



Attitude Toward Online Education and its Influence on Job Satisfaction Among Academic Staffs in Malaysia

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The global pandemic caused by Covid-19 infectious disease during the last two years has pierced the life of humankind in almost all countries and all members of society. This pandemic issue limits one to cope with a changing work environment and it induces both structural and functional consequences on the education system. Thus, the online education system emerged and repositioned itself as one of the most effective mediums of education system recently. This study examined decision factors such as attitude toward online education and its influence on job satisfaction of academic staff in Malaysia. A quantitative research approach has been taken using a random sampling method to collect data from 369 academic staff working in public and private universities. For the study, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling techniques were performed. The findings helped in filling the satisfaction-behavioural gap in understanding attitude measures of academic staff toward conducting courses in online mode during a pandemic.

Keywords: *Attitude, Online Education, Job Satisfaction, Academic Staff, Malaysia*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the use of online education has continued to expand, particularly in tertiary level. Due to the sudden outbreak of Covid-19 infectious diseases, the state of the economy globally has impacted significantly the expansion of online education in the last two years. This pandemic issue limits one to cope up with changed work environment and it induces both structural and functional consequences on the education system. The aspects of digital technology and practical utilities on devices, methods, and computerized systems, such as computer technology, the internet, digital communication, and social media has been emerged and repositioned itself as the one and only medium of education system recently. Therefore, digital technology is one of the leading standard equipment to support lecturers' jobs. Even the most skilled and talented lecturers might be prone to severe underperformance if their digital technology attitude lacks.

While the acquisition of adequate teaching and technical skills is essential, it is not a guarantee of success. Online education is often as new to students as it is to teachers. Individual behaviors regarding the necessity for and use of digital technology in the workplace influence attitudes about digital technology. An individual's emotional reaction to anything is represented by his or her attitude. Lecturers with a favorable attitude toward digital technology are expected to like and satisfy with their work, which leads to improved performance. One of the important elements in better individual work satisfaction may be one's attitude regarding digital technology as a critical problem in this age. It is generally acknowledged that professionals with a cheerful attitude, especially lecturers, are more productive and helpful to the institute. Job satisfaction is one of the most important elements in lecturer attitude. Lecturers are much more likely to be satisfied at work if they love their job, are confident in their ability to do their duties, and value their position. Lecturers who are content with their jobs are satisfied, which leads to improved performance. Job satisfaction is a pleasant or good emotional state arising from the assessment of one's job and job experiences, and it may be linked to satisfaction depending on one's attitude toward digital technology (Tang et al., 2019). High levels of job satisfaction should also be reported by every employees.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Institutions of higher learning play a crucial role in sustaining knowledge-based economies through their duties of teaching, research, and service. Higher education has withstood several worldwide trends (such as massification, digitization, and marketization) (Wan et al., 2020). For example, in today's competitive labour markets, both professors and institutions are under growing pressure to improve graduate employability and create graduates who are prepared for the workforce (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2018). (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2020). New business management techniques in academic contexts have also had an immediate impact on, for instance, mid-level academics who are increasingly obliged to execute both managerial and academic obligations (Butler, 2020). Additionally, because to the current COVID-19 epidemic, educators and students have been forced to swiftly adjust to virtual learning patterns (Mok &



Montgomery, 2021), sometimes without enough training to make the most of these cutting-edge online teaching and learning platforms. Studying academics' actions [such as work performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB)] and attitudes [such as job satisfaction and motivation] is currently becoming more pertinent since this situation parallels the stressed and uncertain nature of the higher education environment. Particularly, job satisfaction has drawn much interest, but it is still ardently contested (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Due to the physical shutdown of universities and university colleges on 1 April 2020, the transition to online teaching and learning techniques accelerated in Malaysia. To ensure that education was not disrupted, this shutdown encouraged the expansion of online educational activities. How to effectively provide online course materials, engage students, and do assessments has been discussed by many faculty (Mukhtar et al., 2020). Everyone has been driven by the crisis to change how they use new technologies in all areas, including education. Teaching, assessment, supervision, research, service, and participation are among the majority of educational professionals' attitudes to their job that have to be changed overnight (Langford and Damsa, 2020; Sangster et al., 2020). However, during the COVID-19 epidemic, instructors faced a number of difficulties because of infrastructural issues, such as poor internet access, which caused pupils to become distracted and less focused while studying online (Maqableh and Alia, 2021). These issues reveal students' preparation for online learning and have an impact on students' perceptions of online learning and course satisfaction (Wei and Chou, 2020).

