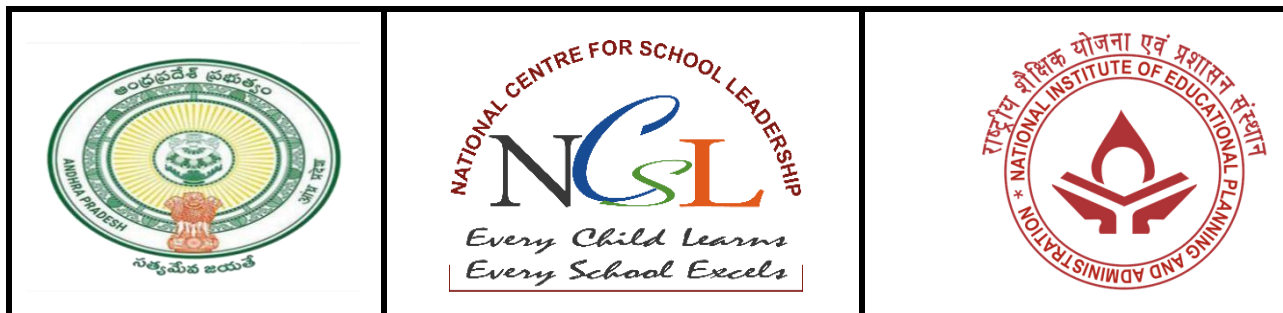




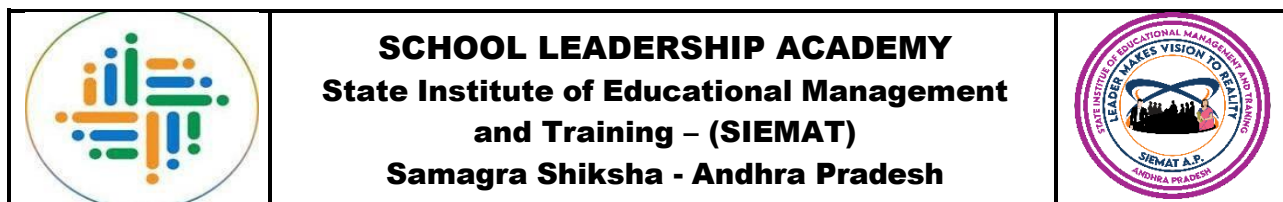
Title of the Module:

**“ROLE OF THE LEADER IN ENSURING ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL CONTENT
FOR CWSN AND MARGINALIZED LEARNERS AND PROMOTING
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITAL MEANS”**

Module submitted

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education systems across the world are increasingly integrating digital technologies to enhance access, participation, and learning outcomes. In India, the shift toward digital learning has accelerated in recent years due to policy initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Digital India mission, and large-scale online learning platforms. These initiatives emphasize the need to create inclusive and accessible digital learning environments so that all learners, including Children with Special Needs (CwSN) and those belonging to marginalized communities, can participate meaningfully in the education system. Inclusive digital education aims to remove barriers that hinder equal access to knowledge and ensure that learning resources are usable by learners with diverse abilities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Accessible digital content refers to digital learning materials designed in ways that enable learners with disabilities to perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with information effectively. Such content includes features like captions for videos, screen-reader compatible text, sign language interpretation, audio descriptions, adjustable fonts, and multilingual support. These features are particularly important for CwSN who may have visual, hearing, cognitive, or mobility impairments. According to guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education, accessible digital resources should allow learners with disabilities to obtain the same information and engage in learning activities “with substantially equivalent ease of use” as learners without disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2021, p. 3). (ciet.nic.in)

The policy framework for inclusive education in India is strongly supported by legislative and policy measures such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 **and the** National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 recognizes education as a key instrument for achieving social justice and stresses the importance of ensuring equitable access for socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), including children with disabilities, rural learners, and first-generation learners (NEP, 2020, p. 4). ([DSEL Education](http://DSEL_Education)) The policy further recommends the extensive use of digital technology, assistive devices, and accessible teaching–learning materials to support inclusive education and enhance learning opportunities for all students (NEP, 2020, p. 59). (CIET)

