Psychological Skills in the Field of University Teaching Amidst Digital Transformation
A Field Study at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'Sila

Sonia Doudou [1*], Asma Kharkhache [2]
[1] Lecture A at Department of Psychology, University of M'sila, Algeria.
sonia.doudou@univ-msila.dz
[2] Professor at Department of Psychology, University of M'sila, Algeria.
asma.kharkhache@univ-msila.dz
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Abstract:

This study examines the psychological skills of university professors in the context of digital transformation, focusing on self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence. The rapid digitalization of higher education has reshaped teaching practices and imposed new psychological demands on academic staff, making psychological readiness a key factor in the success of digital teaching environments. The study adopted a descriptive research design and was conducted at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of M'Sila. The sample consisted of 43 university professors selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire designed to measure the targeted psychological skills, and appropriate statistical methods were employed for analysis. The results indicated that university professors possess high levels of self-awareness and stress management skills, as well as a very high level of self-confidence in dealing with digital teaching requirements. The findings also suggest an interrelated relationship among these skills, highlighting the importance of psychological preparedness in enhancing effective adaptation to digital transformation in higher education.

key words: Psychological Skills, University Teaching, Digital Transformation. Self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence.

Introduction

The contemporary world is witnessing an unprecedented acceleration in the pace of digital transformation, a reality that has compelled higher education institutions to reconsider their operational models, roles, and functions. This includes the role of the university professor, who has become the cornerstone of the educational process within the digital environment. Consequently, the concept of teaching has evolved from the direct transmission of knowledge to the leadership of active learning based on electronic media; shifting from reliance on traditional methods to interacting with intelligent educational systems, digital platforms, and virtual lectures. Despite the opportunities for development and innovation this transformation offers, it is accompanied by psychological and professional challenges that require professors to adapt and acquire new skills, enabling them to effectively sustain their mission.

For instance, a professor who possesses **self-awareness** is more capable of evaluating their performance and identifying strengths and weaknesses in managing digital requirements, which contributes to enhancing performance and developing pedagogical styles. Furthermore, **stress management** has become an urgent necessity given the new professional burdens associated with digitalization—such as the intensity of electronic tasks, the multiplicity of work platforms, the necessity of continuous digital communication, and the meticulous monitoring of online content. Meanwhile, **self-confidence** allows the professor to engage in the digital experience without hesitation or fear, utilizing modern tools with flexibility and efficacy, and participating in digital training with stability and positivity.

It has become evident that the success of digital transformation within the university is not solely contingent upon providing equipment or developing technological infrastructure; rather, it necessitates a profound focus on the psychological dimension of the professors, who serve as the primary drivers of this transition. Hence, there is a need to study the reality of their psychological skills, identify the extent of their mastery, and understand how these skills reflect on their interaction with the requirements of the new digital environment. Today, this topic represents an increasingly important scientific field, particularly within Algerian universities that have officially adopted digital transformation projects in recent years, making the understanding of the university professor's psychological dimensions an indispensable necessity.

Research Problem

Given the rapid expansion of technology integration within the university, the competence of a university professor is no longer determined solely by academic knowledge, but also by the ability to manage the self, cope with stress, and maintain confidence in professional skills. However, digital transformation imposes challenges that may varyingly affect these psychological aspects, raising questions about the extent to which university professors possess these skills within the new digital environment.

Accordingly, the general problem of the study is articulated through the following main research question :

To what extent do university professors possess psychological skills—namely self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence—in the context of digital transformation ?

From this central question, the following sub-questions are derived :

- What is the level of self-awareness among university professors in the context of digital transformation ?
- To what extent do university professors possess stress management skills in response to digital work demands ?
- What is the level of self-confidence among university professors when engaging with digitalization requirements ?

Research Hypotheses

General Hypothesis: University professors possess psychological skills (self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence) to a high degree within the context of digital transformation.

