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Review / Обзорная статья

**Internet resources in enhancing teacher professional
development strategies for educational counsellors
in the information era**

Moses Adeleke Adeoye^{ID}

Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

✉ princeadelekm@gmail.com

Abstract. *Problem statement.* The rapid expansion of digital technologies has reshaped teacher professional development by offering access to online courses, open educational resources, and virtual learning communities. Despite these opportunities, teachers continue to experience challenges such as information overload, limited digital literacy, and institutional misalignment. Educational counsellors are increasingly viewed as essential mediators who can connect abundant internet resources with teachers' practical needs. *Methodology.* The study used a qualitative descriptive research design and conducted documentary analysis of 42 scholarly articles, policy reports, and case studies published between 2019 and 2025. Thematic content analysis was applied to identify recurring patterns and strategies relevant to counsellor-mediated professional learning. *Results.* The findings revealed four central themes: the wide availability and diversity of internet-based resources; the pivotal role of counsellors in curating and contextualizing materials; persistent barriers such as digital competency gaps, workload constraints, and lack of institutional recognition; and the positive impacts of structured integration on teachers' pedagogical repertoire, reflective practice, and global networking. *Conclusion.* Internet resources have transformative potential for enhancing teacher professional development, but their impact depends on structured mediation and supportive institutional frameworks. By recognizing counsellors as learning architects, the study offers theoretical and practical guidance for promoting context-sensitive, digitally enriched, and sustainable professional learning cultures.

Keywords: teacher advanced training, digital learning strategies, open educational resources, online learning platforms

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Роль интернет-ресурсов в совершенствовании стратегий профессионального развития педагогических консультантов в информационную эпоху

М.А. Адеойе 

Университет Аль-Хикма, Илорин, Нигерия

✉ princeadelekm@gmail.com

Аннотация. *Постановка проблемы.* Стремительное развитие цифровых технологий изменило процесс профессионального роста педагогов, предоставив им доступ к онлайн-курсам, открытым образовательным ресурсам и виртуальным учебным сообществам. Несмотря на эти возможности, педагоги продолжают сталкиваться с такими проблемами, как информационная перегрузка, недостаточность цифровой грамотности и институциональная несогласованность. Педагогические консультанты все чаще рассматриваются как важные посредники, способные связать обширные интернет-ресурсы с практическими потребностями педагогов. *Методология.* В исследовании использовался качественный описательный дизайн. Проведен анализ содержания 42 научных статей, политических отчетов и тематических исследований, опубликованных с 2019 по 2025 г. Для выявления повторяющихся закономерностей и стратегий, актуальных для профессионального обучения, направленного на повышение квалификации педагогических консультантов, был применен тематический контент-анализ. *Результаты.* Выявлены четыре актуальные ключевые темы: широкая доступность и разнообразие интернет-ресурсов; ключевая роль консультантов в подборе и контекстуализации материалов; сохраняющиеся барьеры, такие как пробелы в цифровой компетентности, ограничения рабочей нагрузки и отсутствие институционального признания; положительное влияние структуризации и интеграции информационных ресурсов на педагогический инструментарий учителей, рефлексивную практику и глобальное сетевое взаимодействие педагогов. *Заключение.* Интернет-ресурсы обладают значимым потенциалом для повышения профессионального развития педагогов, но их влияние зависит от корректно выстроенного посредничества и соблюдения институциональных рамок. Признавая педагогических консультантов «архитекторами» обучения, в ходе исследования осуществлена выработка теоретических и практических рекомендаций по продвижению контекстно зависимых инвариантных подходов к профессиональной подготовке, базирующихся на использовании цифровых технологий.

