



Investigating the teachers' dispositions to meet the challenges of online learning in multicultural classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic

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We may be heading towards a future where various kinds of crises situations force teachers to alter between online and onsite professional practice. This is the situation now during the current COVID-19 pandemic, where teachers are obliged to use digital technologies increasingly for teaching and learning. However, it is challenging for them to connect with and engage all students with diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds since new competences are required from both of them. A study is being carried out to investigate Maltese primary class teachers' dispositions to use digital technologies with all students, including those coming from diverse cultural backgrounds, a multicultural context where both digital and intercultural competences are required from both teachers and students. Investigating the current teachers' dispositions is crucial towards learning new competences, since dispositions give an indication of the teachers' future performance within initial teacher education but also important to provide competence development to in-service teachers. To gain insight on the current teachers' dispositions, teachers are invited to voluntarily participate in an online questionnaire with narrative scenarios and an online individual interview.

These two data collection methods will focus on the following dimensions of teachers' dispositions: self-efficacy, attitudes, pedagogical beliefs, openness to change, empathy, meekness, social awareness, inclusion and advocacy. The data will be analysed to identify teachers' current dispositions that will help us gain insight on what kind of teacher training is required. The findings might suggest new ways to bridge the knowledge gap on both the digital and cultural divides that are currently present among students a situation which is affecting the educational attainment of students coming from diverse backgrounds. Recommendations for teacher education and competence development are formulated based on the findings.

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