

## Increasing Teacher Professionalism Through Digital Skills Development in The Modern Era

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### Abstract

*In today's modern era, teachers are required to be professional and able to use technology in the teaching process. Professional teachers not only focus on mastering the subject matter but also on developing teaching skills, communication, and the use of technology. Teachers must be able to master digital skills to support an effective learning process that is relevant to students' needs. A teacher needs to have adequate digital skills to maintain the quality of teaching, such as less interactive and monotonous learning and difficulty in accessing resources. Therefore, this study discusses improving teacher professionalism through developing digital skills in the modern era. This study is library research that takes references from books, journals, and other literature that is relevant to this theme. This data analysis uses literature review analysis by analyzing and synthesizing literature on the discussion topics that have been written previously. The results of this study explain that the importance of improving teacher professionalism is one of them through the development of digital skills in the modern era. Teachers who master digital skills can make learning more interactive, and learning objectives will be achieved. Teachers can improve their digital skills through workshop activities*

**Keywords:** Professionals, Teachers, and Digital Skills

### Introduction

In an era marked by technological advances like today, mastering digital skills is very important because digital skills allow individuals to access, evaluate, and use information from various sources. Digital skills allow individuals to continue learning and developing. Mastering digital skills is not only about technical abilities but also about preparing yourself for the challenges and opportunities that arise

in personal and professional life in this increasingly advanced.<sup>1</sup>

The rapid development of information and communication technology forces teachers' competencies to continue to develop. The digital flow that spreads in various aspects of life, including education, changes the way we teach and learn. Digitalization enables more interactive and engaging teaching through multimedia, visual presentations, and simulations. Teachers can

<sup>1</sup> Gamar Al Haddar, 'Pengembangan Keterampilan Digital Melalui Pembelajaran Daring: Sebuah Eksplorasi Dampak Article Info el Bidayah: Journal of Islamic Elementary Education Volume 6, Nomor 2, September 2024

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teach more variedly, improving understanding and retention of material. Digitalization gives teachers and students more comprehensive access to educational resources, including e-books, articles, learning videos, and e-learning platforms. This enables richer and deeper learning. In an increasingly digitalized world, teachers need to develop digital skills. Through technology in the classroom, teachers help students learn how to use digital tools, collaborate online, and understand digital ethics.<sup>2</sup> Thus, digitalization not only affects the way of teaching and learning but also demands an increase in teacher competency in order to adapt to changes and maximize the potential of technology in education.

Teachers play an important role in providing direction to students, which covers various aspects of the educational process and students' personal development. A teacher must have various competencies to be able to teach effectively and have a positive impact on students. A professional teacher is an educator who has broad and in-depth knowledge of the field of science being taught. In addition to academic knowledge, experienced teachers must also master various teaching methods and learning strategies that can be adjusted to students' needs. This includes designing a curriculum, managing classes, and evaluating learning outcomes. In the digital era, professional teachers

must be able to use educational technology to enrich the teaching and learning process. Teachers must be able to utilize various digital tools and platforms to increase student interaction and engagement.<sup>3</sup> There are several ways that can be done to improve teachers' digital skills, including attending training and workshops, mentoring programs, online courses, and joint learning activities. Through these activities, it is hoped that teachers' digital skills can improve, which in turn will have a positive impact on the quality of education they provide to students.

Based on this background, the author wants to identify the improvement of teacher professionalism through the development of digital skills in the modern era. The author will first explain the improvement of teacher professionalism and the development of digital skills in the modern era. From this explanation, we will know the importance of improving teacher professionalism through the development of digital skills. This study aims to create teacher professionalism by mastering digital skills so that teachers can provide varied teaching according to student needs.

Based on the research of Luh De Liska, the importance of teacher professionalism that can help students understand learning materials remotely or online. Teachers can deliver material

<sup>2</sup> Dwi Astuti, 'Penerapan Digital Skill Oleh Guru Dalam Menunjang Pembelajaran Daring Di Masa Pandemi', *SKULA: Jurnal Pendidikan Profesi Guru Madrasah*, 1 (2021), pp. 107-14 <<http://202.162.210.184/index.php/skula/article/view/11>>.

