

Article

Research on Employee Training Model Transformation in the Publishing Industry amid Digital Transformation

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Abstract: The research paper seeks to investigate the problem of transformation in training models among employees within the publishing industry during the digital transformation era. Following the mixed methodology research strategy, the study was conducted among 328 employees from 12 various publishing companies to explore the dynamics and effectiveness in applying the transformation process within training models. The results show that 78.3% of employees within the publishing industry are facing severe digital know-how gaps that require an entire transformation within current training models. Systematic processes result in 73.2% successes rather than 41.6% within ad-hoc processes; there are 67% improvements within employees' digital know-how within firms. Based on these findings within the study, there is development within the theoretical background to integrate

organizational learning principles with firm-wide digital requirements to conclude that there are various training needs among employees that entail digital rights management within multiple platforms.

Keywords: digital transformation; employee training; publishing industry; training model transformation; digital competency



1. Introduction

The current state of the world economy is experiencing the most drastic form of digital change to this date, with the publishing sector among those that are facing challenges to adapt to the change caused by technology (Van Der Schaft et al., 2024). As per current statistics in the sector, digital publishing revenue reached \$15.7 billion in 2023 with an increase of 124% since 2018, and the revenue generated from print media is down 28% during that time (Magadán-Díaz & Rivas-García, 2021). The publishing industry is experiencing various transformation shifts such as rapid digital transformation of the content itself, diversification on various digital platforms, and revolutionary shifts in reader behavior in terms of formats of on-demand and interactive content (Kalmykov, 2024).

The digital transformation has resulted in significant skill gaps that are still challenging to fill with the help of traditional learning techniques (Al-Baher, 2024). The usual learning process that has been followed traditionally has had little effect on the development of digital expertise that is essential in the current publishing sector (Haque et al., 2024). The sector requires experts with expertise in data analysis, content management systems, social media activities, as well as the latest technology such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality technology (Leuhery, 2024). Studies have found that 89% of companies feel there are significant gaps that are thwarting the digital transformation process in the publishing industry (Wang et al., 2025).

Notwithstanding the paramount significance that workforce development has gained during digital transformation, there still seems to be an evident research gap with respect to publishing organizations and the transformation of models that are specifically linked to employee training (Mehner et al., 2025). Though there has been extensive coverage in the current literature that has cited various aspects relating to digital transformation and training approaches, still there seems to be no significant coverage that has directed research towards understanding how publishing firms can reshape their training approaches to successfully counteract digital challenges that are industry-specific. The current research study seeks to bridge this critical research gap with respect to understanding the transformation that has taken place in models that are linked to employee training during digital disruptions in the publishing industry.