Digital platforms such as **DIKSHA, ePathshala, SWAYAM, and PM e-Vidya** have played a significant role in expanding access to digital learning content in India. For instance, the “Barkha: A Reading Series for All” developed under PM e-Vidya demonstrates how inclusive design principles can be integrated into digital resources through audio-visual introductions, sign language support, and interactive storytelling features (NCERT, 2020, p. 6). (pmevidya.education.gov.in) Such initiatives highlight the potential of digital technology to support inclusive classrooms and flexible learning opportunities.

In addition to accessible content, parental engagement through digital means has emerged as an important factor in supporting learners, particularly those from marginalized communities and children with disabilities. Parents play a crucial role in reinforcing learning at home, monitoring student progress, and collaborating with teachers. Digital communication tools such as messaging applications, online parent–teacher meetings, school portals, and learning management systems enable regular communication between schools and families. For children with special needs, digital platforms can provide parents with guidance on individualized learning strategies, therapy support, and assistive technologies.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. Limited digital infrastructure, inadequate teacher training, and low digital literacy among parents can hinder the effective use of accessible digital content. Data from school education statistics indicates that while digital integration is expanding, access to functional digital devices and internet connectivity in schools is still uneven, especially in rural areas (UDISE+, 2023, p. 718). ([Asian Journal of Education](#))

Therefore, it is essential for educational leaders and institutions to promote accessible digital practices, strengthen teacher capacity, and encourage meaningful parental engagement through digital platforms. By adopting inclusive digital strategies, schools can ensure equitable access to learning opportunities and support the holistic development of CwSN and marginalized learners in the digital age.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- 1) Understand the concept and importance of accessible digital content for CwSN and marginalized learners.
- 2) Identify common barriers faced by learners in accessing digital learning materials.
- 3) Apply principles of inclusive design in developing accessible digital content.
- 4) Use digital tools to enhance parental engagement and communication.
- 5) Develop strategies for improving digital inclusion in schools and communities.

3. KEYWORDS

- a) Digital Accessibility
- b) Inclusive Education
- c) Children with Special Needs (CwSN)
- d) Marginalized Learners
- e) Assistive Technology
- f) Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- g) Digital Inclusion
- h) Parental Engagement
- i) Educational Technology

a) Digital Accessibility

Digital accessibility refers to the design and development of digital resources, platforms, and technologies in ways that enable all learners, including persons with disabilities, to access,

perceive, understand, and interact with digital information effectively. In the educational context, digital accessibility ensures that learning materials such as e-books, videos, online assessments, and learning management systems can be used by learners with visual, hearing, cognitive, or physical disabilities. Accessible digital content may include features like screen-reader compatible text, subtitles in videos, adjustable fonts, audio descriptions, and keyboard navigation. In India, digital accessibility has gained importance with the implementation of the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016**, which emphasizes equal access to information and communication technologies. According to **MHRD (2020)**, accessible digital

content plays a critical role in ensuring equitable learning opportunities for children with disabilities, particularly in digital and blended learning environments (MHRD, 2020, p. 312).

b) Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is an educational approach that seeks to ensure that all learners, regardless of disability, gender, socio-economic status, or cultural background, learn together in the same educational environment. It emphasizes removing barriers that hinder participation and ensuring equitable access to quality education for all students. In the Indian context, inclusive education has been promoted through policies such as the **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan**, **Samagra Shiksha**, and the **National Education Policy 2020**, which stresses the inclusion of children from socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Inclusive education not only focuses on physical access to schools but also ensures that curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment practices accommodate diverse learning needs. **Govinda and Bandyopadhyay (2010)** highlight that inclusive education requires systemic reforms in school leadership, teacher training, and community participation to ensure meaningful participation of all learners (Govinda & Bandyopadhyay, 2010, p. 47).