<sup>3</sup> Nur Illahi, 'Peranan Guru Profesional Dalam Peningkatan Prestasi Siswa Dan Mutu Pendidikan Di Era Milenial', *Jurnal Asy-Syukriyyah*, 21.1 (2020), pp. 1-20, doi:10.36769/asy.v21i1.94.

to students by utilizing technology<sup>4</sup>. This is in line with previous research conducted by Erma Suryani and Dwi Astuti. Based on the literature study above, improving teacher professionalism through the development of digital skills in the modern era is very important

## **Method**

The author applies a research method using a literature review. Literature study is a data collection technique carried out by researchers by examining theories, opinions, and main ideas contained in print and digital media, especially books, scientific journals, articles, and other sources that support and are relevant to the problems discussed in the research. The literature research method is beneficial for gaining an in-depth understanding of topics that have been widely researched and discussed. However, it is crucial to remain critical of the sources used and ensure that the data obtained is genuinely relevant and reliable.<sup>5</sup>

In this study, the author uses a descriptive and analytical approach. This study not only explains the improvement of teacher professionalism through the development of digital skills but also analyzes the relevance of both. Data analysis uses a literature review, which is the process of reviewing, assessing, and interpreting

various published works related to the research topic. This method aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a topic based on previous research and to identify gaps, trends, and patterns in the existing literature

## **Result and discussion**

### **Result**

#### **a. Teacher Professionalism**

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, a professional can be defined as someone who has special skills in carrying out their duties (Central Language Dictionary Preparation Team, n.d.). The word professional can relate to professions that require special skills to carry out. Professionals in the field of Islamic education are defined as someone who has sufficient scientific qualities to support their profession because not everyone can carry out their duties well.<sup>6</sup> According to Mukhlison, professional teachers are educators with qualifications, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are by professional teacher standards. They carry out their roles and responsibilities in educating and guiding students with integrity, commitment, and expertise in education.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, according to Moh. Uzer Usman, a professional teacher, is someone who has a certain position, has special skills, and is able to know the ins and outs of education that need to be fostered and developed. Professional

<sup>4</sup> Luh De Liska, 'Profesionalisme Guru Dalam Pembelajaran Daring Selama Masa Pandemi Covid-19', *Stilistika*, 10.1 (2021), pp. 56–65, doi:10.5281/zenodo.5732937.

<sup>5</sup> Chatrine Santi Birgante, Agus Wismanto, and Petrus Joko Warkito, 'Pemanfaatan YouTube Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Efektif Materi el Bidayah: Journal of Islamic Elementary Education

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Berita Bagi Peserta Didik', 8 (2024), pp. 17523–28.

<sup>6</sup> Dewi Safitri, 'Menjadi Guru Profesional', *Riau: PT Indragiri Dot Com*, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Mukhlison, 'Uru Profesional (Sebuah Karakteristik Guru Ideal Dalam Pendidikan Islam)', *Jurnal Darul Ilmi* 2(2), 2014, pp. 47–48.

teachers not only focus on academic knowledge but also on forming students' character so they are ready to face life's challenges in the future.<sup>8</sup>

So from the definitions above, it can be concluded that teacher professionalism is a series of attitudes, behaviors, and competencies possessed by a teacher in carrying out their duties as an educator with high quality and ethical standards. This professionalism reflects a teacher's commitment to developing themselves continuously, carrying out their duties with integrity, and focusing on achieving optimal learning outcomes for students.

### **b. Characteristics of Professional Teachers**

The characteristics of a professional teacher include various aspects that reflect the teacher's expertise in teaching and can be a role model for their students. The following are the most common characteristics of a professional teacher: (1) have pedagogical competence. Teachers understand in depth the material being taught and the appropriate methods for delivering it, are able to create a conducive, enjoyable, and disciplined learning environment, and use various teaching methods to adapt to students' different learning styles. (2) have professional competence. Teachers have appropriate formal education, as well as professional certification as teachers, are able to assess student progress through various types of assessments and provide constructive

feedback, and are able to use technology in the learning process to support digital and interactive learning (3) have personality competence. Teachers are dedicated in carrying out their duties as educators with full responsibility, are able to control emotions, be fair, and do not easily get angry or take sides in dealing with students, have an honest, consistent attitude, adhere to the moral values and ethics of the teaching profession, and have social competence. Teachers are able to communicate well with students, colleagues, and parents. Teachers can skillfully collaborate with other teachers, school staff, and the community to support student learning and commitment to self-development. Teachers continue to update knowledge and skills through training, seminars, and further education. Teachers are able to adapt to changes in the curriculum, educational technology, and social developments.<sup>9</sup>

The characteristics of a professional teacher include the teacher's expertise and personality. Several important aspects of teacher professionalism can be identified through the actions and commitments that a teacher must carry out in his role. The following are characteristics of teacher professionalism: (1) obeying laws and regulations. Teachers are required to understand and comply with educational policies issued by the government because they are part of the government apparatus that is directly involved in