Ключевые слова: повышение квалификации учителей, стратегии цифрового обучения, открытые образовательные ресурсы, онлайн-платформы для обучения

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Problem statement. The rapid expansion of digital technologies over the past two decades has profoundly reshaped educational landscapes, altering how teachers acquire, share, and apply professional knowledge. Among these transformations, the integration of internet resources into teacher professional development (TPD) has emerged as both an opportunity and a challenge. Internet-based tools – ranging from online courses, open-access repositories, interactive simulations, and global discussion forums – have enabled teachers to access knowledge beyond the constraints of geography, time, and institutional boundaries [1; 2]. At the same time, this abundance raises critical questions about quality, relevance, and the sustainability of professional learning in a digitally saturated environment. In many education systems, educational counsellors occupy a pivotal yet often under-defined role in supporting teachers' continuous growth. They are uniquely positioned to mediate between the vastness of online resources and the specific pedagogical, curricular, and contextual needs of teachers. However, existing literature reveals that while counsellors are increasingly expected to facilitate digital learning, systematic strategies for doing so remain inconsistent across contexts [3; 4]. This gap underscores the importance of identifying and critically examining approaches that enable counsellors to harness the internet as a tool for sustained, relevant, and contextually meaningful professional development.

Despite growing global attention to digital integration in education, much of the discourse focuses on technological tools themselves rather than the human and institutional processes that shape their effective use. This study shifts the focus toward strategic mediation – how educational counsellors can actively curate, contextualise, and embed internet resources into teachers' professional learning journeys. Such a shift is essential if TPD is to move beyond episodic workshops toward a culture of ongoing, self-directed, and collaborative professional learning that is grounded in local realities yet enriched by global knowledge flows. By synthesising insights from both research and practice, the paper aims to articulate evidence-informed strategies and policy recommendations that can strengthen the role of educational counsellors in fostering digitally enhanced teacher learning. The findings of this paper are intended to contribute to the scholarly conversation on TPD in the digital age while offering actionable insights for policymakers, school leaders, and professional development facilitators. Ultimately, the goal is to position educational counsellors not merely as resource providers but as learning architects who design and sustain professional ecosystems where internet resources serve as catalysts for transformative teaching practice.

The digital transformation of education has expanded the opportunities for teacher professional development (TPD), enabling access to online courses, open educational resources, and virtual learning platforms that transcend geographical and institutional boundaries [5; 6]. These resources promise flexibility, collaboration, and continuous learning, which are essential for teachers navigating the demands of 21st-century classrooms. However, the proliferation of internet-based tools has also introduced significant challenges. Teachers often face information overload, limited digital literacy, and institutional barriers that restrict the effective use of online professional learning opportunities [7; 8]. Existing research highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of digital TPD. Studies confirm that when online learning is designed with sustained support and collaboration, it enhances teacher confidence and classroom practice [5; 9]. Yet, other findings reveal persistent inequities in access, difficulties in evaluating quality, and teachers' skepticism about the value of online training compared to traditional workshops [10; 11]. Furthermore, while educational counsellors are increasingly expected to guide teachers through this digital landscape, systematic strategies for how they can effectively curate, contextualize, and embed internet resources remain underexplored [3; 4].

This gap underscores the problem: although internet resources hold transformative potential for professional learning, their effectiveness is neither automatic nor evenly realized. Without clear frameworks and strategies mediated by educational counsellors, teachers' risk being overwhelmed by digital abundance rather than empowered by it. Addressing this problem is critical to ensuring that technology-driven professional development becomes meaningful, sustainable, and contextually relevant.

Literature Review. In recent years, the landscape of teacher professional development (TPD) has undergone a profound transformation, propelled by the proliferation of digital technologies and online learning environments. No longer confined to one-off workshops or static training sessions, today's TPD is marked by flexibility, interactivity, and increasingly, personalization [12]. A growing body of systematic reviews underscores that effective online TPD blends customisation, collaborative structures, and sustained support [5]. Programs that offer blended and flexible learning, combining self-paced digital modules with peer interaction and guided mentorship, are consistently associated with deeper professional growth and more confident digital instructional integration [6]. Digital competencies flourish when training is ongoing rather than episodic, permitting educators to build reflective practice within real classroom contexts [13]. Core frameworks like TPACK (Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge) remain essential lenses through which to understand TPD efficacy. TPACK-based designs help align educators' technical know-how with their subject matter expertise and pedagogical strategies, ensuring digital integration enhances learning rather than simply adding technological complexity [14]. Research across multiple contexts reveals that digital TPD positively impacts teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and actual use of ICT in their classrooms. Teachers engage with structured digital learning, their confidence grows alongside their technology use – especially when

training addresses both the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ of integrating digital tools into pedagogy [15].