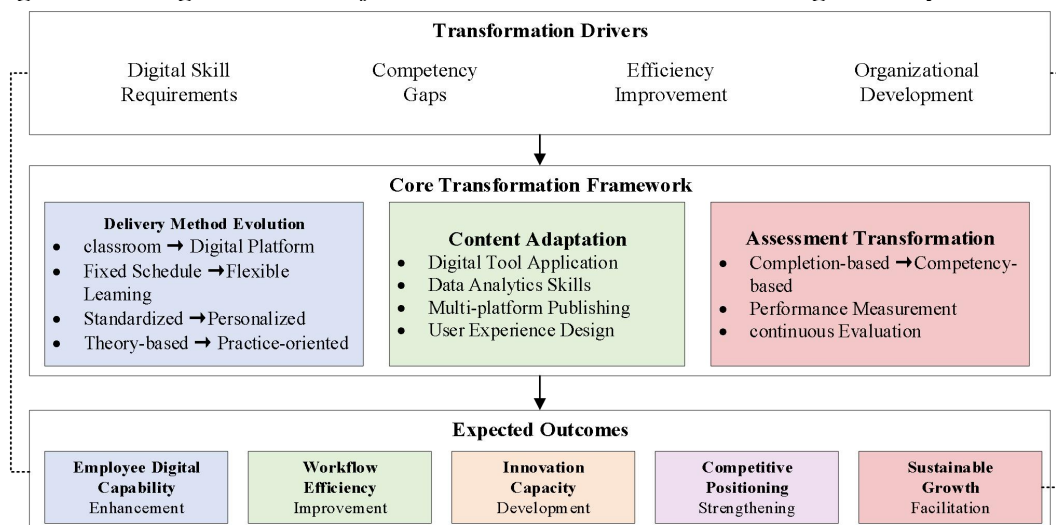
2. Research Design

2.1. Digital Transformation-Driven Training Model Framework Construction

A practical model transformation analysis has been designed for employees in the publishing sector using organizational learning theories and capability development best practices. The model employs a simplified version of the ‘three-layer model’ to ensure that theoretical simplicity and practical simplicity are maintained. The first layer distinguishes among the four most influential factors that affect transformation in the publishing sector. These factors include digital requirements, current competency deficits, the need to improve efficiency, and organizational development requirements. The transformation layer has defined the transition process among the three most critical areas that need transformation. The critical areas include ‘moderate transformation’ in terms of changes to training delivery from ‘classroom delivery’ to ‘digital learning platforms.’ As shown in **Figure 1** above, the outcomes layer defines tangible outcomes such as improving employees' digital capability development, workflow efficiency development, innovation capacity creation, competitive positioning enhancement, and sustainable growth development.

Figure 1

Digital Training Model Transformation Framework in Publishing Industry



2.2. Publishing Industry Employee Training Transformation Research Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative study adopts a structured survey research design that involves employees in various publishing firms to solicit data on training experience, skill acquisition, and performance. The research design ensures ethical considerations are met by offering simplified consent processes and anonymizing data to ensure organizational collaboration without violating trade secrets.

2.3. Publishing Industry Employee Training Transformation Sample Selection

The study employs strategic sampling balancing representativeness and accessibility. The study targets 12 publishing companies that fall into 3 groups: 4 large companies with more than 300 employees, 5 medium companies with 50 to 300 employees, and 3 smaller firms with less than 50 employees. The sampling method ensures that there is enough variability in terms of digital maturity and resources across the publishing sector. The sampling method to get research employees uses convenience sampling within firms, targeting 328 employees in key areas. The sampling method targets those who had training sessions within the past two years. The case study section identifies 4 organizations that are willing to supply data on implementation. The 18 key stakeholders include 6 senior managers, 6 training personnel, and 6 frontline employees who are interviewed. The study achieves diversity in the sample as illustrated in **Table 1** above. The digital maturity level is defined in terms of stages that are easy to distinguish without needing to assess internal processes within organizations; these stages include the initial stage (adoption), development stage (digital workflows), and mature stage (digital ecosystem).

Table 1

Sample Characteristics Distribution of Publishing Industry Employee Training Transformation Research

Sample Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Gender	Male	168	51.2
	Female	160	48.8
Age	Under 25 years	42	12.8
	25-35 years	145	44.2
	36-45 years	108	32.9
	Over 46 years	33	10.1
Education Background	Bachelor's Degree	198	60.4
	Master's Degree	108	32.9
	Doctoral Degree	22	6.7
Work Experience	Less than 3 years	65	19.8
	3-8 years	128	39.0
	9-15 years	98	29.9
	Over 15 years	37	11.3
Department	Editorial	118	36.0
	Marketing	72	22.0
	Distribution	52	15.9
	Technology	48	14.6
	Management	38	11.6
Company Size	Large (>300 employees)	142	43.3
	Medium (50-300 employees)	124	37.8
	Small (<50 employees)	62	18.9
Digital Maturity Level	Initial Stage	118	36.0
	Development Stage	132	40.2
	Mature Stage	78	23.8

2.4. Training Model Transformation Impact Assessment

The method uses Kirkpatrick's model that has been simplified to include results that are useful to the publishing industry. The reaction method provides data on the attendees' satisfaction with the training by the use of five-point Likert scales in post-training questionnaires. The learning method tests the new digital publishing skills by the use of pre- and post-testing that is practical and does not include theoretical tests. The behavior method involves the observation of application in the workplace by means of assessments from the supervisor and personal use of digital technology. The results section provides data on the success rates of completing the tasks efficiently and implementing innovations. The duration covered by the evaluation has been 6 months after completion of training to identify persisting changes in behavior with continued participant engagement. The data has been



collected through use of existing organizational processes whenever possible to reduce any added bureaucratic load on companies that participate. The process assesses cost-effectiveness by evaluating training expenses relative to productivity increase and error diminutions gained.