<sup>8</sup>Uzer Usman, *Menjadi Guru Profesional*. (Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Munawir Munawir, Amilya Nurul Erindha, and Della Puspita Sari, 'Memahami Karakteristik

implementing education. Awareness and compliance with these regulations ensure that every action and learning activity is by applicable legal provisions. (2) maintaining and improving professional organizations. Teachers must actively participate in professional organizations like the Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI). By Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, teachers are required to be members of professional organizations to maintain the quality and dignity of their profession, as well as to play a role in developing the profession together (3) having good relationships with colleagues. Teachers must be able to foster good relationships with fellow teachers through a family attitude and social solidarity. This not only creates a harmonious work environment but also encourages cooperation and support among teachers (4) teaching and guiding students. The role of teachers is not only to teach but also to guide students to develop according to their potential, interests, and talents. Teachers who are liked by students usually have democratic, patient, fair, kind, humorous characteristics, and care and attention to students; (5) they obey their superiors. Teachers must comply with the directions and policies of leaders in the scope of education, including the principal or education office. This obedience supports the smooth implementation of education policies in schools (6) have commitment. Professional teachers always provide services and dedication based on their abilities

and professional integrity. They carry out their duties with high dedication and are committed to always improving their professionalism in serving the community (7), creating a conducive atmosphere. Teachers are responsible for creating a conducive work atmosphere, which will have a positive impact on work productivity and the quality of learning. A good atmosphere in the workplace will also affect students' comfort in learning widely.<sup>10</sup> By fulfilling the above responsibilities, a teacher not only becomes an effective teacher but also becomes a role model for students and colleagues and contributes to improving the quality of education.

### **c. Digital Skills Development**

Digital skills are the ability to use digital technologies effectively and efficiently in a variety of contexts, including education, work, and everyday life. It encompasses a range of competencies that enable a person to interact with digital devices, applications, and networks and to understand and manage digital information. Digital skills refer to a person's ability to use digital technologies effectively. In today's digital era, skills are increasingly important because almost every aspect of personal and professional life involves the use of digital technologies. Digital skills are not only relevant for careers in information technology but are also important in every modern industry and profession. Preparing yourself with strong digital skills helps a person to succeed and adapt in an increasingly diverse work environment.<sup>11</sup> Digital skills are beco-

<sup>10</sup> Syarifah Nurmawati, 'Etika & Profesi Guru', *Riau : PT. Indragiri Dot Com*, 2019.

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<sup>11</sup> Gamar Al Haddar, 'Pengembangan Keterampilan Digital Melalui Pembelajaran

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ming increasingly important in this digital era because many aspects of daily life, education, and work now depend on technology. Developing these skills helps individuals become more productive, creative, and competitive in an ever-changing world.

Digital skills are divided into four dimensions, namely (1) Digital technician skills. Digital technician skills refer to the skills needed to manage, support, and repair digital technology infrastructure (2) Digital communication skills. Digital communication skills refer to a person's ability to communicate effectively using various digital technologies and online platforms (3) Digital analysis. Digital analysis refers to the process of analyzing data or information generated from the use of digital technology (4) Digital thinking. The ability or way of thinking needed to adapt and succeed in the digital era. This includes attitudes, skills, and thinking strategies that enable individuals or organizations to utilize digital technology effectively and innovatively.<sup>12</sup> The dimensions of digital skills cover various aspects that enable individuals to interact effectively with digital technology. By developing these dimensions of digital skills, individuals can be more effective in using technology for various purposes, such as learning, working, communicating, and creating innovation. It also helps them become smart, critical, and responsible

users of technology in the ever-evolving digital world.

If someone does not have digital skills, several consequences can occur, both in a personal and professional context. The following are some main consequences, namely limited access to information and learning. With digital skills, a person can access online courses, learning materials, and educational resources available on the internet, as well as find up-to-date and relevant information that can expand their knowledge and skills—difficulty in employment. Many jobs today require basic digital skills, such as using email, office applications, and digital communication tools. Without these skills, a person may have difficulty meeting job requirements. Digital skills are becoming increasingly important in the workplace, and those who lack these skills may be left behind in the competition for jobs. Difficulty using social media, instant messaging applications, and other digital communication tools can limit a person's ability to interact with friends, family, and coworkers. Many projects and assignments today require online collaboration. Without digital skills, participating in such cooperation becomes difficult. Without understanding digital security, a person is more vulnerable to threats such as malware, phishing, and identity theft. A lack of skills in managing online privacy can result in personal information being shared

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Daring: Sebuah Eksplorasi Dampak Article Info ABSTRAK', *Jurnal Pendidikan West Science*, 01.08 (2023), pp. 554-69.

<sup>12</sup> Fathurrahmani Fathurrahmani, Herpendi Herpendi, and Khairul Anwar Hafizd, 70

'Pentingnya Memiliki Digital Skills Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19', *Jurnal Widya Laksmi: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 1.2 (2021), pp. 83-90, doi:10.59458/jwl.v1i2.17.

without control. Many creative tools and digital applications can help a person express ideas and creativity. Without digital skills, access to these tools is limited. Digital skills enable the exploration and development of new ideas. Without these skills, the potential for innovation is limited.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, having good digital skills is essential for success in an increasingly technology-dependent world. Investing in developing these skills can provide great benefits in various aspects of life.