Today's educational landscape may be most strongly influenced by technology (Johnson et al., 2016). The way that knowledge is delivered to university students in the existing learning system must be enhanced by educators through the use of technology. By supplying equipment like laptops, boosting internet access, and adopting initiatives to develop computer literacy for both instructors and students, several institutions are demonstrating their support for greater use of technology in the classroom (Johnson et al., 2016). These needs are crucial in order for us to adjust to the advancement of the current period, the digital era, where pupils are more encouraged to think creatively and innovatively. Technology acts as a bridge between professors and students, in Kern's (Kern, 2006) opinion. Media technology is also one of the intermediary means of communicating information. According to Kop's (Kop, 2011) study, one of the main benefits of internet technology for education is the free flow of educational materials. Social media use has improved learning by making it more engaging and effective. A combination of online services based on philosophy and Web 2.0 technologies that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content is referred to as social media, according to a research by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).

As we can see, Facebook was first just used as a social media platform for people to connect and interact with one another, but today it is also being used for educational reasons. Facebook is the most widely used social media platform among students and the general public, claims a



survey by Beer (2008). Professors and students may quickly and readily obtain information through the Facebook website, particularly information on current events, education, and learning. When using e-learning techniques to allow instructors and students to communicate online or disseminate knowledge broadly, the internet is crucial. According to Rader and Wilhelm (2001), this approach enables students to more methodically get the knowledge they want in both teaching and learning. Additionally, video streaming is a technique that is frequently employed in the educational system and is seen as a creative substitute for developing a teaching and learning environment that is both more engaging and successful. Littlejohn (2003) asserts that using video streaming in the teaching and learning process has many positive effects and advantages because it may motivate students to take an active role in their education and promote contact between instructors and students.

The concept of work satisfaction used in this study is taken from Joung et al. (2015) and relates to the emotional well-being that affects how people see their jobs. As a result, this construct is made up of two parts: cognitive and emotive. Both elements have an impact on general attitude and conduct, according to Weiss (2002). In a study conducted within the framework of a university, the researcher noticed a negative correlation between academic staff members' job happiness and their workload (Ahsan et al., 2009). According to a Malaysian study, university teaching staff members' job satisfaction is negatively impacted by their workload (Leung et al., 2000). On the other hand, a significant and favourable association between job satisfaction and performance was discovered, suggesting that job contentment is a reliable indicator of greater performance at work (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). Another study found that job happiness increased work productivity and performance (Aziri, 2011). This demonstrates how crucial employee satisfaction is to the efficiency and effectiveness of a firm (Aksoy et al., 2018). In a study that focused on the Arabic culture, the researcher found that work satisfaction had moderating effects when role conflict and role ambiguity affected several organizational commitment factors (Yousef, 2017). Job stress, job satisfaction, and job commitment showed some partial mediation effects between the quality of work-life and work-life balance in a study of southern Indian employees in a transportation firm (Aruldoss et al., 2020). Academic staff's degree of satisfaction may indicate how emotionally invested they are in their institution in terms of the academic profession (Szromek & Wolniak, 2020). Researchers that studied the topic of employee health found that workload, a source of work stress, and job satisfaction, a mediating factor, both had an effect on psychological health (Jou et al., 2013). When job satisfaction acted as a mediator between the workload-job performance link, similar results were discovered (Jalal & Zaheer, 2017).