Moreover, one of the most powerful benefits of digital TPD lies in its capacity to foster Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Digital platforms enable teachers to connect across schools and borders, exchanging ideas, offering mutual support, and deepening their collective practice. This sense of community is particularly vital in an era when educators may otherwise feel isolated in their classrooms [9]. Ho – especially between rural and urban schools – and uneven access to reliable internet and devices can curtail the reach of digital TPD, perpetuating existing divides despite its potential to democratize learning [10]. Additionally, teachers may struggle with the functional demands of social media or online platforms, experiencing anxiety about their public presence or uncertainty navigating these tools – factors that can inhibit their willingness to participate meaningfully [16]. In sum, teacher professional development in the digital age is most impactful when it is context-sensitive, anchored in theory (such as TPACK), collaborative, reflective, and sustained. When designed with these elements in mind, digital platforms can transform PD from a procedural checkbox into a dynamic, reflective journey of professional growth.

Internet-Based Learning Platforms – an umbrella term that includes MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), Learning Management Systems (LMSs), webinars, synchronous virtual workshops, micro-credentialing services, and professional social networks – have become central instruments for teacher professional development (TPD). These platforms are not a single technology but a constellation of affordances: scalability, asynchronous access, varied media formats, analytics for tracking engagement, and opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration. Class Central’s ongoing surveys and reports show the proliferation and diversification of MOOC providers and related platforms, underscoring the global reach of these tools [17]. Empirical syntheses indicate that internet-based TPD produces meaningful gains in teacher knowledge, classroom practice, and teacher confidence – especially when programs are intentionally designed rather than offered as isolated, one-off experiences. A large-scale research synthesis of online teacher professional development found predominantly positive effects on teacher competencies and classroom practices, with stronger outcomes when digital learning was blended with face-to-face support and when it emphasized active, practice-oriented learning [18].

MOOCs receive particular attention because of their sheer scale and the backing of major universities and institutions. They offer structured, content-rich pathways that are appealing for subject-focused updates and large cohorts of teachers seeking standardized content. However, MOOC completion and sustained behavior change are heavily mediated by course design (e.g., scaffolding, interactivity, assessment) and by local supports that help teachers translate course insights into classroom practice. Bibliometric and systematic reviews of MOOCs highlight both their potential for widespread access and their limitations regarding sustained engagement and contextual adaptation [19; 20]. Learning Management Systems (LMSs) – such as Moodle, Canvas, and proprietary district platforms – play a different, often more

integrative role. LMSs serve as organizational hubs where courses, resource libraries, discussion forums, and assessment tools are housed; they enable longitudinal tracking of teacher participation and can be tailored to district curricula and goals. Recent practitioner and research reports stress that LMSs are most effective when they are embedded in coherent professional learning cycles that include follow-up coaching, peer collaboration, and opportunities for practice and feedback [21].

Webinars and live virtual workshops complement asynchronous content by providing real-time interaction, modelling, and Q&A – features that help reduce feelings of isolation and provide immediate relevance to classroom dilemmas. Research indicates that webinar-based professional development (PD) can enhance novice teachers’ practical readiness and professional community through structured live sessions, extension tasks, and follow-up supports [22; 23]. Despite these strengths, the literature is clear about persistent challenges. Infrastructure gaps, unreliable internet, and device shortages limit reach – especially in low- and middle-income contexts – so the promise of democratizing access does not automatically translate into equitable uptake. Additionally, quality assurance is uneven across platforms; not all online offerings are grounded in evidence-based pedagogy or linked to sustained in-class application. Syntheses and policy reports therefore emphasize that scaling digital TPD requires careful attention to context, purposeful instructional design, and measures to support teacher implementation in the classroom [24; 25]. From a design perspective, several evidence-based principles emerge across the literature:

- 1) blend asynchronous content with synchronous interaction and coaching;
- 2) center activities on authentic classroom practice (lesson design, observation, feedback);
- 3) build communities of practice to sustain reflection and peer learning;
- 4) integrate assessment and micro-credentials to recognize competence;
- 5) provide scaffolding for digital literacy so teachers can critically evaluate and adapt online resources.

