

# ASSESSING AWARENESS AND COMPETENCE OF BEST PRACTICES IN SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE INSTRUCTION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENTS

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## Introduction

- Outbreak of deadly disease, COVID-19, suddenly put world in lockdown in Spring 2020 (Bushweller, 2020)
- Educators were expected to continue instruction, but entirely virtually using online conferencing applications (Daniel, 2020)

## Objectives

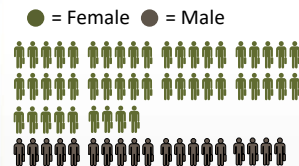
- Identify participants' knowledge of synchronous learning features related to effective instruction
- Identify participant's self-perceived competence levels of synchronous learning features related to effective instruction

## Methods

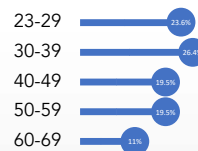
- Researcher-developed survey
- Administered using Qualtrics
- Email sent to study population requesting survey participation

## Findings

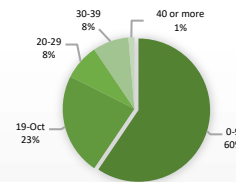
### Gender



### Age

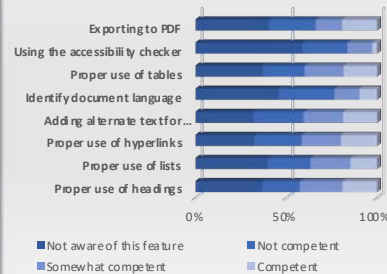


### Years in Extension

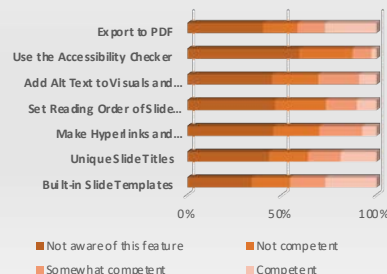


- Zoom was the most-used platform
- Word & PowerPoint Accessibility
  - Low awareness of accessibility features/practices
- Mix of competence levels of schedule/meeting tools
  - Confidence (Score 3 or 4) ranged from 15.6% - 95.9%
- Areas with least awareness & competence
  - File transfer (73%)
  - Practice room for panelists (81.3%)
  - Instantly broadcast to unlimited audience (84.4%)

Accessibility Skills Using Microsoft Word



Accessibility Skills Using Microsoft PowerPoint



## Conclusions

- Extension personnel have limited ability to use synchronous learning platforms
- Accessibility skills very low



## Recommendations

- Inservice on Zoom and accessibility skills
- Replicate in southeastern states
- Create in-service trainings to address deficiencies in knowledge of accessibility features

## References

- Bushweller, K. (2020). How COVID-19 is shaping tech use. What that means when schools reopen. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/03/howcovid-19-is-shaping-tech-usewhat.html>.
- Daniel, S. J. (2020). Education and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Prospects*, 1-6.