Job is an important aspect of human existence. Humans devote more time to their jobs than they do to any other task. People reflect themselves in some ways via their activities; it is difficult to live without performing some useful job, and any effort of such importance must elicit strong positive or negative responses. The degree to which these answers reflect an employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is a critical component of any



company's success. Furthermore, job happiness is a fundamental study topic. Any financial endeavor that lacks this component will fail to meet its objectives. As a result, it is critical for the Organization to have pleased workers. Employees who are happy at work are more likely to progress in their careers. It also enhances the interrelationships amongst workers. Employees are also encouraged to do their jobs, obligations, and responsibilities with minimal supervision. Employees that are happy are more productive, which is to be anticipated. Companies, on the other hand, would lose a lot of money since dissatisfied employees are less committed to their business.

Job satisfaction is the positive feelings about a job that arise from an assessment of its usefulness (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Muhammad et al. (2010) investigates worker satisfaction in Dhaka City, Bangladesh, in terms of management, salary, and development opportunities. The study looks at the relationship between job happiness and variables including salary, supervision, and promotion incentives. The findings showed that job happiness is positively related to earning potential, monitoring, and progress. In addition, competent human capital with greater work satisfaction levels in companies influence not just the company's success but also the whole economy's growth and performance. Job dissatisfaction impacts service quality, increases employee voice, and causes unrest, all of which influence consumer happiness (Rahman et al., 2017). Job satisfaction, according to Locke (1976), is a pleasant or positive emotional state that comes from assessing one's work experiences. Job satisfaction, according to Herzberg, may be regarded as a motivation for individuals who work in a business.

According to Keith Davis and John W. Newstrom, job satisfaction is a set of positive or negative thoughts and emotions that employees have about their employment (2002). An effective mood is one of relative like or contempt for someone. Workplace happiness is a predictor of job efficiency, unproductive work behavior, and attrition intentions, according to experimental studies (Qazi, & Jeet, 2016; Hwang & Ramadoss, 2017). Satisfied employees are a valuable company asset who work together to accomplish common goals (Soodan et al., 2017). In addition, job satisfaction is defined as "the extent to which people's desire to work" and is influenced by a number of factors. Pay, job performance, fringe supervision, and coworker relationships are the most important variables influencing employee workplace satisfaction (Mosammod & Nurul, 2011). In education sector, online education can portray positive attitude about the teaching to deliver, students' management, and institutions' policies. Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify the attitude towards online education and its influence on job satisfaction among academic staffs considering the importance of education sector over all other sectors.

3. METHODS

To meet the objective of this study, a questionnaire instrument has been adapted based on previous similar study instrument from Krishnan et al. (2012). The instrument comprise two main sections: the first section includes demographic characteristics of employees working in

different academic positions in universities about their gender, age, delivering lecturing in media type, work experience, employment status and tenure in the current job. The second section of the instrument intended based on employees' attitude towards online education system and its impact on job satisfaction. Using random sampling procedure, the participants were selected as it was the most appropriate probabilistic approach for this study. For three months, the questionnaires were disseminated. The target sample size was minimum 300 academic staffs working in different universities in Malaysia.

For data analysis, the study also considered issues related to data screening prior to further analysis, such as the treatment of incomplete data, multicollinearity and detection of outliers and normality issues. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity were measured to find the reliability and validity of the constructs. As Attitude towards Online Education questionnaires were rarely used in previous studies to predict academic staffs' job satisfaction, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principle component analysis method in SPSS has been used to get the best estimates. Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with structural equation modelling technique in AMOS has been used to evaluate the structural model of the study and getting the results of the path coefficients among the relationships of factors of attitude towards online education and job satisfaction. In SPSS, Cronbach's Alpha is generally used to measure the reliability or internal consistency of questionnaire items. After running the reliability test, it was found that for both constructs, the Cronbach's Alpha value was greater than 0.7 (for Attitude towards Online Education, $\alpha=0.858$ and for Job Satisfaction, $\alpha=0.713$) which means that both the constructs used in this research are reliable enough (Hair et al., 2010).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