When these elements are present, internet-based platforms do more than deliver content – they become engines for continuous, situated professional learning. In conclusion, internet-based learning platforms offer powerful affordances for modern TPD, but their impact depends on design, contextual supports, and equitable access. Educational counsellors and school leaders need to move beyond merely recommending platforms; they must curate, scaffold, and integrate digital offerings into broader professional learning systems that prioritize sustained practice and local relevance.

Open Educational Resources (OERs) – teaching, learning, and research materials shared openly for no-cost access and adaptation – have become powerful tools in teacher professional development (TPD), offering flexibility and agency to educators across contexts [26]. OERs offer more than just free content – they embody principles of availability, practicality, and adaptability. The *Open Guidebook Approach (OGA)* highlights how well-designed OERs can be freely accessed, legally reused, and easily navigated, enabling teachers to adapt materials that align

with their local contexts and professional routines [27]. In K-12 education, studies show that teachers perceive OERs as both useful and easy to use, enhancing their willingness to experiment with and implement new resources in their classrooms [28]. Moreover, collaborative models enhance OER impact. Participation in communities of practice empowers teachers to co-create, adapt, and share resources. Such collective engagement fosters a sense of ownership, motivation, and sustainable practice – evident in successful faculty incubators and mentoring networks collaborating on vetted OERs [29].

Despite its promise, OER adoption is not without hurdles. Awareness remains a significant obstacle: many teachers are unaware of existing repositories, limiting access and use [30]. Technological barriers, such as poor infrastructure and difficult-to-navigate platforms, further hinder effective adoption, particularly in resource-limited settings [31]. Quality, too, is a concern – especially the pedagogical robustness of OERs. Teachers are reluctant to adopt materials lacking alignment with their instructional goals or curricular standards, especially when establishing quality assurance remains a challenge [32]. In contexts like primary mathematics during the pandemic, educators reported difficulties in locating appropriate and high-quality OERs – revealing a clear need for improved discoverability and contextual relevance [33]. Adoption of OERs is also shaped by institutional contexts and leadership. In China, OER use is influenced by content quality, technological support, and leadership support, with formal encouragement often not translating into actual practice [34]. In Sub-Saharan Africa, initiatives like TESSA (Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa) provide structured OER modules designed for teachers in low-resource settings [35]. Yet feedback reveals that relevance to local curriculum and user satisfaction vary – highlighting the importance of designing OERs with context and user experience at the forefront.

To harness OER's full potential for TPD, intentional design and support mechanisms are essential. Metadata-driven quality detection shows promise in helping educators find high-quality OERs among millions available online [36]. Professional development that guides teachers through OER creation and use – such as open educational practices (OEP) – has been shown to boost self-efficacy, foster advocacy, and cultivate a culture of sharing [37].

Role of Educational Counsellors. In the evolving educational landscape of the information era, the role of educational counsellors has expanded well beyond their traditional focus on student guidance and career planning. Teachers are increasingly playing a crucial role in teacher professional development, helping them navigate the vast array of internet-based learning resources, while also supporting students' academic, personal, and social growth [38]. Educational counsellors are now recognized as pivotal allies in fostering a culture of continuous teacher learning. With the rapid growth of online learning platforms, Open Educational Resources (OERs), and professional learning networks, teachers face the dual challenge of locating credible resources and integrating them into meaningful pedagogical practice. Educational counsellors can serve as knowledge brokers, bridging the gap between available digital tools and teachers' specific professional needs. They can

help educators evaluate the quality and relevance of online materials, align them with curriculum standards, and ensure they support differentiated and inclusive teaching strategies.

