

Online Instruction and Assessment Instruments in a Philippine School in Oman

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Abstract

This quantitative-descriptive study examined the level of educator compliance with online teaching standards and the utilization of assessment instruments in online instruction at a Philippine basic education school in Muscat, Oman during School Year 2020-2021. Using total enumeration, 25 educators from preschool/primary, intermediate, junior high school, senior high school, and school administration participated. Data were gathered through a validated Google Forms questionnaire adapted from the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching and were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and correlation tests at the 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that most respondents were 31-40 years old (48%), female (76%), master's degree holders (68%), and had two years or less of online teaching experience (100%). Educators reported a high level of compliance with online teaching standards (overall weighted mean = 4.23), with Assessment and Measurement receiving the highest mean (4.37) and Diverse Instruction the lowest (4.01). Assessment-instrument utilization was also high and interpreted as often used (overall weighted mean = 4.16), with Community Building highest (4.30) and Assessment and Measurement lowest (3.99). Significant relationships were found between selected profile variables and particular online teaching standards, especially age, years of work experience in Oman, and relevant online teaching and assessment training. The findings suggest that educators adapted effectively to emergency online teaching but require sustained professional development in differentiated online instruction, learner engagement, and systematic online assessment practices.

Keywords: online instruction, online assessment, online teaching standards, basic education, e-learning

INTRODUCTION

Technology has reshaped educational delivery by expanding learning beyond the physical classroom and by allowing teachers and learners to interact through digital platforms, learning management systems, and web-based assessment tools. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning had already gained ground in higher education because of its flexibility and accessibility (Arinto, 2016; Chiu et al., 2007). However, its implementation in basic education was less developed, especially in schools that were originally organized around face-to-face instruction.

The pandemic accelerated the need for non-face-to-face learning. Schools were required to redesign instruction, communication, assessment, and feedback systems within a short period. In the Philippine context, institutions adopted distance learning modalities to sustain learning continuity, while educators had to acquire new skills in digital pedagogy, learner engagement, online classroom management, and assessment (Cahapay, 2020; Javier, 2020).

Similar adjustments were experienced internationally as online instruction became a practical response to school closures and health restrictions (Dolighan & Owen, 2021).

Literature on online teaching emphasizes that effective online instruction requires more than technological familiarity. Teachers need pedagogical, content, design, management, social, and communication competencies to support learners in virtual environments (Albrahim, 2020). Standards such as the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching provide a framework for professional responsibilities, digital pedagogy, community building, learner engagement, digital citizenship, diverse instruction, assessment and measurement, and instructional design (iNACOL, 2019; Smith et al., 2016).

Assessment is a central concern in online learning because teachers must gather evidence of learning while ensuring validity, reliability, feedback quality, and academic integrity. Online assessment practices may include formative checks, digital submissions, online quizzes, collaborative tasks, and learning management system data. Previous studies note that teachers often need sustained support to translate traditional assessment practices into meaningful online assessment designs (Corry & Stella, 2018; Zlatović et al., 2015).

Despite the growth of online learning research, there remains a need for school-based evidence on how basic education teachers comply with online teaching standards and utilize assessment instruments, particularly among Philippine schools operating overseas. This study therefore aimed to determine the profile of educators, their level of compliance with online teaching standards, their level of utilization of assessment instruments in online instruction, and the relationship between these levels and selected educator profile variables.

METHODS

Research design

The study used a quantitative-descriptive research design. A survey method was employed to describe the educators' profile, determine the level of compliance with online teaching standards, identify the level of utilization of assessment instruments in online instruction, and test relationships between profile variables and the two major study variables.

Participants and Sampling

The participants were 25 educators from a Philippine basic education school located in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The specific name of the research site is not stated in this manuscript to protect the institutional identity. Total enumeration was used because all available educators in the school during the period of the study were invited to participate. Respondents included preschool/primary teachers, intermediate teachers, junior high school teachers, a senior high school teacher, a head teacher/academic coordinator, and administrators. Participants were included if they were employed in the school during School Year 2020-2021 and were involved in online instruction or its implementation.

Instrument

The data-gathering instrument was a modified survey questionnaire based on the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching, 3rd edition. The instrument had two main parts. Part I collected the respondents' demographic and professional profile. Part II measured online teaching standards and assessment-instrument utilization across eight areas: Professional Responsibilities, Digital Pedagogy, Community Building, Learner Engagement, Digital Citizenship, Diverse Instruction, Assessment and Measurement, and Instructional Design. A five-point Likert scale was used. For compliance, the scale ranged from Very Low to Very High; for utilization, the scale ranged from Never to Always. The questionnaire was validated by education and research experts before administration.

