

ONLINE TEACHING SELF-EFFICACY AND COMPETENCE

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There has been a rise in the number of students choosing online courses over those offered in regular classrooms over the past few years. However, not all teachers are equally suited to manage the problems of digital instruction, and online teaching demands a different set of skills and competencies than face-to-face instruction. What are online teaching self-efficacy and competence? Why is it important? How can it be developed and measured? In this article, we will provide answers to the following questions.

Online teaching self-efficacy refers to a teacher's confidence in approaching online teaching and learning. The success of distance learning depends on students having confidence in their abilities, which can be fostered through online education, formal training, and social support. Teachers who believe in their abilities can better motivate their students, design practical lessons, and adjust to the ever-evolving world of online education.

Having confidence in using technology is essential for online educators, Easton (2003). Teaching online requires proficiency in learning management systems, video conferencing software, and other digital tools beyond basic computer knowledge. Teachers who do not possess these skills may need assistance creating engaging and effective online learning opportunities for their pupils.

However, more than technical proficiency is required to guarantee successful online instruction. Teachers also need a firm grasp of and facility with the pedagogical and instructional design ideas that underpin effective online learning. To do this,

educators must be open to trying new methods in the classroom, asking for and acting on constructive criticism, and reflecting on and improving their practices over time.

Multiple strategies have been shown to increase teachers' confidence in teaching online. Teachers can benefit from ongoing professional development through workshops, webinars, and online courses by learning about recent products and best practices in digital education. Educators can benefit from mentoring and coaching programs because they offer personalized feedback and support that enables them to pinpoint specific areas for development. Teachers who take the time to reflect on and evaluate their work can gain valuable insight into their areas of strength and where they can improve.

Although it can be complex, several instruments and frameworks can be used to assess instructors' confidence and skill when teaching online. One tool used to gauge educators' conviction in their capacity to guide online learning is the Online Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (OTSES). Other frameworks, such as the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model, offer a more all-encompassing method of gauging the efficacy of online instruction by considering not just the instructor's proficiency but also the quality of the online classroom's social, cognitive, and pedagogical presence.

Self-efficacy and competency in online teaching are, thus, crucial to success in education (Martin, 2022). Teachers with the knowledge, self-assurance, and flexibility to effectively engage their students in online learning are more likely to produce high-quality lessons, boost student accomplishment, and aid in the evolution of the digital education system. Teachers may help assure the long-term success of online education by investing in continued professional development, seeking out mentorship and coaching, and continually reflecting on and refining their practice.

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