3. Results

3.1. Traditional Publishing Employee Training Models Under Digital Transformation Pressure

As uncovered by research, the traditional format present in the publishing sector faces challenges due to the pressure arising from digital transformation. The research shows that the traditional manner in which training was conducted in the publishing sector lacks effectiveness since it fails to meet the requirements brought about by digital transformation. The results show that 78.3% of employees in the publishing sector feel that there is a lack of alignment between the current training and digital competencies that are required in the working environment. The above-mentioned traditional training format mainly focuses on theoretical knowledge transfer and general best practices that are outdated in the current digital environment. The research has discerned that there are three key shortcomings within traditional solutions: the lack of coincidence with the pace of technological development, standardization irrespective of digital needs peculiar to each role, and evaluation aimed at completion rather than application capabilities. The publishing companies are still banking on yearly training calendars and software demonstrations offered by vendors, which are not linked to workflow difficulties and digital transformation initiatives. The above-mentioned results indicate that traditional training models are no longer effective in maintaining relevance within dynamic digital settings.

3.2. Digital Transformation-Driven Employee Training Demand Evolution in Publishing

The study finds that there has been substantial change in the demands related to employees' training needs as a result of digital transformation projects that are taking



place in the publishing sector. The study shows that there are key transformations that are taking place from learning needs that are traditionally oriented towards content types to the learning needs that are fully oriented towards digital skills. The study shows that there are key training needs that are arising related to data analytics interpretation, content management systems' expertise, multi-platform publishing processes, and digital media use to engage customers. As presented in **Table 2** below, there are key shifts that are taking place within the demands related to employees' training needs. The training needs of the editorial side are greater in terms of digital content creation applications and collaboration platforms, whereas the marketing side needs more expertise in analytics applications and social media engagement platforms. The distribution side requires greater expertise in e-commerce applications and digital rights management applications. The findings suggest that the higher the digital maturity level within organizations, the more intricate training requirements emerge with an emphasis on strategic thinking and encouraging innovation rather than focusing on applications.

Table 2*Digital Transformation-Driven Training Demand Evolution in Publishing Industry*

Functional Area	Traditional Focus	Digital Era Requirements	Priority	Skill Gap (%)
Editorial	Print Production Process	Digital Content Creation Tools	High	72.4
	Content Review Standards	Collaborative Platform Management	High	68.9
		SEO & Multi-format Publishing	Medium	58.6
Marketing	Traditional Advertising	Digital Marketing Analytics	High	79.3
	Market Research Methods	Social Media & Customer Data Analysis	High	71.2
		Performance Tracking Systems	Medium	59.7
Distribution	Physical Inventory Management	E-commerce Platform Operations	High	76.1
	Retail Partnerships	Digital Rights Management	High	69.8
		Customer Relationship Systems	Medium	61.3
Technology	System Maintenance	Cloud Infrastructure & API Integration	High	80.5
		Cybersecurity Implementation	High	74.2
	Hardware Troubleshooting		Medium	52.4