Data collection

Data were collected through Google Forms because COVID-19 protocols limited face-to-face data gathering. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the school administration, and participants were informed about the purpose of the study before responding. Consent was obtained from the participants. The source thesis contained administrative approval and consent documents; however, a separate ethics review committee reference number was not indicated in the available thesis record.

Data analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the profile of respondents. Weighted means were used to determine the levels of compliance and utilization. The interpretation for compliance was: 1.00-1.50 Very Low, 1.51-2.50 Low, 2.51-3.50 Average, 3.51-4.50 High, and 4.51-5.00 Very High. The interpretation for utilization was: 1.00-1.50 Never, 1.51-2.50 Rarely, 2.51-3.50 Sometimes, 3.51-4.50 Often, and 4.51-5.00 Always. Relationships were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using correlation procedures appropriate to the profile variables and study indicators.

RESULTS

The respondents represented different grade levels and administrative functions. Table 1 shows that the largest age group was 31-40 years old, females composed three-fourths of the respondents, and most had master's degrees. All respondents reported two years or less of online teaching experience, reflecting the emergency shift to online modality during the pandemic period.

Table 1. Profile of participants (n = 25)

Variable	Category	f	%
Age	30 years old and below	1	4.00
	31-40 years old	12	48.00
	41-50 years old	8	32.00
	51 years old and above	4	16.00
Sex	Male	6	24.00
	Female	19	76.00
Position	Preschool/Primary Teacher	6	24.00
	Intermediate Teacher	8	32.00
	Junior High School Teacher	7	28.00
	Senior High School Teacher	1	4.00
	Head Teacher/Academic Coordinator	1	4.00
Highest educational attainment	Administration	2	8.00
	Bachelor's Degree	8	32.00
Area/Subject specialization	Master's Degree	17	68.00
	English	3	12.00
	Mathematics	3	12.00
	Science	3	12.00
	Filipino	1	4.00
	Early Childhood Education	6	24.00
	Others	9	36.00

Variable	Category	f	%
Years of work experience in Oman	1-5 years	6	24.00
	6-10 years	8	32.00
	11-15 years	7	28.00
	16-20 years	2	8.00
	20+ years	2	8.00
Online teaching experience	2 years and below	25	100.00
Relevant online teaching and assessment training	1-2 hours	5	20.00
	3-4 hours	8	32.00
	5-6 hours	6	24.00
	7-8 hours	1	4.00
	9-10 hours	1	4.00
	More than 10 hours	4	16.00
Learning Management System used	VSmart	14	56.00
	Google Classroom	9	36.00
	MS Teams	1	4.00
	Schoology	1	4.00

The level of compliance with online teaching standards was high across all eight areas. As presented in Table 2, Assessment and Measurement had the highest weighted mean, while Diverse Instruction received the lowest. The overall weighted mean of 4.23 indicates that the respondents generally perceived themselves as compliant with the expected standards for online teaching.

Table 2. Summary of compliance with educator online teaching standards

Online teaching standard	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Professional Responsibilities	4.32	High
Digital Pedagogy	4.11	High
Community Building	4.31	High
Learner Engagement	4.14	High
Digital Citizenship	4.32	High
Diverse Instruction	4.01	High
Assessment and Measurement	4.37	High
Instructional Design	4.22	High
Overall Weighted Mean	4.23	High

Note. Scale: 1.00-1.50 Very Low; 1.51-2.50 Low; 2.51-3.50 Average; 3.51-4.50 High; 4.51-5.00 Very High.

Table 3 shows that the utilization of assessment instruments in online instruction was interpreted as Often in all standards. Community Building had the highest weighted mean, suggesting that respondents frequently used assessment and interaction tools to support online participation and collaboration. Assessment and Measurement had the lowest weighted mean but remained within the Often range.

Table 3. Summary of utilization of assessment instruments in online instruction

Assessment-instrument utilization area	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Professional Responsibilities	4.26	Often
Digital Pedagogy	4.26	Often
Community Building	4.30	Often
Learner Engagement	4.05	Often
Digital Citizenship	4.11	Often
Diverse Instruction	4.16	Often
Assessment and Measurement	3.99	Often

Assessment-instrument utilization area	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Instructional Design	4.14	Often
Overall Weighted Mean	4.16	Often

Note. Scale: 1.00-1.50 Never; 1.51-2.50 Rarely; 2.51-3.50 Sometimes; 3.51-4.50 Often; 4.51-5.00 Always.