c). Children with Special Needs (Cwsn)

Children with Special Needs (CwSN) are learners who require additional support and accommodations in education due to physical, sensory, intellectual, or learning disabilities. These children may experience challenges in accessing conventional teaching-learning processes and therefore benefit from specialized instructional strategies, assistive technologies, and individualized support systems. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) recognizes multiple categories of disabilities and emphasizes the right of children with disabilities to inclusive and equitable education. Educational programs under Samagra Shiksha provide support services such as resource teachers, assistive devices, and inclusive classroom practices to ensure meaningful participation of CwSN in mainstream schools. According to Jangira and Ahuja (2010), inclusive education for CwSN requires flexible curriculum design, supportive learning environments, and collaborative involvement of teachers, parents, and community members (Jangira & Ahuja, 2010, p. 82).

d) Marginalized Learners

Marginalized learners are students who face social, economic, cultural, or geographical disadvantages that limit their access to quality education. In India, marginalized groups may include children from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), minority communities, economically weaker sections, migrant families, and remote rural areas. These learners often experience barriers such as poverty, language differences, limited digital access, and lack of educational resources. Educational policies in India aim to address these inequities through targeted interventions, scholarships, and inclusive learning strategies. **Tilak (2018)** notes that educational inequality remains a major challenge in India, particularly for marginalized groups who face systemic barriers in accessing digital and technological resources (Tilak, 2018, p. 96). Addressing these challenges requires inclusive policies, community engagement, and equitable access to digital learning opportunities.

e) Assistive Technology

Assistive technology refers to devices, software, and tools that support individuals with disabilities in performing tasks that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. In educational settings, assistive technologies enable learners with disabilities to access digital content, participate in classroom activities, and complete academic tasks independently. Examples include screen readers for visually impaired learners, speech-to-text software for students with writing difficulties, hearing aids for students with hearing impairments, and adaptive keyboards for learners with mobility challenges. In India, assistive technology is increasingly integrated into inclusive education initiatives under **Samagra Shiksha** and digital learning platforms such as **DIKSHA**. According to **Sharma (2015)**, assistive technologies play a critical role in bridging learning gaps and promoting independence among learners with disabilities (Sharma, 2015, p. 121).

f) Universal Design for Learning (Udl)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework that aims to design curriculum and learning environments that are accessible and beneficial for all learners from the outset. Instead of adapting materials after barriers appear,

UDL promotes flexible teaching strategies that accommodate diverse learning styles, abilities, and preferences. The framework emphasizes three key principles: providing multiple means of representation (how information is presented), multiple means of engagement (how learners interact with content), and multiple means of expression (how learners demonstrate understanding). In the Indian context, UDL aligns with the inclusive education goals outlined in the **National Education Policy 2020**, which encourages flexible curriculum design and learner-centred pedagogy. *Mishra and Koehler (2012)* highlight that integrating UDL principles with digital technologies can enhance accessibility and participation for diverse learners (Mishra & Koehler, 2012, p. 214).

Digital Inclusion

Digital inclusion refers to the efforts made to ensure that all individuals and communities have access to digital technologies, internet connectivity, and the skills required to use them effectively. Digital inclusion is particularly important for marginalized learners and children with disabilities who may face barriers in accessing digital resources. In India, initiatives such as **Digital India**, **PM e-Vidya**, and **DIKSHA** aim to promote equitable access to digital learning resources across the country. Digital inclusion also involves improving digital literacy, providing affordable devices, and ensuring accessible digital content. According to **Rani (2021)**, bridging the digital divide is essential for ensuring equitable educational opportunities in the era of technology-enabled learning (Rani, 2021, p. 64).