Sub-Hypotheses:

- The level of self-awareness among university professors is high.
- University professors possess a high degree of stress management skills in teaching amidst digital transformation.
- The level of self-confidence among university professors regarding digital transformation requirements is high.

Significance of the Study

The present study examines a critical yet underexplored dimension of digital transformation in higher education: the psychological preparedness of university professors. While existing research predominantly emphasizes technological infrastructure and digital competencies, the effectiveness of digital transformation largely depends on professors' psychological readiness to engage with evolving digital roles. By analyzing key psychological variables, including

self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence, this study provides empirical insight into professors' capacity for constructive adaptation within digitally mediated academic contexts.

Moreover, the study addresses a notable gap in the local scholarly literature by integrating psychological competencies into the discourse on digital transformation. It advances a theoretically grounded framework that clarifies the relationship between psychological variables and digital learning environments, thereby contributing a qualitative addition to educational sciences and educational psychology. From an applied perspective, the findings offer evidence-based implications for faculty development, institutional planning, and the enhancement of instructional effectiveness. Collectively, the study supports the promotion of professional well-being and more effective engagement in digital higher education environments.

Objectives of the Study

To examine the level of psychological skills (self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence) possessed by university professors in light of digital transformation.

To identify the level of self-awareness among university professors while engaging with the requirements of the new digital environment.

To determine the degree to which university professors are capable of managing stress resulting from the tasks and burdens of digital transformation.

To assess the level of self-confidence among university professors in utilizing digital tools and platforms.

Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Psychological Skills: These are learned abilities mastered through education, practice, and training **(Ibrahim, 2022)**. In this study, they encompass the internal competencies required to navigate professional demands effectively.

Self-Awareness: The individual's capacity to interpret their emotions, understand the impact of these emotions on behavior, and recognize personal strengths and weaknesses **(Abdel-Hadi, 2015).**

Operational Definition: The numerical score achieved by the university professor in the first dimension of the questionnaire. It quantifies their perception of their feelings, abilities, and professional behavior when facing digital transformation requirements.

Stress Management: The adaptive methods—whether approach or avoidance-based—that an individual utilizes to confront daily stressors without incurring negative physical or psychological effects. This process is governed by the individual's referential framework and endurance skills **(Askar, 2003).**

Operational Definition: The score obtained in the second dimension of the questionnaire, reflecting the professor's ability to control work pressures resulting from digitalization through positive and effective strategies.

Self-Confidence: An individual's perception of their competence across physical, psychological, social, and linguistic domains, enabling effective interaction in various life situations **(El-Desouky, 2008).**

Operational Definition: The score in the third dimension of the questionnaire, representing the professor's pride in their digital competence and their readiness to engage in technological tasks with stability and without hesitation.

Digital Transformation: The institutional transition toward modern business methods through the optimal utilization of technology and diverse organizational capabilities **(Khouca & Orairi, 2023).**

Operational Definition: The technical and organizational shifts at the university (e.g., e-learning, digital assessment, virtual communication) that mandate the professor's use of technology in performing academic duties.

The University Professor: Specifically refers to faculty members at the **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of M'Sila** during the study period. Their participation is operationalized through their responses to the research questionnaire.

Previous Studies

FadhiliFatiha conducted a study aimed at uncovering the relationship between psychological hardiness and coping styles as moderating variables for the psychological stress experienced by university professors, framed within the perspective of positive psychology. The study utilized a randomly selected sample of (200) male and female professors from various faculties at MouloudMammeri University in TiziOuzou. A battery of psychological scales was administered, including the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations by Paulhan et al. (1994) and the Psychological Hardiness Scale by Hansali (2014). The results revealed a positive correlation between psychological hardiness—specifically the control dimension—and problem-focused coping.