In this study, a total of 369 valid responses were received with a response rate of 92.25%. After running descriptive statistics in SPSS, the demographic information including their gender, age, education, religion, marital status and work experience of the respondents are presented in Table 1. Among the respondents, mostly were female (67.8%), aged between 36 to 45 years (42%), post-graduate degree holders (68.6%), married (74%), Muslims (97%), with more than 6 years of experience (73.7%).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	119	32.2
	Female	250	67.8
Age	18 to 25	4	1.1
	26 to 35	114	30.9
	36 to 45	155	42.0
	46 to 55	79	21.4
	56 to 65	17	4.6
	Education	Diploma	2
	Graduate	10	2.7
	Post-Graduate	253	68.6
	Others	104	28.2
Marital Status	Married	273	74.0
	Un-married	78	21.1
	Widowed	12	3.3
	Divorced	5	1.4
	Others	1	.3
Religion	Islam	358	97.0
	Hinduism	6	1.6
	Buddhism	2	.5
	Christianity	1	.3
	Others	2	.5
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	8	2.2
	1 o 3 years	59	16.0
	3 to 6 years	30	8.1
	More than 6 years	272	73.7

After performing descriptive statistics in SPSS, the data sets were examined for missing data. In the continuous and categorical scale replies, there were no missing data fields found. The skewness and kurtosis distribution methods were used to determine normality test of the data sets. Skewness refers to the regularity of a distribution, while Kurtosis refers to its homogeneity as compared to a normal distribution. The usual range of skewness and kurtosis, according to Hair et al. (2010), is less than ± 3 . There were no items in the 5-point Likert type response scale which exceed this range and therefore all items in this investigation were within the normal range.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Alpha values (Cronbach's Alpha) for both the constructs are found to be more than 0.7 and thereby can proceed for further analysis. In SPSS, after running dimension reduction on

the data, we can see from the KMO table that, the measure of sampling adequacy is 0.869 (see Table 2) which is more than 0.6 and it means sampling is perfectly adequate. From the data extracted for Communalities using principle component analysis extraction method, there is no value which is less than 0.3, means we can keep all the variables.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.869
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square Sphericity	3035.011
df	190
Sig.	0.000

After running EFA in SPSS, from the Total Variance Extraction table, we can see that 58.79% of total variance has been explained by all the variables in the model. There were four components out of twenty are having Eigen value of greater than 1 and the rest components are having Eigen value of less than 1. It means we have found four components which should be retained. After analysing the data again in SPSS through fixed number of Factors (four) and setting Coefficient value less than 0.5, we can see the Component Correlation Matrix is orthogonal. Then, we checked the Varimax method in SPSS for analysing orthogonal matrix. After removing some components due to cross loading, from the Rotated Component Matrix (see Table 3), we can see the extracted components related to their corresponding variables.

Table 3. Factor Analysis Results

Rotated Component Matrix ^a		
	Component	
	1	2
JS1	.764	
JS3	.739	
JS4	.824	
JS5	.818	
JS6	.769	
JS8	.748	
Att1		.550
Att2		.801
Att3		.609

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

The composite reliability reached the cut-off value of 0.7 and is now over 0.8 for all the constructs. As a result, the structures' composite reliability provides a good evaluation. The convergent validity is also found good when the AVE of each concept is estimated at 0.5. (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). All constructs in this investigation met the 0.5 cut-off estimate. So, reliability and validity of the data are satisfactory.

4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

IBM AMOS (version 25) has been used for confirmatory factor analysis. There are varieties of indicators that tell us how good the model fits through Structured Equation Modelling (SEM) technique. The global model fit can be done in two non-exclusive ways, by using inference statistics, i.e. so-called tests of model fit, or by the use of fit indices, i.e. an assessment of approximate model fit (Hair et al., 2017). Now a day, it has become usual to find out the model fit both for the measurement model and for the structural model. Structural model means where all constructs correlate freely.