g) Parental Engagement

Parental engagement refers to the active involvement of parents and caregivers in supporting their children's learning and educational development. Research has consistently shown that when parents participate in school activities and maintain communication with teachers, students demonstrate improved academic performance and motivation. In the digital age, parental engagement has expanded through digital platforms such as school portals, messaging applications, online meetings, and learning management systems. These tools enable parents to track academic progress, receive feedback from teachers, and support learning activities at home. *Desforjes and Abouchaar (as cited in Singh,*

2014) highlight that parental engagement significantly influences student learning outcomes and school success (Singh, 2014, p. 58).

h) Educational Technology

Educational technology refers to the use of digital tools, platforms, and technological resources to support teaching, learning, and educational management. It includes technologies such as online learning platforms, digital classrooms, multimedia resources, and mobile learning applications. In India, educational technology has gained significant importance with initiatives like **SWAYAM, DIKSHA, e-Pathshala, and PM e-Vidya**, which provide digital learning resources to students and teachers across the country. Educational technology not only enhances access to learning materials but also supports personalized learning, collaborative learning, and innovative teaching practices. According to **Selwyn (2016)**, effective integration of educational technology requires careful planning, teacher training, and alignment with pedagogical goals (Selwyn, 2016, p. 73).

CORE CONTENT

I) INCLUDES PRACTICAL EXERCISES

- a) **Accessible Digital Content for Inclusive Learning**
Accessible digital content ensures that educational materials can be accessed and understood by all learners. Key principles include:
 - a) **Perceivable:** Content should be available in multiple formats (text, audio, visuals).
 - b) **Operable:** Learners should be able to navigate content easily.
 - c) **Understandable:** Language and instructions should be clear.
 - d) **Robust:** Content should work with assistive technologies.

Examples of accessible practices include:

- a) Captioning videos for hearing-impaired learners.
- b) Providing alt-text descriptions for images.
- c) Using readable fonts and color contrast.
- d) Offering downloadable low-bandwidth materials.

II) DIGITAL TOOLS FOR PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Digital technologies help schools maintain continuous communication with parents.

Examples include:

- a) School communication apps
- b) Online parent–teacher meetings
- c) SMS updates about student progress
- d) Digital learning dashboards
- e) WhatsApp or community learning groups

These platforms help parents monitor attendance, assignments, and academic progress.

Practical Exercises

Exercise 1: Accessibility Audit

Participants review a digital lesson (PDF or PowerPoint) and identify accessibility barriers such as unreadable fonts, missing captions, or complex language.

Exercise 2: Redesign Activity

Participants modify the lesson to make it accessible by adding captions, alternative text, and simplified instructions.

a) CASE STUDY

Module Title:

Role of the Leader in Ensuring Accessible Digital Content for CwSN and Marginalized Learners and Promoting Parental Engagement through Digital Means

1. Module Overview

This session focuses on strengthening the capacity of school leaders to:

- a) Ensure equitable access to digital learning
- b) Promote inclusive practices for CwSN and marginalized learners
- c) Enhance parental engagement through digital platforms

The session uses a **case study approach** to encourage critical thinking, reflection, and application.

2. Duration

- Total Time: **90 minutes**

Component	Time
Introduction & Context Setting	10 min

Component	Time
Case Study Reading	15 min
Group Discussion	30 min
Presentation & Debrief	25 min
Reflection & Closure	10 min

3. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify leadership roles in promoting **accessible digital content**
- Analyze challenges in **digital inclusion**
- Develop strategies for **parental engagement**
- Reflect on their own leadership practices

4. Materials Required

- Printed/digital copies of the case study
- Chart paper / whiteboard
- Markers
- Projector (optional)

5. Facilitation Process

Step 1: Introduction (10 minutes)

Facilitator Actions:

- Welcome participants
- Ask a triggering question:
 - *“Are all children in your school able to access digital learning equally?”*
- Briefly introduce:
 - CwSN (Children with Special Needs)
 - Digital divide and inclusion

Key Message:

Digital learning can **exclude** if not designed inclusively.