Furthermore, Abdel-Hadi and Al-Bustami (2015) conducted a study to identify the level of self-awareness among Arabic-speaking faculty members at Abu Dhabi University. The sample consisted of (90) faculty members holding doctoral and master's degrees. The researchers applied a version of the Self-Awareness Scale, translated and standardized for the UAE environment. The findings indicated that faculty members possessed a moderate level of self-awareness.

Methodology and Procedures

Research Method

Given that the current study examines the psychological skills of university professors amidst digital transformation, the **Descriptive Method**was deemed the most appropriate. This method aims to collect facts and data regarding the studied phenomenon or a specific situation, interpreting these facts by analyzing data to understand their significance.

Sample and Sampling Technique

For this study, a **Purposive Sample** (Intentional Sample) was selected, consisting of **(43)** male and female professors from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of M'Sila. A purposive sample is defined as: "A sample where the researcher intentionally selects specific subjects based on the belief that they represent the original population accurately" **(Zerouati, 2007, p. 192).**

Sample Characteristics

This section outlines the primary characteristics of the study sample:

Table (01): Distribution of Study Participants by Gender

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	18	42%
Female	25	58%
Total	43	100%

Research Instrument

The instrument consists of **18 items**, distributed across three dimensions:

- **Dimension I: Self-Awareness** (Items 1 – 6).
- **Dimension II: Stress Management** (Items 7 – 12).
- **Dimension III: Self-Confidence** (Items 13 – 18).

Scoring Method: Responses are recorded using a **3-point Likert scale**: (Disagree = 1, Neutral = 2, Agree = 3). Accordingly, the minimum possible score is **18**, and the maximum is **54**.

Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire

Preliminary verification of the validity and reliability of the questionnaire yielded the following results:

First: Reliability (Internal Consistency - Cronbach's Alpha)

The reliability was calculated using **Cronbach's Alpha coefficient**, which estimates the average correlation among items. The results are presented in the following table:

Table (02): Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) for the Questionnaire Dimensions

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Number of Items
Dimension I: Self-Awareness	0.525	6
Dimension II: Stress Management	0.838	6
Dimension III: Self-Confidence	0.753	6
Total Questionnaire	0.839	18

As shown in the table above, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients reached (0.52) for the first dimension, (0.83) for the second, and (0.75) for the third, while the total reliability for the questionnaire was (0.83). These values indicate that the instrument possesses **acceptable reliability**, with all values being positive and exceeding (0.50), reflecting internal consistency among the items.

Second: Validity (Internal Consistency - Item-Total Correlation)

Construct validity was assessed by calculating **Pearson Correlation Coefficients** between the score of each dimension and the total score of the questionnaire. All correlations were statistically significant as follows:

- Dimension I (Self-Awareness) and Total Score: $r = 0.662$.
- Dimension II (Stress Management) and Total Score: $r = 0.835$.
- Dimension III (Self-Confidence) and Total Score: $r = 0.731$.

These results confirm that the questionnaire is valid and effectively measures the constructs it was designed for, as detailed in the following table:

Table (03): Correlation Matrix of Dimension Scores with the Total Questionnaire Score

Dimension	Correlation with Total Score (r)	Dimension	Correlation with Total Score (r)
Dimension I	0.662^{**}	Dimension III	0.731^{**}
Dimension II	0.835^{**}	***Note:*** *** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*	

Scope of the Study

- **Spatial Scope:** This study was conducted at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'Sila.
- **Temporal Scope:** The field study was carried out during the period from October 1, 2025, to October 25, 2025.
- **Human Scope:** The study population consisted of university professors at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'Sila.