Figure 1 represent the structural model of this study. In AMOS, the chi-square value is called CMIN. From Figure 1, we can see that CMIN is 78.425, RMSEA is 0.074 and CFI is 0.954 which support the standard threshold of fit indices. So, based on the CFI, Chi-Square and RMSEA values, the model fit is found to be good. Based on the measurement model, the hypothesized path coefficients are presented in Table 4 which shows the critical ratios (CR) obtained for the model. It presents the hypothesized paths, coefficients, CR and the p-values. The critical ratio and significance of path coefficients are used as the basis for supporting or rejecting the proposed hypotheses in this research. Therefore, it can be concluded that attitude towards online education is positively significant towards job satisfaction of academic staffs in Malaysia as the CR value is 3.671 where the threshold is $CR \geq \pm 1.96$ and the path is significant at the 0.05 level.

Figure 1. Structural Equation Model

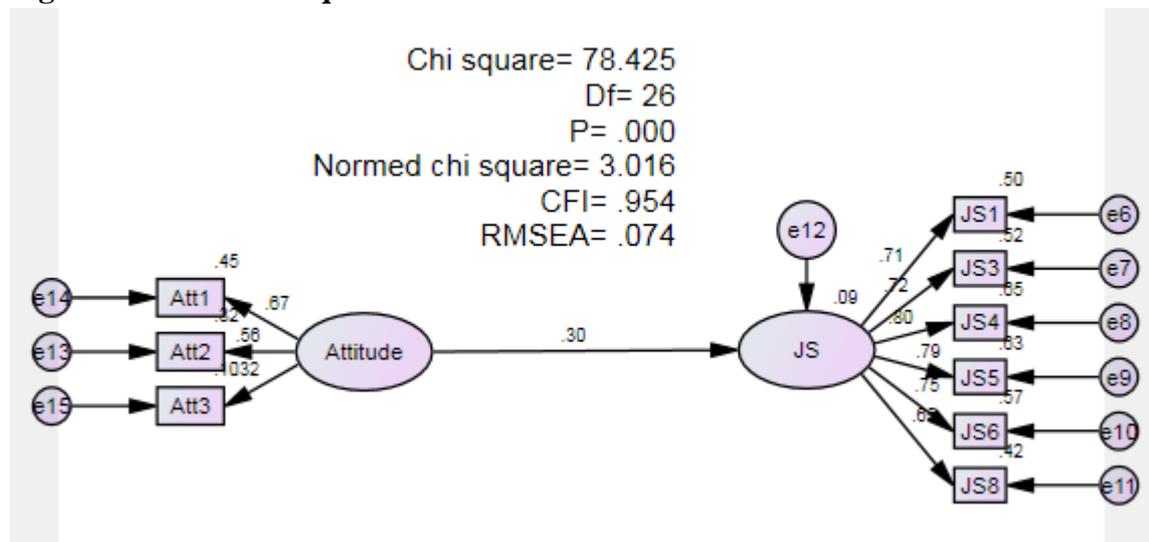


Table 4. Covariance: Default Model

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
JS <--- Attitude	0.264	0.072	3.671	0.000

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to see if there is a link between attitudes about online education and job satisfaction in the education sector. One direct effect is supported by the structured model, which achieved model fit. The current study's findings, in general, have supplied solutions to the research questions. According to the data, the university's academic staff has a modest degree of overall satisfaction. A well implemented organizational climate survey may give significant information that can be used to influence and boost the success of many colleges. Universities that opt to conduct a survey, on the other hand, must be prepared to respond to both positive and bad results, as well as engage with employees, in this case, academic staff, to improve the workplace. Failure to respond to employee input can lead to a rise in the number of workforce issues at a university, which can have severe consequences for the institution. To be a world-class university, it must have world-class academic staff members who are devoted, skilled, informed, and most importantly, committed to the institution and their careers. All of these qualities, however, may fade over time if academic staff members believe they are dissatisfied with their jobs at the institution. As a result, it is strongly advised that the institution consider undertaking a university-wide organizational climate survey since the data acquired can give useful information that can be used to guide and boost the university's future performance in becoming a world-class university.