Step 2: Case Study Reading (15 minutes)

Facilitator Actions:

- Distribute the case study: *“Bridging the Digital Divide”*
- Ask participants to read individually

Instruction:

While reading, identify:

- Challenges faced
 - Leadership actions taken
-

Step 3: Group Discussion (30 minutes)**Formation:**

- Divide participants into small groups (4–6 members)

Task:

Each group discusses:

1. What were the key challenges in the school?
2. What leadership strategies were effective?
3. How did the leader ensure inclusion for CwSN?
4. What methods improved parental engagement?
5. What additional strategies would you suggest?

Facilitator Role:

- Move between groups
 - Prompt deeper thinking
 - Ensure all voices are heard
-

Step 4: Presentation & Debrief (25 minutes)**Group Presentation:**

- Each group presents key points (3–4 minutes each)

Facilitator Debrief:

Highlight:

- Importance of **accessible content** (audio, visual, simple language)
- Role of leader as:
 - **Facilitator**
 - **Capacity builder**
 - **Change agent**
- Value of **low-tech solutions** (WhatsApp, voice messages)
- Importance of **community and parental involvement**

Link to Practice:

Ask:

- *“Which of these strategies can you implement immediately?”*
-

Step 5: Reflection & Closure (10 minutes)

Individual Reflection:

Ask participants to write:

- One challenge in their school
- One action they will take as a leader

Sharing (Optional):

- 2–3 participants share their reflections

Closing Message:

Inclusive digital education requires:

- **Intentional leadership**
 - **Empathy**
 - **Innovative use of available resources**
-

6. Key Facilitation Tips

- Encourage **participation from all members**
 - Avoid lecture mode—use **discussion and probing questions**
 - Be sensitive to participants' diverse contexts
 - Use real-life examples wherever possible
 - Reinforce that **small steps can lead to big change**
-

7. Assessment Strategy

- Observation of group participation
 - Quality of responses during discussion
 - Reflection notes (action-oriented)
-

8. Expected Learning Indicators

Participants demonstrate:

- Understanding of inclusive digital practices

- Ability to identify barriers to access
- Practical leadership strategies
- Commitment to implement change

9. Follow-up Activity (Post-Session)

Participants prepare:

- A **school-level action plan** on:
 - Accessible digital content
 - Parental engagement strategies

10. Key Takeaways for Facilitator to Reinforce

- Inclusion in digital learning is a **leadership responsibility**
- Accessibility must address **diversity of learners**
- Parental engagement is critical for student success
- Innovation is possible even with **limited resources**

SIMULATION

Participants assume the role of a school leader tasked with implementing accessible digital learning during a blended learning program. They must:

- a) Identify accessibility needs of learners
- b) Select suitable digital platforms
- c) Develop a parental engagement plan

HYPOTHETICAL EXERCISE

Imagine a rural school where many parents have only basic smartphones and limited internet access. Design a **digital communication strategy** that ensures parents remain informed and involved in their children's education.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- 1) What barriers to digital accessibility exist in your school?
- 2) How can teachers design digital lessons that support diverse learners?
- 3) In what ways can schools involve parents who have limited digital literacy?

VIDEO CLIPPING

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/05-VSTiuqr4?si=KqbVrlec9DnGp8ns>

PHOTOGRAPHS





FIVE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DIGITAL LEARNING

Digital learning comes in many exciting shapes and forms. Here are five different types of digital learning:



MOOCs

Massive open online courses, where students take courses online, usually for free



