Response to Reviewer #2)

Dear reviewer:

With regard to the reviewer comments and suggestions, we will give targeted answers to each question, and all of revisions will be reflected in the manuscript (highlighted in yellow). Thank you for your careful and patient comments, and instructive recommendations.

This article describes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on face-to-face classroom teaching systems, resulting in the need for distance learning. The author selected countries with low digitization through the Global Innovation Index. A soft skills survey was designed based on the Bochum Inventory of Personality and Competencies. The soft skills of university teachers in these countries were analyzed through 219 sample data. The results showed that the soft skills of university teachers were able to cope with the increase in digital competencies caused by COVID-19, independent of the level of digitization in their respective countries.

It is a topical and targeted study, and the author has collected data from several countries. The paper is generally well-written and well-structured. However, in my opinion, the paper has some shortcomings in some data analysis and textual aspects:

Comment #1)

In this paper, countries with Global Innovation Index (GII) index <29, i.e., low digitization, are selected for the reference study. However, according to the World Bank, the Gini coefficient of the selected countries is high (as shown in the table below), which means that the gap between the rich and the poor is large. The universities may be located in urban areas with a high middle class, and the knowledge and socio-economic status of the university faculty mean that they may belong to a more digitized class in their respective countries. Additional analysis is suggested.

Country	Gini coefficient
Panama	49.8
Peru	41.5
Argentina	42.9
El Salvador	38.8
Ecuador	45.7
Paraguay	45.7
Honduras	48.2
Bolivia	41.6

Response to the reviewer:

Thank you for your valuable comment. Furthermore, the authors believe that this observation is very interesting and useful, and hence deserves to be taken into account in their future studies. In view of the comment, the following paragraph has been introduced in the Introduction section.

Page 3:

According to the Gini Index, used by the World Bank to evaluate inequality in each country in a range from 0% (minimum inequality) to 100% (maximum inequality), many of the countries with low GII have high levels of inequality (49.8 for Panama, 45.1 for Peru, 42.9 for Argentina, 38.8 for El Salvador, 45.7 for both Ecuador and Paraguay, for example). Bearing in mind that the universities are located in favored areas of the cities and their teachers are part of the most affluent sectors of the societies of the respective countries, this fact implies that the results obtained cannot be extrapolated to the entire societies of the geographical area involved, but only to the sector of university teachers. This social sector will, in fact, be more similar in its socio-economic aspects to the social bulk of more technologically advanced societies (e.g., some European countries such as Spain or Italy).

Comment #2)

In essence, this paper is too long and boring in parts, and the extensive statistical analysis narrative could be revised to make it easier to read and convey the main points.

Response to the reviewer:

Authors agree with reviewer comments. The Results section has been reformulated to include all the results and statistics, in order to summarize the statistical analysis. In the same sense, the Discussion section has been reworked to include only the discussion of results, so that it no longer contains a description of the statistical analysis.

Comment #3)

This is an article that leads to a conclusion but does not explain what the reasons are. The four main points only point out the deviations under different comparison conditions without cross-tabulation. For example, female teachers who are young and have little teaching experience (Line 576-577 combined with Line 582-583)

Response to the reviewer:

We agree and are grateful for the reviewer's comment, which is really interesting. In our article we have focused on studying, separately, each of the independent variables considered (sociological or academic) in order to identify which of them generate statistically significant gaps in teachers' evaluations of their own soft skills. However, crossing the independent variables is a very interesting idea. Despite this, the realization of which would entail a whole research work and it is out of scope of the aims of this paper. For this reason, it has been included as a future line in the final of Discussion section.

Page 18:

This work also has some limitations. Among them, the fact that it does not carry out an analysis of the answers of the respondents by crossing the different independent variables. This would make it possible to deepen the analysis of the gaps studied and probably identify others. In addition, the article is limited to exploring the self-concepts of university teachers, without taking into account the students' perception of their teachers' skills or of themselves. This last limitation raises an interesting future line of research, which involves exploring the self-concept on soft skills of university students in different areas of knowledge, the perception they have of the skills of the faculty, and differentiating the results by the different sociological and academic variables taken into account in this paper. In this same sense, it would also be interesting to explore the opinion of employers, who, in some way, also evaluate the skills of university graduates.

Comment #4)

The references to recent literature are cited, but the number is a little weak and insufficient. It is recommended that more relevant literature be cited to strengthen the basis of the discussion.

Response to the reviewer:

Authors agree with reviewer comments and the number of references has been increased. Likewise, the Discussion section has been completely reformulated to increase the depth of the discussion of the results and their connection with the bibliographic sources.