Results: Presentation, Interpretation, and Discussion

First: Presentation of the Questionnaire Results

1. Results of Dimension I: Self-Awareness

The responses of the sample members to the items of the first dimension (Self-Awareness) were processed, and the results are presented in the following table:

Table (04): Descriptive Statistics for Dimension I (Self-Awareness) Items (Means and Standard Deviations)

No.	Items of Dimension I (Self-Awareness)	Sample Size (N)	Mean (M)	Std.Deviation (SD)	Rank
01	I recognize my strengths and weaknesses while using digital technologies in teaching.	43	3.3488	1.41225	6
02	I easily recognize the feelings I experience when facing new digital difficulties.	43	4.0000	1.25357	2
03	I constantly review my digital behaviors to improve my professional performance.	43	3.9070	1.46082	3
04	I can perceive the impact of digital development on my psychological state and work behavior.	43	3.4186	1.34930	4
05	I utilize digital feedback to develop myself professionally and psychologically.	43	3.3721	1.09160	5
06	I set clear goals for self-development in line with digital transformation requirements.	43	4.1628	1.15326	1
Total	Dimension as a Whole	43	22.2093	4,84797	-

Interpretation and Discussion of Dimension I (Self-Awareness) Results

Based on the table above and by examining the arithmetic means and standard deviations derived from the participants' responses to each item of the first dimension (**Self-Awareness**), it is observed that items **(2, 3, 4, and 6)** fall within the **High Range (3.41 – 4.20)**. On the other hand, items **(1 and 5)** fall within the **Moderate Range (2.61 – 3.40)**.

Furthermore, considering the **overall arithmetic mean** of the first dimension, which reached **(22.20)**, it falls within the **High Range (20 – 25)**. Consequently, it can be concluded that the level of self-awareness among the study sample members is **high**, as illustrated in the following figure:

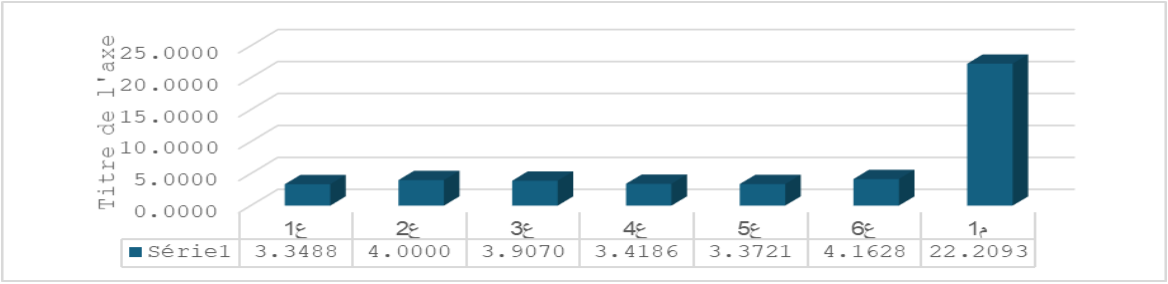


Figure (01): Distribution of Dimension I Items According to their Arithmetic Means

2. Results of Dimension II: Stress Management

The responses of the sample members to the items of the second dimension (**Stress Management**) were processed, and the results are presented in the following table:

Table (05): Descriptive Statistics for Dimension II (Stress Management) Items (Means and Standard Deviations)

No.	Items of Dimension II (Stress Management)	Sample Size (N)	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Rank
7	I am able to remain calm while facing technical failures or pressures.	43	4.1628	1.19384	3
8	I deal positively with the burdens resulting from digital education requirements.	43	3.7442	1.36439	4
9	I use effective strategies to alleviate stress resulting from the multiplicity of electronic tasks.	43	4.2326	1.30634	2
10	I can separate digital work pressures from my personal life.	43	4.3721	1.13438	1
11	I view digital transformation as an opportunity for development rather than a source of stress.	43	3.7674	1.28799	5
12	I can adapt quickly to sudden changes in digital systems or platforms.	43	3.4419	1.16092	6
Total	**Dimension as a Whole**	**43**	**23.7209**	**4.64617**	**-**

Statistical Interpretation of Dimension II (Stress Management)

Based on the table above and the arithmetic means and standard deviations derived from the participants' responses, it is noted that all items in the second dimension fall within the **High Range (3.41 – 4.20)**.