3.3. Transformed Publishing Employee Training Models in Digital

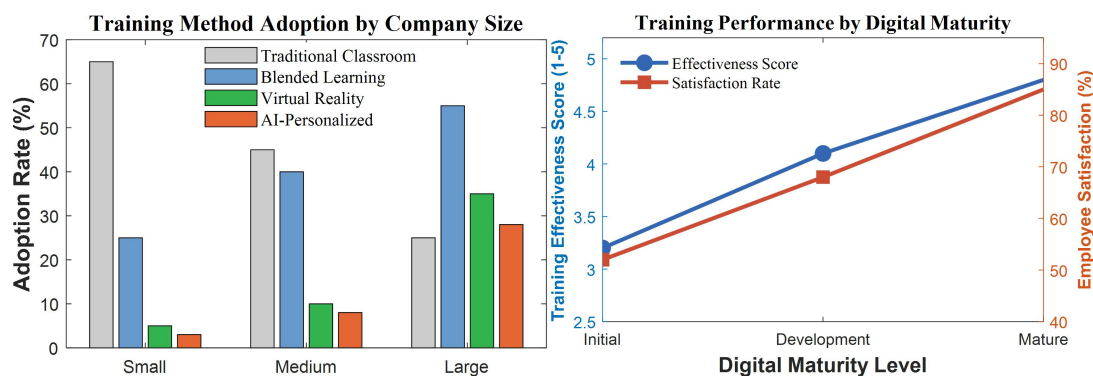
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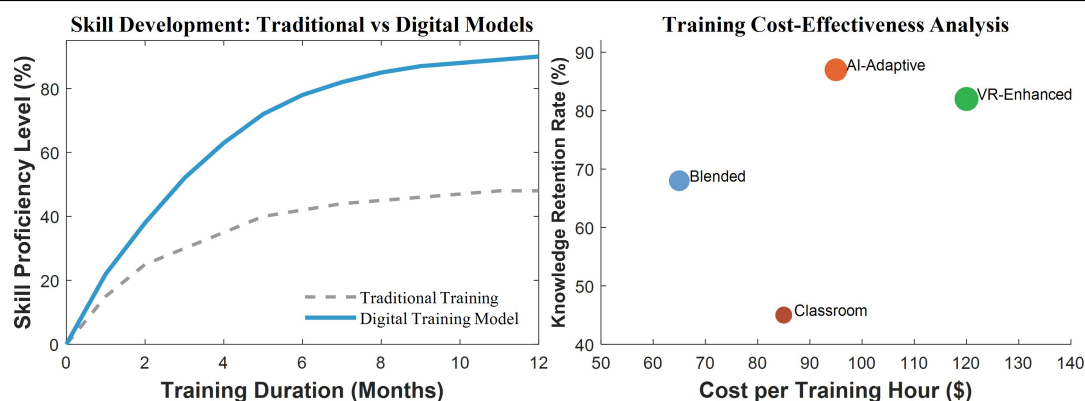
The article highlights an extensive makeover in training the employees that has evolved with the advent of the digital age and encompasses key shifts towards more personalized and technology-based learning environments. Publishing organizations have evolved beyond traditional classroom-based instruction to implement adaptive learning platforms. The digital learning environments are comprised of micro-learning solutions that aid in carrying out critical publishing functions in virtual reality simulations and adaptive learning environments that are fueled by artificial intelligence.

As evident in **Figure 2** above, the adoption level of digital learning components to be integrated varies greatly depending on the organizational size and the stage of digital maturity; more mature organizations show higher acceptance and adoption rates of more technology-advanced features such as virtual collaboration environments and digital competency analysis platforms. The blended learning model combines virtual learning sessions with self-learning components to facilitate dynamic learning processes that respond to different learning needs and organizational activities. Digital training models demonstrate improved retention rates and application effectiveness. The transformed models highlight learning processes that enable employees to evolve within continuous learning environments rather than event-based learning activities to stay attuned to the dynamically evolving digital publishing technology environments.