Only selected profile variables were significantly related to specific standards. Table 4 summarizes the significant correlations reported in the thesis. Age and years of work experience were positively related to selected compliance standards, while relevant online teaching and assessment training showed negative correlations with selected standards. For utilization, training hours were significantly related to learner engagement and diverse instruction.

Table 4. Significant relationships between educator profile variables, compliance, and utilization

Study variable	Profile variable	Standard/area	r	p	Direction
Compliance	Age	Diverse Instruction	.445	.026	Positive
Compliance	Years of work experience in Oman	Assessment and Measurement	.404	.045	Positive
Compliance	Relevant online teaching and assessment training	Diverse Instruction	-.551	.004	Negative
Compliance	Relevant online teaching and assessment training	Assessment and Measurement	-.403	.046	Negative
Utilization	Relevant online teaching and assessment training	Learner Engagement	-.490	.013	Negative
Utilization	Relevant online teaching and assessment training	Diverse Instruction	-.461	.020	Negative

Note. Only significant relationships at $p < .05$ are shown.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the educators were able to transition to online instruction with generally high perceived compliance. This may be explained by the respondents' professional qualifications, teaching experience, and exposure to learning management systems. Online teaching requires pedagogical, technological, management, and communication competencies, and the high compliance scores suggest that the educators were able to perform many of these required roles during the pandemic transition (Albrahim, 2020; Cavanaugh & Roe, 2019).

Assessment and Measurement received the highest compliance rating. This suggests that teachers recognized the importance of choosing and administering online assessment tools to support learning outcomes. This is consistent with literature emphasizing that assessment in online environments should be valid, reliable, and aligned with learning objectives (Smith et al., 2016; Zlatović et al., 2015). However, the same area received the lowest utilization score among assessment instruments, implying that teachers may understand the standard but still need more consistent practice in designing and applying varied assessment tools online.

Diverse Instruction was the lowest among compliance areas, although still interpreted as high. This result is important because online learning environments can widen differences among learners in terms of access, learning pace, home support, and ability to participate. Previous literature notes that online educators need differentiated strategies, flexible support, and accommodations to respond to varied learner needs (Corry & Stella, 2018; Smith et al., 2016). Thus, the lower score in Diverse Instruction identifies a practical area for professional development.

The high utilization of Community Building indicates that teachers frequently used tools and practices that supported learner interaction, collaboration, and participation. Community building is particularly important in online education because the absence of physical classroom routines can reduce social presence and learner engagement. This finding aligns with studies that emphasize social interaction, communication, and feedback as important conditions for successful online instruction (Guasch et al., 2010; Omar et al., 2012).

The significant relationships suggest that age and years of work experience may support specific areas of online teaching compliance, particularly diverse instruction and assessment practice. Experienced educators may have a wider range of classroom strategies that can be adapted to online teaching. At the same time, the negative relationships involving training hours should be interpreted cautiously. One possible explanation is that teachers who attended more training were those who needed more support, were more aware of the complexity of online instruction, or became more critical in rating their own practice. This interpretation is consistent with studies showing that professional development must be sustained, contextualized, and linked to teachers' actual online teaching tasks (Arinto, 2016; Dolighan & Owen, 2021; Zweig & Stafford, 2016).

The study has limitations. It was conducted in one school with 25 respondents, and the results were based on self-reported perceptions. The pandemic context may also have affected teachers' responses and their opportunity to apply online teaching standards fully. The findings therefore should not be generalized to all Philippine schools overseas, but they offer useful evidence for school-level planning, teacher training, and online assessment improvement.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that educators in a Philippine basic education school in Oman demonstrated high compliance with online teaching standards and often utilized assessment instruments in online instruction. The respondents were generally experienced and professionally qualified, although most had limited formal online teaching and assessment training and two years or less of online teaching experience.

The strongest area of compliance was Assessment and Measurement, while the lowest was Diverse Instruction. In utilization, Community Building was the strongest area, while Assessment and Measurement was the lowest. These results indicate that teachers were able to sustain online instruction and build learner interaction, but the school should continue strengthening differentiated online instruction and more systematic assessment practice.

Based on the findings, school administrators should provide staged and continuous professional development on online assessment design, learner engagement, differentiated instruction, digital citizenship, and instructional design. Teachers should also be given time to collaborate, model best practices, review assessment data, and align online teaching tools with learning standards. Future studies may involve larger samples, learner performance data, parent and student perspectives, and mixed-method designs to better explain how online teaching standards are implemented in practice.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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