Furthermore, the overall arithmetic mean for the second dimension reached **(23.72)**, which is situated within the **High Range (20 – 25)**. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the level of **Stress Management** among the study sample members is **high**. This distribution is illustrated in the figure below:

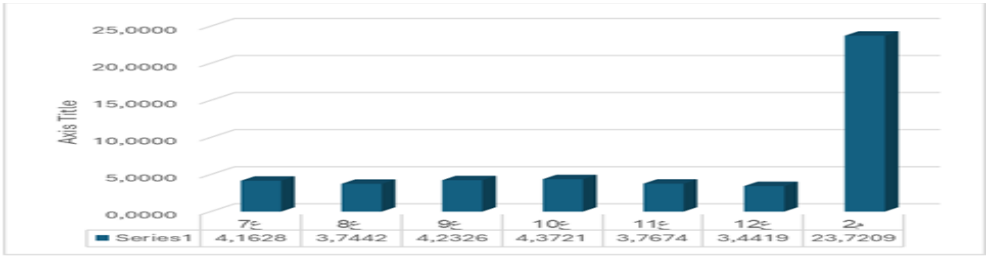


Figure (02): Distribution of Dimension II Items According to their Arithmetic Means

3. Results of Dimension III: Self-Confidence

The responses of the study sample regarding the third dimension (**Self-Confidence**) were statistically processed, as presented in the following table:

Table (06): Descriptive Statistics for Dimension III (Self-Confidence) Items (Means and Standard Deviations)

No.	Items of Dimension III (Self-Confidence)	Sample Size (N)	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Rank
13	I feel confident in my ability to use digital educational platforms efficiently.	43	3.3256	1.24825	6
14	I can adapt confidently to any new software or technology in teaching.	43	4.6977	0.74113	1
15	I believe my skills enable me to keep pace with my colleagues in the digital environment.	43	4.6047	0.90342	2
16	I face technical problems without fear or hesitation.	43	4.3023	1.14507	4
17	I trust my ability to provide high-quality digital lessons.	43	4.2791	0.85428	5
18	I can confidently transfer my digital experience to my colleagues and students.	43	4.3721	1.17561	3
Total	**Dimension as a Whole**	**43**	**25.5814**	**3.91111**	**-**

Statistical Interpretation of Dimension III (Self-Confidence)

According to the table above, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the responses show that almost all items fall within the **Very High Range (4.21 – 5)**, with the exception of **Item (13)**, which falls within the **Moderate Range (2.61 – 3.40)**.

The overall arithmetic mean for the third dimension reached **(25.58)**, placing it within the **Very High Range (26 – 30)**. Consequently, it can be concluded that the level of **Self-Confidence** among the study sample members is significantly high. This distribution is further detailed in the figure below:

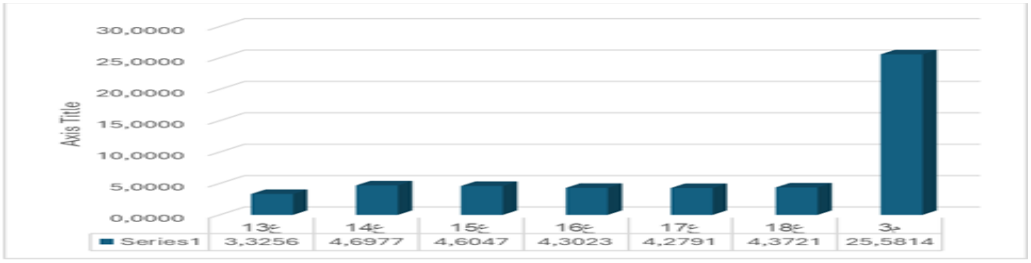


Figure (03): Distribution of Dimension III Items According to their Arithmetic Means