Despite the wealth of internet-based learning opportunities, teachers often encounter barriers such as information overload, time constraints, and technological skill gaps. Educational counsellors can provide structured pathways for professional development, breaking down overwhelming volumes of content into manageable, goal-oriented learning sequences. They can also work with school leaders to secure the necessary infrastructure and institutional support to make internet-based professional learning both feasible and impactful. When embedded within school improvement frameworks, educational counsellors can become strategic partners who help align teacher professional learning with institutional goals and educational reforms. By collaborating with administrators, they can ensure that internet-based professional development aligns with curriculum reforms, assessment strategies, and broader educational priorities. This alignment strengthens the coherence between teachers' learning and their classroom practice, ultimately improving student outcomes. In summary, the role of educational counsellors in the information era extends into a domain that is both advisory and strategic. They are not merely resource providers but facilitators of critical engagement, reflective practice, and professional collaboration. By guiding teachers through the complexities of internet-based professional development, educational counsellors help ensure that technology's promise is fully realised in the service of effective teaching and enriched learning experiences.

Challenges in Integrating Internet-Based Learning in Teacher Professional Development. While internet-based learning has opened unprecedented opportunities for teacher professional development, its integration into everyday teaching practice is far from straightforward. The transition from traditional, face-to-face professional learning to digital and hybrid modalities introduces a set of challenges that are technical, pedagogical, institutional, and even cultural. Understanding these barriers is essential for designing effective support systems that make online professional development both accessible and impactful. One of the most persistent challenges, especially in developing contexts, is the inadequacy of technological infrastructure. Slow internet connectivity, limited access to devices, and insufficient technical support can impede teachers' participation in online professional development [39]. Even in technologically advanced environments, disparities in access – often referred to as the “digital divide” – can lead to unequal opportunities for professional learning. Without reliable infrastructure, the promise of internet-based resources cannot be fully realized. While many teachers are adept at using technology for personal communication, professional digital literacy – particularly the ability to locate, evaluate, adapt, and integrate online resources – is often underdeveloped [40]. Teachers who are unfamiliar with advanced online tools, digital collaboration platforms, or content creation applications may struggle to engage deeply with internet-based professional learning opportunities. This gap underscores the need for targeted digital skills training as part of any professional development program.

However, teachers often face heavy workloads, administrative responsibilities, and personal commitments that limit the time they can devote to sustained online learning [41]. Even when high-quality internet-based programs are available, a lack of dedicated time for professional growth can reduce participation and impact. In some cases, the challenge lies not in access or skills, but in perception. Teachers accustomed to traditional workshop-style training may view online professional learning as less effective or less interactive [11]. This skepticism can hinder adoption unless digital professional development is designed to be interactive, collaborative, and directly relevant to classroom realities. Internet-based professional development is most impactful when it is embedded within school and district improvement plans. However, in many educational systems, online learning for teachers remains an optional or peripheral activity rather than a structured component of professional growth [42]. Without institutional policies, incentives, and clear expectations, participation tends to be sporadic and inconsistent. Finally, teachers need clear guidelines and support in navigating these issues to ensure that their professional learning remains safe, legal, and ethically sound. These challenges underline the fact that internet-based professional development, while rich in potential, is not automatically transformative. Addressing these barriers requires a multi-pronged strategy involving technological investment, targeted skills training, institutional policy alignment, and a shift in professional learning culture. By anticipating and mitigating these obstacles, educational stakeholders can create conditions where internet-based learning truly enhances teacher professional development.

Methodology. This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research design, which is well-suited for capturing nuanced perspectives and synthesizing existing evidence in areas where practical strategies are as critical as theoretical framing [43]. Unlike experimental or quasi-experimental approaches, qualitative description prioritizes rich, contextual understanding over statistical inference. This orientation aligns with the present study's aim: to explore and articulate evidence-informed strategies that educational counsellors can employ to integrate internet resources into teacher professional development (TPD) in the information era. By grounding the analysis in existing scholarship, professional guidelines, and documented case practices, the study bridges the gap between theoretical discourse and actionable recommendations. The approach was particularly appropriate because it allowed for the integration of global perspectives with locally relevant implications, without the constraints of a single empirical site. Data for the study were gathered through documentary analysis, focusing on scholarly literature, professional development frameworks, and illustrative case studies published between 2019 and 2025. The decision to limit the review to this period was intentional, ensuring that the data reflected contemporary developments in digital technology, online learning ecosystems, and counsellor-mediated professional learning. To ensure a robust and systematic selection process, the following databases and repositories were used: Google Scholar offers interdisciplinary access to scholarly works, while ERIC provides peer-reviewed education-specific publications. ResearchGate provides recent working papers, conference proceedings, and practitioner reports. The search

