

Theme

Education and society:
Quality and education

Subject

Digital Governance,
Professional Growth & Teachers'
Professional Identity

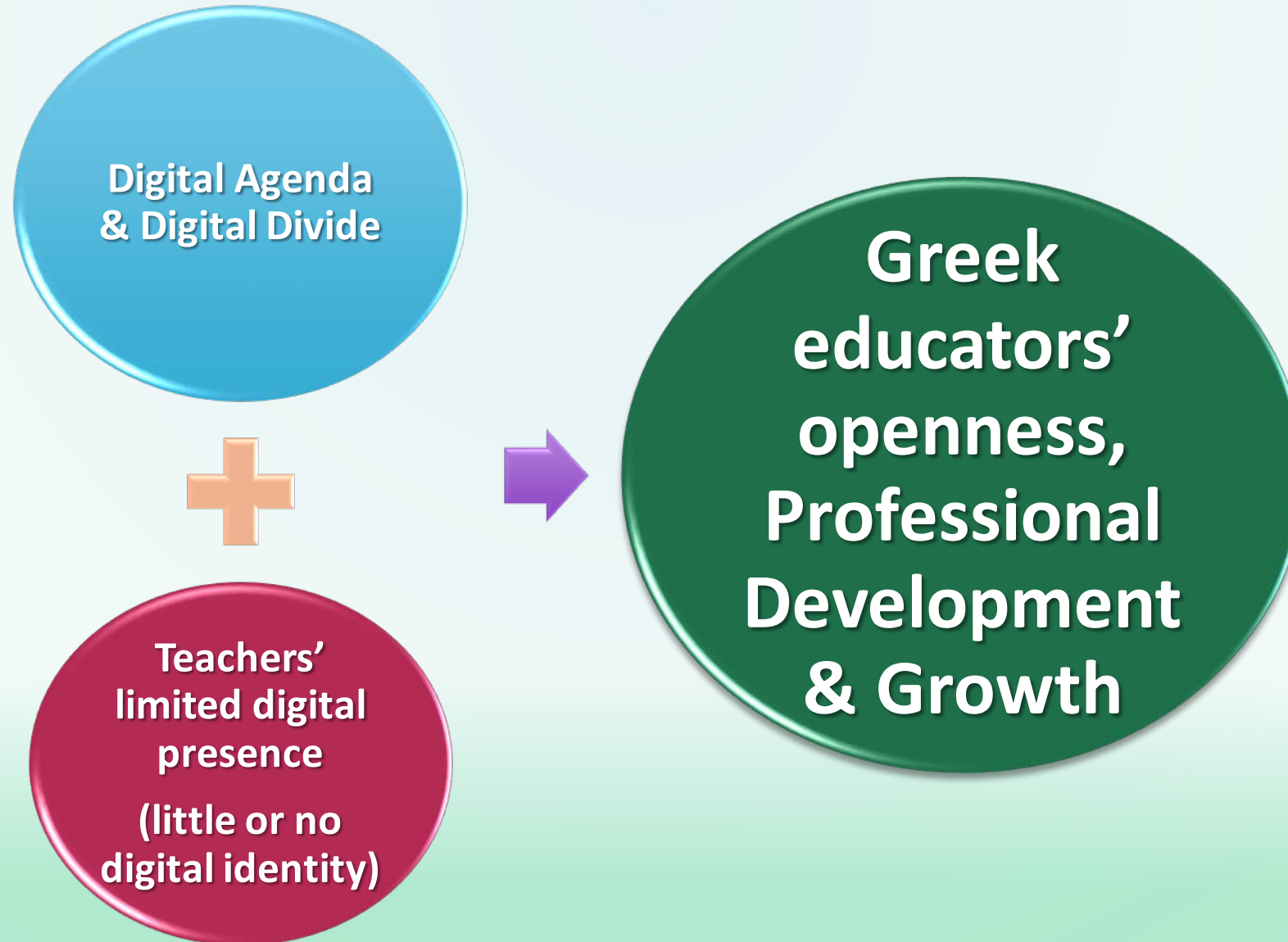
The Greek Case Study

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The historic trajectory of the digital transition in Greece



From 1980 Greece faces a digital divide due to dominant internal policy factors that shaped the Greek education policy

This policy, among others, affected:

- the digital pace of the country, which has been slow and uneven.
- the Greek education system, which remained highly centralized.

As a result Greece still lags behind in digital maturity, it ranks 25th out of the 27 EU countries and it is characterized Europe's "digital tail" (Dimopoulos, 2024; European Commission, 2022).