III. Presentation and Discussion of Results in Light of Research Hypotheses

Presentation and Discussion of the General Hypothesis

The general hypothesis stated that:**"University professors possess psychological teaching skills amidst digitalization to a high degree."** To verify this hypothesis, a **One-Sample T-Test**was conducted by comparing the arithmetic mean of the participants' responses with the theoretical (hypothetical) mean of the questionnaire. The results are presented in the following table:

Table (07): T-Test Results for the Level of Psychological Teaching Skills amidst Digitalization

Total Scale	Sample Size (N)	Theoretical Mean	Arithmetic Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Total Score	43	54	71.51	11.504	42	9.982	0.000	Sig. at 0.01

Based on the results shown in Table (07), the arithmetic mean of the study sample on the overall scale reached **(71.51)**, which is significantly higher than the theoretical mean of **(54)**. Accordingly, the degree of psychological skills possessed by university professors in teaching amidst digitalization is **high**. This is confirmed by the calculated **t-value (9.982)**, which is positive and statistically significant at the alpha level **($\alpha = 0.01$)**. This indicates that the differences are in favor of the sample’s arithmetic mean. Consequently, the general research hypothesis is **accepted**, with a **99%** confidence level and a **1%** margin of error.

This finding suggests that digital transformation is no longer optional but an integral component of the university's instructional fabric. Consequently, professors have spontaneously honed their psychological skills through daily technological engagement. Managing electronic platforms and digital workflows necessitates high levels of self-awareness, stress management, and self-efficacy.

Furthermore, the results stem from the autonomy and professional responsibility inherent in the academic environment. The freedom to plan and organize work naturally fosters robust psychological competencies. These findings align with contemporary educational research, which asserts that successful digitalization depends less on technical proficiency and more on a professor's psychological dimension and their capacity for mental and emotional adaptation.

Presentation and Discussion of Results for the First Sub-Hypothesis

The first sub-hypothesis stated:**"The level of self-awareness among university professors is high."** To verify this, a **One-Sample T-Test**was employed to compare the arithmetic mean of the participants' responses with the theoretical mean. The results are summarized in the following table:

Table (08): T-Test Results for the Level of Self-Awareness among University Professors

Dimension	N	Theoretical Mean	Arithmetic Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	df	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Self-Awareness	43	18	22.20	4.847	42	5.694	0.000	Sig. at 0.01

The results in Table (08) indicate that the arithmetic mean of the participants' responses for the first dimension reached **(22.20)**, which falls within the **High Range (20–25)** and is significantly higher than the theoretical mean of **(18)**. Consequently, the level of self-awareness among university professors is high. This finding is supported by the **t-value (5.69)**, which is positive and statistically significant at the alpha level **($\alpha = 0.01$)**. This confirms that the differences favor the sample's arithmetic mean. Thus, the first sub-hypothesis is **accepted** with a **99%** confidence level.

These findings highlight self-awareness as a foundational psychological skill for university professors, enabling effective self-assessment of professional and emotional needs. The results indicate that professors can accurately monitor their emotions and performance, identifying specific strengths and weaknesses during technological interaction.

This heightened awareness is largely driven by the nature of digital transformation, which demands continuous reflection. Digital platforms offer immediate feedback—such as performance analytics and student engagement metrics—that fosters professional self-reflection. Additionally, the inherent research-oriented background of faculty members encourages the self-analysis and systematic review necessary for self-awareness. These results align with Abdel-Hadi (2015), who found that faculty members exhibit significant self-awareness, particularly within environments defined by rapid professional change.

Presentation and Discussion of Results for the Second Sub-Hypothesis

The second sub-hypothesis stated:"University professors possess a high degree of stress management skills in teaching amidst digital transformation." This was verified using a One-Sample T-Test to compare the sample's arithmetic mean with the theoretical mean. The results are shown below:

Table (09): T-Test Results for Stress Management Skills among University Professors

Dimension	N	Theoretical Mean	Arithmetic Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	df	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Stress Management	43	18	23.72	4.646	42	8.074	0.000	Sig. at 0.01

The results in Table (09) show that the arithmetic mean for the second dimension reached **(23.72)**, falling within the **High Range (20–25)** and significantly exceeding the theoretical mean of **(18)**. Thus, the degree of stress management skills among professors is high. This is confirmed by the **t-value (8.074)**, which is positive and statistically significant at the alpha level **(alpha = 0.01)**, indicating that differences favor the study sample. Consequently, the second sub-hypothesis is **accepted** with a **99%** confidence level.