Mobile learning

Learning adapted to mobile phones



Gamified digital learning

Learning designed with gaming features that increase engagement



Virtual classrooms

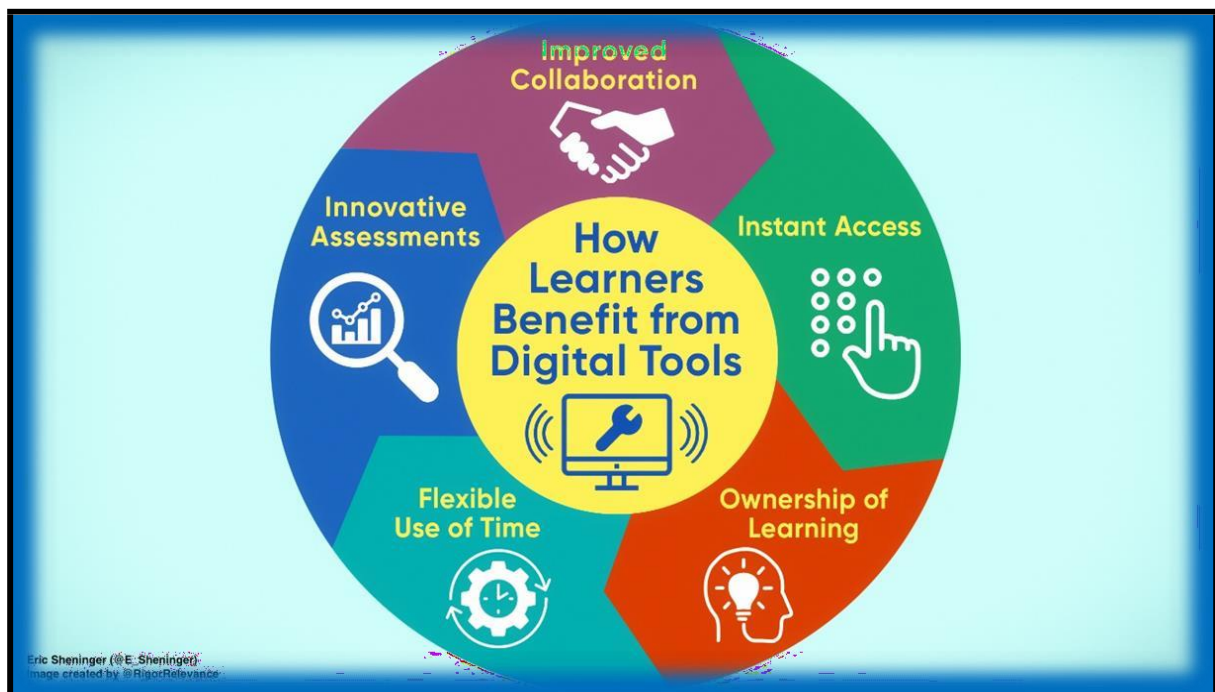
Where learners meet online via Zoom or another video conferencing platform