Mastering digital skills is very important for teachers when facing technological developments and improving the learning process. Here are some ways that teachers can master digital skills, namely (1) Training and workshops. Attending training, seminars, or workshops that focus on the use of technology in education. Many educational institutions or educational organizations offer programs (2) Online Courses. Utilizing online learning platforms about educational technology, programming, graphic design, and other digital tools (3) Use of social media and forums. Join social media groups or discussion forums on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to share experiences and learn from other teachers about the use of technology (4) Experiment with digital tools. Try various digital tools and applications that can be used in learning, such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Canva, and find ways to integrate them

into the curriculum. (5) Reading and researching. Following blogs, articles, or books that discuss the latest trends in educational technology to update knowledge and understanding of digital tools (6) Mentoring. Looking for a mentor or teacher who is more experienced in using educational technology to get guidance and tips (7) Collaboration with colleagues. Collaborate with fellow teachers to share digital skills and experiences in using these tools in learning. (8) Implement in Learning. Actively apply digital skills in the classroom, for example, using videos, digital presentations, or online learning platforms to increase student engagement (9) Feedback and self-evaluation. Seek feedback from students and colleagues on the use of technology in learning and conduct self-evaluation to improve teaching practices (10) Involvement in the digital education community. Join a community or educational organization that focuses on innovation and technology to get support and inspiration. By implementing the methods above, teachers can improve their digital skills and use them to create better learning experiences for students. Through these activities, it is hoped that teachers' digital skills can improve, which in turn will have a positive impact on the quality of education they provide to students and can also improve the quality of education.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Fathurrahmani, Herpendi, and Hafizd.

<sup>14</sup> I J Fitriyah and others, '... Peningkatan Keterampilan Guru Dalam Mengembangkan Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Digital Sebagai El Bidayah: Journal of Islamic Elementary Education Volume 6, Nomor 2, September 2024

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## **Discussion**

### **Relevance of Improving Teacher Professionalism with Digital Skills Development in the Modern Era**

Professional teachers have several characteristics that can improve teaching effectiveness and student development. These characteristics are having a mature personality, mastery of material and application of various learning methods, use of technology in learning so that they can deliver material in a more varied and non-monotonous way and access extensive resources.<sup>15</sup>

Professional teachers play an essential role in education by integrating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to support student development. Experienced teachers can create a positive learning environment and facilitate students' academic and social growth by committing to self-development and active involvement in the educational process. In this digital era, teachers must be able to adapt and master technology to become influential professionals. The ability to utilize digital skills not only improves the quality of teaching but also helps students prepare themselves for an increasingly complex and technology-based world. Thus, teacher professional development in the technological aspect is significant in creating a quality and relevant learning experience.

<sup>15</sup> Hetwi Marselina Saerang and others, 'Strategi Pengembangan Profesionalisme Guru Di Era Digital: Tantangan Dan Peluang', *El-Idare: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 9.1 (2023), pp. 65-75, doi:10.19109/elidare.v9i1.16555.

<sup>16</sup> Erma Suryani Sahabuddin and others, 'Kompetensi Profesionalisme Guru Dalam

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The use of information and communication technology devices can have a positive effect on improving teacher professional competence. Teachers who can utilize information and communication technology devices can develop themselves as better human resources so that they can also improve the quality of education.<sup>16</sup>

## **Conclusion**

A professional teacher is an educator who can develop digital skills effectively in the teaching process. This ability is essential in today's digital era, where technology has become integral to everyday life, including education. Professional teachers can use various digital tools and platforms such as learning management systems (LMS) (e.g., Moodle, Google Classroom), presentation applications (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi), and social media to support the learning process. These tools allow for more dynamic interactions between teachers and students.

Professional teachers have several qualities that make them effective in their roles. They have in-depth knowledge of the subject being taught and can explain concepts clearly and easily. They also communicate well, convey information, listen to students, and excitingly explain material. Professional teachers

Memanfaatkan Teknologi Informasi Melalui Platform Merdeka Mengajar', *SEMINAR NASIONAL HASIL PENELITIAN 2023 "Penguatan Riset, Inovasi, Kreativitas Peneliti Di Era 5.0"*, 2023, pp. 1518-27.

commit to continuing to learn and develop themselves.

Teachers' understanding of digital skills is essential to creating a practical and relevant learning environment. They can improve their skills through various workshops and training activities focusing on technology use in education. In addition, they can also take advantage of online courses available on multiple platforms. Teachers proficient in technology can create a more interactive and engaging learning experience. By using digital tools, they can deliver material more effectively and variedly, improving student understanding and achieving learning objectives

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