6. IMPLICATION

The results have a wide variety of application possibilities. Well-satisfied academic staff may build a national and international reputation for themselves and their institutions in professional fields, research, and publication if the right supports are in place (Capelleras, 2005). If lecturers' attitudes toward providing online education are considered to be paramount, policies that seek to improve academic job satisfaction through, for example, the provision of networking and professional development opportunities, as well as enhancing lecturers' social status and providing more supportive work environments (Ansyari et al., 2019) should be prioritized. Furthermore, according to Castellacci and Vias-Bardolet (2020), academics in European nations with a permanent contract are more happy with their jobs than those engaged on a temporary basis. Given the importance of job satisfaction in the research model, it appears that policies related to selection, recruitment, human resources (particularly in terms of revisiting contract arrangements) and improving the online working environment can be pursued to keep or increase academics' job satisfaction to an acceptable level during pandemic times. It's worth noting that pleased professors are proud of their institution, but dissatisfied lecturers could



consider quitting it, or possibly the academic world altogether; alternatively, they might retreat or disconnect from their academic community.

7. CONCLUSION

The study is effective in identifying key characteristics that impact job satisfaction among Malaysian academic employees. The outcomes of this study lead to managerial activities that focus on academic staffs' attitudes toward online education in order to improve job satisfaction. There are certain limitations to this study that will need to be addressed in future research. To begin with, the research topic and findings were restricted to a single Malaysian academic institution. As a result, the findings may not be applicable to the whole education industry in the country. In the future, researchers may investigate expanding the population to include additional Malaysian institutions. In addition, additional criteria such as pay scale, training, career planning, and job rotation may impact work satisfaction, according to the many theories discussed earlier. As a result, it is advised that, more factors to be investigated in future studies to predict job satisfaction.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaires used in the Survey

Part A: Demographic Information					
Please tick (✓) where appropriate:					
Gender					
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Others			
Age					
<input type="checkbox"/> 18-25	<input type="checkbox"/> 26-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 36-45	<input type="checkbox"/> 46-55	<input type="checkbox"/> 56-65	<input type="checkbox"/> 66 and above
Education					
<input type="checkbox"/> Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Post-grad	<input type="checkbox"/> Others		
Marital Status					
<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Unmarried	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	
Religion					
<input type="checkbox"/> Islam	<input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism	<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism	<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	
Employment Status					
<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent	<input type="checkbox"/> Contractual	<input type="checkbox"/> Others			
Work Experience					
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 6 years	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 years		
Delivering Mode of Education					
<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Others		
Part B: General Information					
Based on the following scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), please circle your best answer:					
Job Satisfaction					
Statements	1-----5				
1. I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have too many duties and responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have the opportunity to take part in trainings, webinars, meetings and outreach activities.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I receive the information, tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I know where to get help if I have a problem at work.	1	2	3	4	5

6. I am allowed / encouraged to make decisions to solve problems for my students.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am satisfied with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude towards Online Education					
Statements	1-----5				
9. Many of the rules and procedures to conduct online education need to be streamlined.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I work more hours to conduct online education.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Online education is not a viable alternative for learning compared to face-to-face environments.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students learn less in online education courses.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Grades will be lower for students in an online education class.	1	2	3	4	5
14. There is less student-teacher interaction in online education environments.	1	2	3	4	5
15. There is a high degree of depersonalization and anomie among students and teachers in online education.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Student discussions in online education courses will seem impersonal and lack feeling compared to face-to-face classes.	1	2	3	4	5
17. The time commitment for developing an online education courses is comparable to those in face-to-face classes.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Teaching online will have no impact on my face-to-face courses and instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
19. My lectures cannot be replaced by technology tools.	1	2	3	4	5
20. The technology of online education courses is difficult to manage.	1	2	3	4	5