

## **A Case Study of Kosovan Teachers' Transition to Distance Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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### **Abstract**

*The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted education globally; however, different contexts around the world have responded to the challenges distinctively depending on the available resources. Developed countries like USA, Canada, and Qatar transitioned to online education within few days after the spread of the pandemic while developing countries such as Pakistan and India kept their schools closed for several months. The selected context of this study is, however, Kosovo, where distance education received attention only after the closure of schools following the spread of the virus. This shift marked innovation in distance education, but the experiences of the teachers in their transition to online education remain unexplored. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to identify the challenges that middle school teachers in Kosovo faced in the implementation of online education and investigate teachers' attitudes towards integrating the online component in the traditional education system. This article involves multiple case research on the pedagogical crises resulting from the pandemic. In-depth interviews were conducted with twelve teachers (n=12) and data were thematically analyzed through cross-case analysis. The findings showed that teachers' challenges varied from the setting to planning to implementation of online classes. Teachers' main concerns were their lack of professional development for online teaching and their (as well as students') lack of technology equipment. Despite the difficulties, teachers considered that online education not only served the purpose for the emergent situation with the closure of schools, but also their online teaching experience positively influenced their attitudes about integrating the online component into their traditional teaching system. The study highlights the need for policy intervention in distance education, specifically directives in online learning implementation. Implications suggest that the Kosovan Ministry of Education should offer resources for teachers' professional development, provide the necessary technological equipment, and encourage technology integration and use in the traditional classrooms.*

**Keywords:** innovation in education, distance education, online learning, teachers' challenges, blended learning, teachers' attitudes.