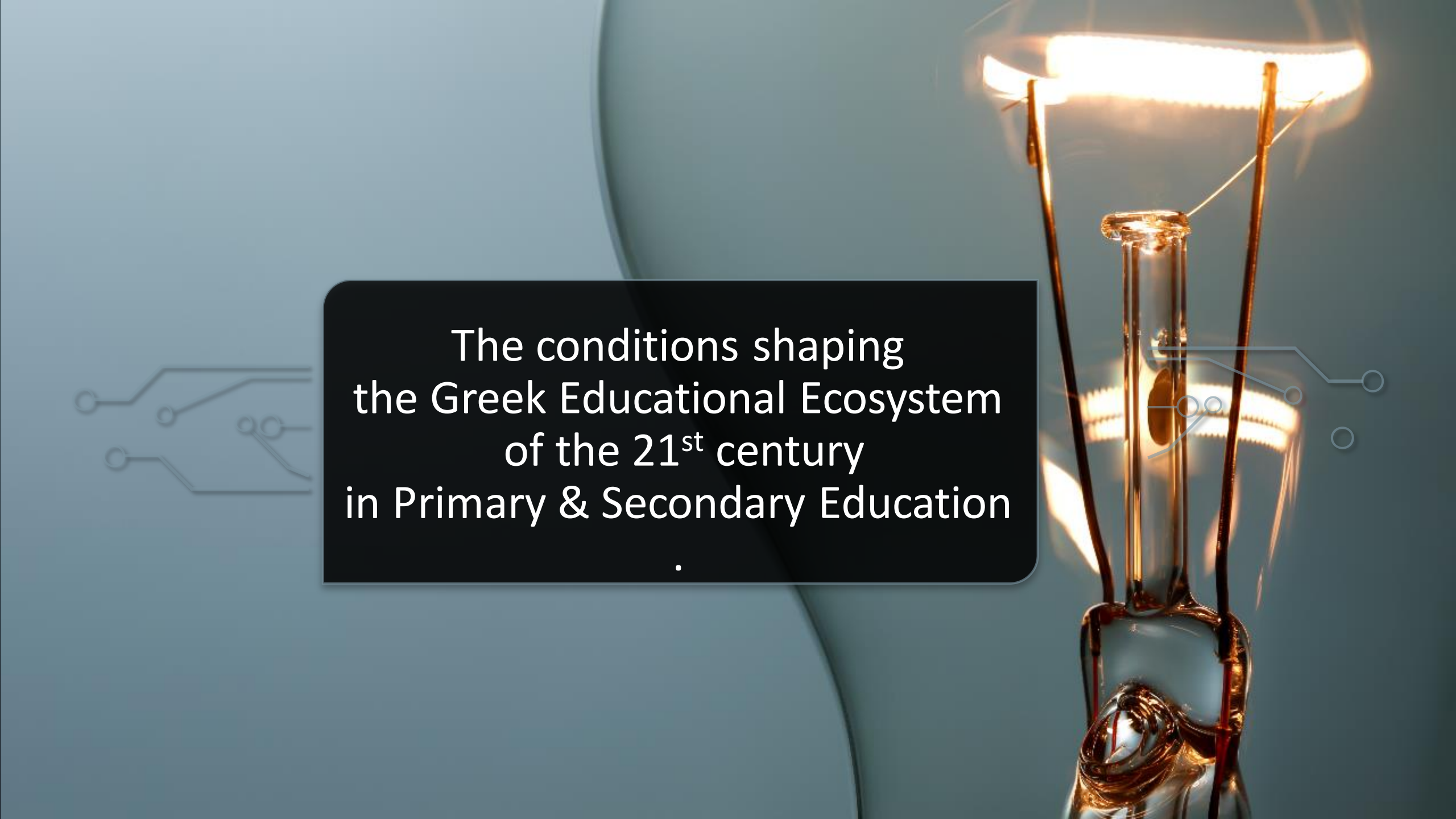


It is only in recent years that the Greek state has adopted a clear **Digital Agenda** that outlines more realistic and clearly defined educational priorities.

In recent **peer learning initiatives** take place. They are designed to promote **creativity** and **innovation** by facilitating the diffusion of an **open, collaborative digital culture** that further bolsters the **professional development** and **growth** of contemporary Greek teachers and school leaders (Dimopoulos, 2024).

But still, Greece still lags behind in the effective integration and use of ICT in both classroom settings and alternative learning environments.



A glowing lightbulb with a circuit board overlay. The lightbulb is on the right side of the image, with its filament glowing brightly. A circuit board overlay is visible on the right side of the image, with lines and circles representing electronic components. The background is a solid blue color.

The conditions shaping the Greek Educational Ecosystem of the 21st century in Primary & Secondary Education

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Greek teachers of the **previous century** were accustomed to:

- working isolated,
- with minimal interference and personal, introspective and collaborative reflection (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2015).