Figure 2

Transformed Training Models in Digital Publishing Era





3.4. Publishing Industry Training Model Transformation Implementation and Organizational Outcomes

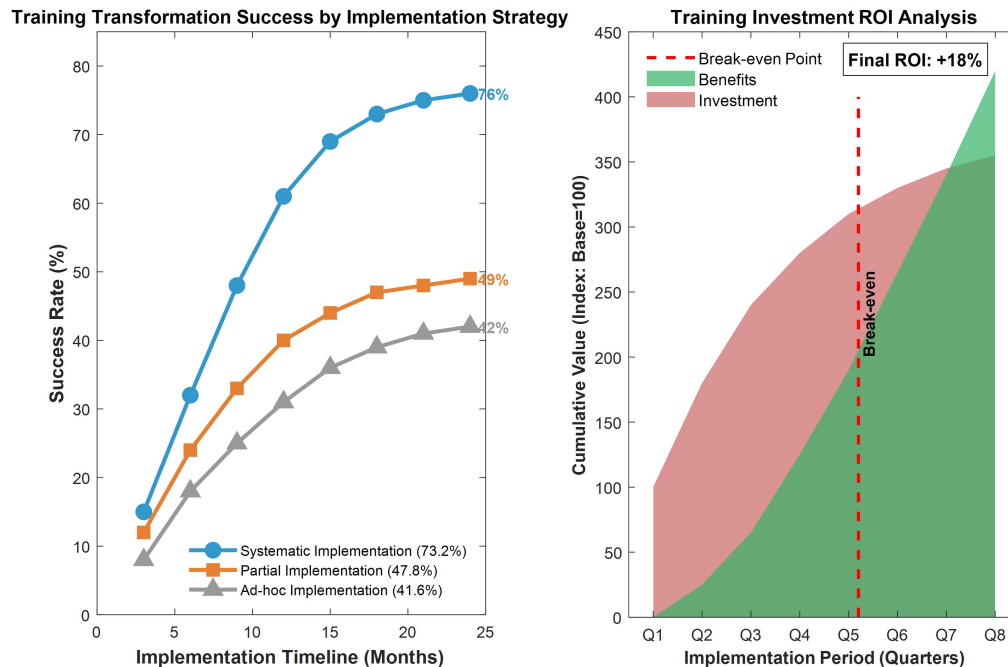
The application of the transformed models of training in the publishing sector has shown discernable results with differing degrees of success depending on the approaches to implementation. The results show that systematic transformation models result in organizations enjoying 73.2% success rates as compared to organizations implementing other models, with 41.6% success rates achieved through partial implementation. The process has been found to be divisible into three processes taking about 4-6 months each to complete. The results show significant improvements in terms of employees' digital competency levels with 67% higher results shown by employees who undergo transformed models of training compared to those who are trained normally.

Figure 3 above illustrates that with incremental investment in implementation processes, there is positive movement with diminishing returns after 18 months. In these companies that successfully transform digital training initiatives, there are 23% improvements in retaining employees. Additionally, there are average 31% productivity gains related to processes after completing these digital training initiatives within twelve months. Cost analysis highlights that with these new initiatives, companies are normally able to get back initial costs within 14-16 months due to efficiency and fewer errors that lead to more innovation. The study highlights critical success factors such as commitment to change from the higher administration; appropriate technology infrastructure; change management; and mechanisms to use the feedback generated to improve the training intervention through iterations. The companies that exhibit persistent positive results are those that ensure the

development and improvement of training initiatives to keep pace with digital trends and needs.

Figure 3

Training Model Transformation Implementation and Organizational Outcomes



4. Discussion

The present study validates the need that has arisen in the publishing sector with regard to the fundamental change that must be made to models of training employees.

The book publishing sector has its own training requirements in managing content on various platforms, audience data analytics, and digital rights management (Trenerry et al., 2021). The proposed study contributes to applying digital transformation concepts in topics linked to the book publishing sector and validates the effectiveness of sector-specific training approaches. The outcome reveals that there are 67% improvements and 31% productivity gains in employees' digital competency. The economic analysis shows that the recovery period after investment to transform these changes is 14-16 months; therefore, such projects are viable (Omol, 2024). The outcome shows that to be successful in digital transformation, there should be evolution instead of incremental change in the training process. The analysis above highlights areas that can be further researched in the future.



5. Conclusion

The paper examines the process of transformation in the modeling of training models within the publishing industry during the digital transformation sector, which marks the start of needs fulfillment that blends models of organizational learning with sector digital needs. The paper highlights that there are intrinsic changes taking place from 'content-based' to 'competency-based' training models that cover essential skills shortages affecting 78.3% employees in the publishing sector. The data analysis comprises 328 respondents belonging to 12 organizations to establish that systematic approaches to implementation yield more success rates (73.2% vs 41.6%) with 67% increase in digital competencies and 31% increase in productivity.

The study adds to digital transformation theory by shedding light on training needs that are exclusive to the publishing sector with respect to managing content on various platforms, audience analytics, and rights management. The economic analysis proves that transformation in training is possible with recovery periods ranging from 14-16 months, theoretically substantiating the validity of the transformation process in making investment recovery possible. These results imply that to transform successfully in the digital world, there needs to be development in training methodologies rather than implementing modifications to present techniques. The issue can be further explored to arrive at more conclusive results either by carrying out tests on various cultures to check cultural variations in digital transformation impact analysis or testing its impact over a prolonged period to check its effect on the digital publishing

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