Discussion and Interpretation

These figures demonstrate a significant capacity among professors to navigate technology-related stressors, including technical malfunctions and dense digital workloads. This resilience is forged through daily self-regulation in response to platform outages, rapid electronic correspondence, and the demands of online assessments.

Furthermore, intensified digitalization training within Algerian universities has effectively mitigated cognitive and technical anxiety. This shift aligns with Fadhili Fatiha's study, which identified a strong correlation between positive coping mechanisms and psychological hardiness in faculty members. Consequently, professors increasingly perceive digitalization as a professional development opportunity rather than a mere stressor, resulting in enhanced stress management capabilities.

Presentation and Discussion of Results for the Third Sub-Hypothesis

The third sub-hypothesis stated: "The level of self-confidence among university professors regarding digital transformation is high." This was verified using a One-Sample T-Test to compare the sample's arithmetic mean with the theoretical mean. The results are presented in the following table:

Table (10): T-Test Results for Self-Confidence Levels among University Professors

Dimension	N	Theoretical Mean	Arithmetic Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	df	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Self-Confidence	43	18	25.58	3.911	42	12.711	0.000	Sig. at 0.01

The results in Table (10) indicate that the arithmetic mean for the third dimension reached (25.58), which falls within the Very High Range (26–30) and significantly exceeds the theoretical mean of (18). Thus, the level of self-confidence among university professors in the context of digital transformation is high. This is confirmed by the t-value (12.711), which is positive and statistically significant at the alpha level ($\alpha = 0.01$), indicating that the differences favor the study sample. Consequently, the third sub-hypothesis is accepted with a 99% confidence level.

Discussion and Interpretation

This result stems from continuous exposure to e-learning tools, which fosters environmental mastery and digital workspace control. Combined with professional experience and academic interaction, this exposure builds a strong sense of **professional self-efficacy**.

Furthermore, these findings validate the preceding hypotheses: the high levels of self-awareness and stress management skills directly bolster self-confidence, illustrating an **integrative relationship** between these three competencies. As professors transition from viewing technology as a daunting challenge to a professional routine, they gain the flexibility to deliver digital lectures and resolve technical issues without hesitation. This observation aligns with **El-Desouky (2008)**, who defines self-confidence as the individual's perceived competence in navigating diverse situational demands.

Conclusion:

This study investigated the psychological preparedness of university professors—specifically regarding self-awareness, stress management, and self-confidence—within the context of the rapid digital transformation in Algerian universities. The research posits that successful digitalization transcends technological infrastructure; it fundamentally depends on the "human cornerstone"—the professor—whose psychological readiness determines the efficacy of the digital educational process.

The findings confirm that professors possess high levels of these psychological competencies. They demonstrate a sophisticated ability to monitor their professional performance (self-awareness) and navigate the pressures of digital workloads (stress management) with significant self-assurance. Rather than acting as a barrier, digital transformation has served as a catalyst for fostering advanced professional resilience and flexibility.

Central to these findings is the integrative relationship between the studied skills:

Self-Awareness acts as a precursor, enabling better identification and reduction of stressors.

Stress Management fosters a stable environment that enhances professional Self-Confidence.

This cohesive psychological structure is not merely an individual attribute but a critical determinant of institutional quality. The study concludes that the professor's psychological adaptability is the primary driver for ensuring the long-term success and quality of higher education in the digital age.

It is important to highlight the need to provide training programs for mentoring and support aimed at developing the psychological skills of university professors.

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