Greek teachers of the **21st century**:

- need to learn to share and work collaboratively and creatively,
- are considered important *agents of change* that require *continuous updating* of knowledge and skills through *reskilling* and *upskilling* in order to enrich their professional repertoire,
- and adapt their methods and practices to the ever-changing educational conditions, constructively incorporating *innovative technologies* and *new pedagogical approaches*.



The background of the slide features a glowing incandescent light bulb on the right side, with its internal filaments visible and emitting a warm, yellow light. The background is a solid light blue color. On the left side, there are faint, stylized line art illustrations of circuit boards and electrical connections. A dark, rounded rectangular box is centered on the slide, containing the title text in white.

The Digital Metamorphosis

THE METAMORPHOSIS IN GREEK DIGITAL CULTURE

01

Emphasis on fostering a culture of digital connectivism within the country's digital agenda.

02

Emphasis on the sharing economy, peer collaboration, co-creativity, and innovation.

03

Emphasis on induction policies for newcomer teachers.

04

Cultivation of a holistic and coherent digital culture.

05

Establishment of educational institutions and structured initiatives (e.g. mentors, counselors).

06

Emphasis on official lifelong professional development, teacher training programs and skills and digital competence development.

07

Emphasis on the development of virtual professional learning communities and networks.

The Role of **Mentoring** in School-Based Teacher Induction Programs

- Greek policymakers have recently acknowledged the ellipsis of **early support mechanisms** for educators.
- Greek educational policy prioritized the formal implementation of **school-based induction policies** designed to assist newly appointed primary and secondary teachers in forming their *professional identity*, promoting their personal and professional development, and improving their teaching practices by embracing *openness, sharing* and *peer collaboration*.
- **Pedagogical Guidance Counselor-Mentor** in primary and secondary schools is a newly created institution that refers to a peer veteran teacher who is capable of *inspiring, guiding and supporting any newly appointed or recently assigned permanent or substitute teacher or hourly-paid teacher with up to five (5) years of experience, with the aim of improving the quality of their teaching and, in general, of the educational work they perform* (Greek Government, 2022).



Engagement in *Virtual Professional Learning Communities & Networks*

They provide access to:

- **shared online digital resources and open educational practices** via *interactive digital learning environments*, thereby fostering the formation of the *digital professional identities* of Greek primary and secondary school educators,
- **opportunities for professional learning and training** in new technological and scientific developments, such as the implementation and application of innovative digital tools and models in contemporary teaching practice,
- **formal, accredited virtual ICT training programs** designed for educators offered by the *Computer Technology Institute and Press “Diophantus”* or by the *National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government* (known as *EKDDA* in Greek language) or ,
- **fee-free or commercialized programs** offered by Greek public or foreign universities, Lifelong Learning Centers of Universities and Other Higher Education Institutions, Private University-affiliated Institutes and Professional Development Centers.



Significant issues

- Many teacher training programs remain *overly academic, overloaded with theoretical content*.
- The *reliability and quality of the distance assessment procedures*.
- The existing technological and internet infrastructure in schools may be substandard or insufficient to support the effective implementation of the new skills.
- Many digital tools are *integrated or confined to traditional pedagogies* due to both inadequate implementation of technology-enhanced approaches and insufficient school infrastructure.



Fostering *Innovation & Collective Creativity*

To date, there has been little empirical evidence to suggest that educational communities within Greek school units are actually *professional learning communities*.

Holistic research is required to examine if contemporary Greek school units function as *genuine learning organizations* and exhibit a *progressive or conservative stance* towards:

- the *digital sharing economy*,
- *innovation*,
- *co-creativity*
- *change and transformation*,
- exhibiting *adaptability*,
- encouraging *early and continuous professional development and growth*.



Greek primary educators:

- believe in the necessity of an **innovative school climate**, strive to improve teaching, and are empowered to do their best, they continue to express considerable **doubts and reservations** about the existence of a genuinely collective innovative atmosphere within their school communities (Tzika & Xafakos, 2022).
- **maintain an apparent positive attitude** towards embracing change, innovation, the use of new technologies, experimentation, reflection, and self-activity, despite feeling that *they are not given enough opportunities* to contribute to this atmosphere (Tzika & Xafakos, 2022).

Greek school leaders:

- seem more convinced of the existence of an innovative climate, Greek teachers do not share the same conviction (Tzika & Xafakos, 2022).

These findings indicate a clear divergence of opinion between Greek school principals and teachers, despite their operating within the same school settings.



RECOMENDATIONS

Transformative
Governance,
Strategic, goal-oriented
modifications to the
Greek educational policy
framework with focus
on **digital culture**.