employed targeted keyword combinations such as internet resources, teacher professional development, digital learning platforms, and educational counsellors. Boolean operators (AND/OR) and phrase matching were applied to refine search results. In total, over 130 documents were initially retrieved. After removing duplicates and applying inclusion criteria – relevance to TPD, focus on internet-based strategies, and explicit reference to the role of educational counsellors – a final corpus of 42 documents was selected for in-depth review. The research maintains analytical focus by excluding studies focusing solely on student learning without implications for teacher professional growth, outdated publications predating significant technological changes in online learning ecosystems, and non-English publications without accessible translations. The inclusion criteria included peer-reviewed journal articles, policy guidelines, and case studies relevant to TPD in the digital era publications dated between 2019–2025. The study employed thematic content analysis to identify, categorise, and interpret recurring patterns across the selected literature.

Results and discussion. This study set out to explore the strategies educational counsellors can employ in integrating internet resources into teacher professional development, drawing exclusively on documentary evidence from scholarly articles, professional guidelines, and case studies published between 2019 and 2025. The analysis reveals four major thematic domains that collectively illuminate both the opportunities and the limitations of internet-based professional learning. These domains are interlinked, and their interplay determines the effectiveness of integration strategies in different educational contexts.

Availability and Diversity of Internet Resources for Teacher Professional Development. The analysis revealed a growing diversity of internet-based resources accessible to teachers, ranging from structured Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to open-access video tutorials, interactive simulations, and peer-support platforms. Several studies emphasise that this variety has significantly expanded teachers' professional learning opportunities, enabling personalised, self-paced, and collaborative approaches [44–47]. For example, platforms like Coursera for Teachers and UNESCO's Teacher Task Force portal offer not only subject-specific content but also training in pedagogical innovation. However, the findings indicate that the abundance of these resources has also led to a paradox: while access has improved, the problem of information overload has become increasingly pronounced [7]. Without targeted guidance, teachers often struggle to identify high-quality, relevant, and contextually appropriate materials. This aligns with [48] TPACK framework, which highlights the need for a balanced integration of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge – something not automatically guaranteed by open access alone. The implication is clear: educational counsellors must play a more active role in curating and contextualizing resources, ensuring that teachers engage with materials that are both pedagogically sound and aligned with curricular priorities.

Strategies for Integration of Internet Resources by Educational Counsellors. The analysis highlights the pivotal role educational counsellors play in bridging the

gap between the mere existence of internet resources and their effective application in teacher professional development. Across the reviewed literature, four interrelated strategies consistently emerge: *Curated Resource Mapping* – Counsellors take on the role of content curators, identifying, evaluating, and organizing internet-based resources that align with national curricula, subject-specific needs, and institutional priorities [49]. This step is critical to avoiding the trap of information overload and ensures that teachers engage with reliable, high-quality materials. *Capacity-Building Initiatives* – Counsellors facilitate professional learning opportunities that build teachers' digital literacy and their ability to critically evaluate and adapt online materials [50]. This often involves targeted workshops, hands-on training sessions, and follow-up mentoring to ensure sustained skill application.

Virtual Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The literature emphasizes that professional development is most effective when it is collaborative. Counsellors can establish and moderate online forums, social media groups, and digital discussion boards that allow teachers to exchange ideas, share resources, and collectively troubleshoot challenges [51].

Policy and Performance Integration. Several sources underline that online professional development gains greater legitimacy and uptake when it is formally recognised within teacher appraisal systems or continuing professional development (CPD) frameworks [52]. Counsellors can advocate for and facilitate such policy alignment, ensuring that internet-based learning is not perceived as extracurricular but as integral to career growth. Analytically, these strategies point to a multi-layered integration process. The counsellor is not simply a facilitator but a strategic intermediary, ensuring that the adoption of internet resources moves beyond isolated experimentation toward systemic institutionalization.