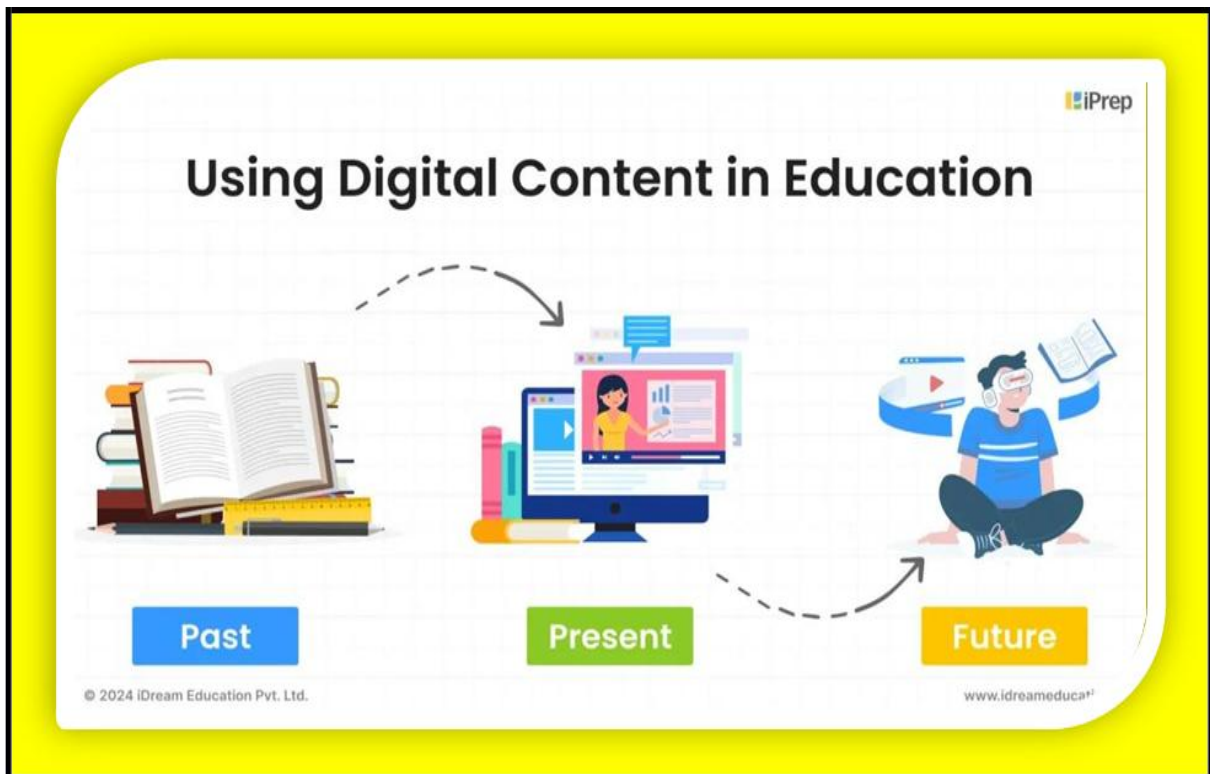


Personalised learning

Where AI is used to personalise content for learners online

Source: CIPD





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) How can schools ensure that digital learning platforms are inclusive for CwSN?
- 2) What strategies can be used to involve parents from marginalized communities?
- 3) What challenges might arise when implementing accessible digital content in schools?

LET'S SUM UP

Accessible digital education plays a crucial role in promoting inclusive and equitable learning opportunities. By designing digital resources that accommodate diverse learning needs, schools can support CwSN and marginalized learners effectively. Accessible content, assistive technologies, and inclusive instructional strategies ensure that digital learning environments remain equitable.

Parental engagement through digital platforms further strengthens the learning ecosystem. When parents are actively informed and involved, students receive stronger academic and emotional support. Educational leaders must therefore focus on capacity building, digital infrastructure, and inclusive practices to ensure that digital education benefits every learner.

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ASSESSMENT FOR THE MODULE (MCQ)

5) **Accessible digital content ensures:**

- a) Only online learning
- b) Equal access to learning materials for all learners
- c) Faster teaching
- d) Less teacher involvement

Answer: (b)

6) **Which feature supports hearing-impaired learners?**

- a) Larger fonts
- b) Captions in videos
- c) Color contrast
- d) Alt text

Answer: (b)

7) **Assistive technology helps:**

- a) Only teachers
- b) Students with disabilities access learning
- c) Reduce internet use
- d) Replace teachers

Answer: (b)

8) **Digital parental engagement helps:**

- a) Reduce communication
- b) Improve school–parent collaboration
- c) Replace schools
- d) Reduce learning time

Answer: (b)

9) **Which strategy improves accessibility?**

- a) Complex language
- b) High-contrast text
- c) Small fonts
- d) Single-format content

Answer: (b)

ASSESSMENT (True-False)

- 1) Accessible digital content helps Children with Special Needs (CwSN) learn more effectively. (True / False) **Answer (True)**
- 2) Marginalized learners do not benefit from digital learning tools. (True / False) **Answer (False)**
- 3) Parental engagement can be improved through digital platforms like apps and online meetings. (True / False) **Answer (True)**
- 4) Accessible content includes features like subtitles, audio support, and simple language. (True / False) **Answer (True)**
- 5) Digital learning reduces the need for inclusivity in education. (True / False) **Answer (True)**

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Thank you ...