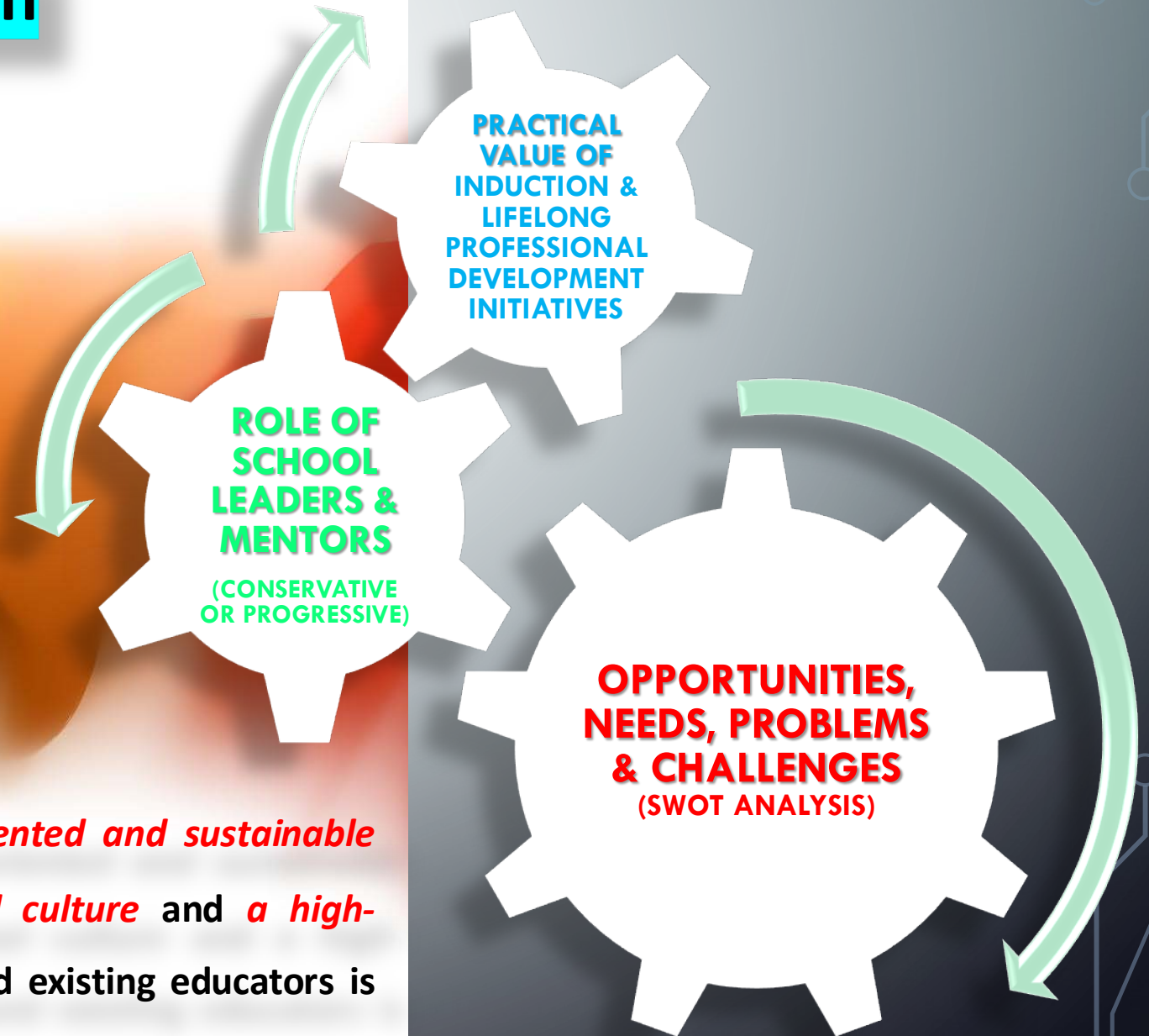


Well-organized and
coherent formal
professional training
programs for
teacher's induction
and lifelong
professional
development.



- (a) A **holistic digital culture**.
- (b) the establishment of **coherent professional digital identity** for teachers, mentors and school leaders.
- (c) **Innovation & co-creativity**.

The need for ongoing research



Conclusion Fostering a *formal, transformative-oriented and sustainable educational ecosystem*, an *effective digital school culture* and a *high-quality training experience* for newly appointed and existing educators is the cornerstone of a **successful development process**.

References

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A background image showing a group of students sitting at a long wooden table in a classroom or study hall. They are focused on their work, with some writing in notebooks. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The students are wearing casual clothing like t-shirts and sweaters.

Thank you for your kind attention!

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