Barriers to Effective Use of Internet Resources. While the literature acknowledges the transformative potential of internet-based professional learning, it also converges on a set of persistent barriers that undermine its effectiveness. First, digital competency gaps remain widespread. Even in contexts with adequate infrastructure, teachers often lack the advanced skills required to critically assess, adapt, and meaningfully integrate online materials into their practice [53]. This is not merely a matter of technical know-how; it involves deeper competencies such as media literacy, content evaluation, and the ability to design technology-enhanced lessons. Second, workload and time constraints are recurrent issues. Teachers in many countries face demanding schedules and administrative burdens that limit the time they can dedicate to sustained online learning [8]. Without institutional time allowances, professional development risks being relegated to after-hours commitments, leading to low engagement and burnout. Third, resource overabundance – ironically – can be as problematic as scarcity. The vast array of available online materials, much of it uncurated, can overwhelm teachers and lead to decision fatigue [54]. Without structured guidance, the sheer volume of options can dilute focus and impede practical application.

Finally, institutional misalignment remains a barrier. In many systems, no explicit policies are recognizing or rewarding participation in online professional

development [55]. As a result, even motivated teachers may struggle to justify sustained engagement, especially if the benefits are not formally acknowledged in career progression frameworks. The interplay between these barriers suggests that piecemeal interventions are insufficient. Addressing them requires a coordinated approach that simultaneously tackles skill gaps, workload issues, content curation, and institutional policy.

Documented Impacts on Teacher Professional Growth. Despite the challenges, the documentary evidence shows that effective integration of internet resources into teacher professional development yields substantial and multifaceted benefits. One clear benefit is the expansion of teachers' pedagogical repertoire. Access to diverse instructional strategies, multimedia tools, and innovative lesson formats enables teachers to experiment with and adapt new approaches to their local contexts [56]. This not only enhances classroom engagement but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement. A second impact is the flexibility and responsiveness of professional learning. Unlike traditional workshop-based models, internet-based PD allows teachers to engage in 'just-in-time' learning – accessing resources as specific classroom needs arise [57]. This adaptability supports differentiated instruction and makes professional learning more directly relevant to immediate teaching challenges.

Third, internet resources facilitate global professional networking. Through online platforms and communities, teachers can connect with peers and experts across borders, sharing best practices, co-developing resources, and gaining exposure to diverse educational perspectives [58]. Such engagement not only enriches individual professional growth but also strengthens cross-cultural pedagogical exchange. Critically, the literature underscores that these benefits are most fully realized when educational counsellors actively scaffold the integration process – through content curation, capacity building, community facilitation, and policy advocacy. Without such structured mediation, the potential of internet-based PD risks remaining fragmented and underutilized.

The findings of this study bring to light both the promise and the complexity of integrating internet resources into teacher professional development (TPD). A central insight is the paradox of abundance: while teachers today have unprecedented access to MOOCs, open repositories, webinars, and professional learning networks, this very abundance often results in information overload and decision fatigue. As [7] cautions, the "crisis of information" is no longer scarcity but the challenge of discernment. This underscores why educational counsellors must move beyond passive resource recommendation to active curation and contextualization. In practice, the findings suggest that without structured mediation, the availability of digital resources does not automatically translate into meaningful professional growth. Another significant contribution of this study lies in affirming the expanded role of educational counsellors as mediators of digital professional learning. Evidence from the literature confirms that teachers benefit most from internet-based development when they receive guidance in selecting quality resources, aligning them with curriculum goals, and embedding them into sustained cycles of reflection and classroom practice [5; 15]. The thematic analysis

demonstrates that counsellors can add value by mapping resources to institutional priorities, building teachers' digital literacy, and creating safe spaces for professional dialogue through virtual learning communities. This aligns with the argument of [50] that professional support must also cultivate evaluative judgment, enabling teachers not only to access resources but to critically determine their pedagogical worth. Equally important, the findings point to barriers that continue to constrain the full realization of digital TPD.

Digital competency gaps, lack of dedicated time, and institutional misalignment were consistently documented across the reviewed literature. For instance, [8] highlights how teachers' heavy workloads often relegate professional learning to after-hours commitments, leading to exhaustion and shallow engagement. Similarly, [55] reminds us that unless online PD is formally recognized within appraisal systems or professional standards, it risks being perceived as peripheral rather than integral. These observations resonate strongly with the data in this study, which showed that participation and sustained application of internet-based learning flourish only when supported by both institutional structures and leadership advocacy. At the same time, the findings illustrate the transformative potential of internet-based professional learning when thoughtfully integrated. Teachers who engage with well-curated resources and collaborative online platforms expand their pedagogical repertoire, adopt innovative instructional strategies, and connect with colleagues beyond geographical boundaries [56; 58]. The flexibility of 'just-in-time' learning – accessing materials in response to immediate classroom challenges – also emerged as a clear advantage [57]. However, these benefits did not appear in isolation; they were realized when counsellors scaffolded the process through mentoring, peer facilitation, and policy advocacy. In this sense, the findings reinforce the view that technology is not transformative by itself but becomes so when embedded within supportive professional ecosystems [14]. Overall, the discussion reveals a layered picture: internet resources hold enormous promise for teacher professional development, but their effectiveness depends on the presence of mediators who can filter, contextualize, and embed them into practice. Counsellors, therefore, emerge not as peripheral figures but as architects of digital learning cultures, ensuring that professional development remains purposeful, collaborative, and contextually meaningful. This redefinition of their role offers valuable implications for policymakers, school leaders, and teacher education stakeholders seeking to build resilient professional development systems in the information era.

Conclusion. This study set out to explore how educational counsellors can strategically integrate internet resources into teacher professional development (TPD) in the information era. The most important insight emerging from the findings is that access to digital tools alone does not guarantee professional growth. While previous research has often highlighted the proliferation of MOOCs, open repositories, and online platforms as inherently transformative, this study reveals a more nuanced reality: teachers frequently experience information overload, skill gaps, and institutional misalignment that hinder meaningful use of such resources. The key finding, therefore, is that educational counsellors are not simply support

figures but strategic mediators who curate, contextualize, and embed internet resources into teachers' professional learning journeys. This repositions their role from resource providers to learning architects – an insight that goes beyond descriptive results to highlight a shift in professional practice and responsibility.

The contribution of this research lies in both its scholarly and practical value. At the scholarly level, it enriches the discourse on digital professional development by linking it explicitly to the mediating role of counsellors, a perspective often underexplored in existing literature. By doing so, the study extends theoretical frameworks such as TPACK and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), situating them within a counselling-mediated model of digital learning support. Practically, the research provides actionable strategies for counsellors, policymakers, and school leaders: from curated resource mapping to digital capacity-building, the establishment of virtual professional learning communities, and advocacy for institutional recognition of online PD. These strategies collectively demonstrate how internet resources, when properly scaffolded, can shift teacher development from episodic workshops to sustained, reflective, and context-sensitive professional learning cultures.

In conclusion, this study highlights that while internet resources hold transformative potential for teacher professional development, their value is unlocked only through structured mediation and institutional support. By positioning educational counsellors as central to this process, the research contributes both a fresh perspective to academic discourse and practical pathways for more effective professional learning in the digital age. Nevertheless, the study is not without limitations. The reliance on documentary analysis, while effective for capturing broad trends and synthesizing diverse perspectives, does not provide empirical data from teachers or counsellors themselves. This limits the ability to capture lived experiences, particularly the nuanced challenges and creative adaptations that occur in real-world school contexts. Future research could address these gaps by adopting mixed-method approaches that include interviews, surveys, or action-research projects with teachers and counsellors across varied educational settings.

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Bio note:

Moses Adeleke Adeoye, PhD, Alumni, Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. ORCID: 0000-0003-0755-3532. E-mail: princeadelekm@gmail.com

Сведения об авторе:

Мозес Аделеке Адеойе, доктор философии, выпускник кафедры образовательного менеджмента и консультирования, Университет Аль-Хикма, Нигерия, штат Квара, Илорин. ORCID: 0000-0003-0755-3532. E-mail: princeadelekm@gmail.com