FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING:

AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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This qualitative phenomenological study was an exploration of the lived experiences and perceptions of five full-time faculty members and their perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Semistructured interviews elicited information to describe faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning and further explore the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning. With a two-step deductive and inductive coding process grounded in transformational learning theory, this study showed how faculty moved through transformational learning stages and indicated the salient themes associated with faculty perceptions.

Keywords: higher education, online learning, COVID-19, transformative learning

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my loving family for their support and encouragement.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Along with their students, faculty were "thrown into the deep end of the pool for digital learning and asked to swim," Mr. Moe said. "Some will sink, some will crawl to the edge of the pool and climb out, and they'll never go back in the pool ever again. But many will figure out what to do and how to kick and how to stay afloat."

"Will the Coronavirus Forever Alter the College Experience?"
By Jon Marcus
The New York Times
April 23, 2020

Introduction

There is no way to fully understand how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted students and educators; however, what is known is that schools and teachers were unprepared when it occurred. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic resulted in nearly 1.5 billion children in 164 countries affected by closed or partially closed schools (Bobley & Best, 2021). Due to the pandemic's drastic changes, teachers had to redefine their new normal and recreate face-to-face classrooms online (Herold & Chen, 2021). Online and distance learning have existed for 30 years; therefore, it merits exploring why school and higher education leaders and instructors struggled to pivot to remote instruction quickly when the pandemic occurred.

The United States has approximately 26,000 state-approved teacher preparation programs (Kuenzi, 2018); however, less than 5% provide field experience in online learning environments (Herold & Chen, 2021). Throughout the pandemic, several state education departments invited teacher education programs to present proposals on how candidates could meet certification requirements through alternative means (Bobley & Best, 2021). With such a small percentage of higher education institutions providing clinical practice in online settings, it is no surprise that many struggled to deliver high-quality clinical experiences during the pandemic.

HEI leaders must evolve their organizations to remain relevant to the populations they serve. Rightly or wrongly, education has a reputation for resistance to change (Ellis et al., 2020).

The rapid response required of K–12 schools and teacher preparation institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges and innovation opportunities. Innovation has several definitions with different responses depending on the context; this study will use the following:

> A new or improved product or process (or [a] combination thereof) that differs significantly from the unit's previous product or processes and that has been made available to potential users (product) or brought into use by the unit (process). (Ellis et al., 2020, p. 17)

Innovations in education are new, breakaway ideas or practices derived from past processes or products. However, Ellis et al.'s (2020) definition does not address how higher education faculty effect new ideas, practices, or process adoption. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HEIs have had to evolve their core programs while considering the new and relevant skills necessary for the next generation of educators.

Research Questions

The following research question and subquestion framed this study:

Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

Statement of the Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an accelerated need for innovation and reflection on teacher preparation college practices. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (2018) *Clinical Practice Commission Report* indicated the need for university and school-based teacher educators to pioneer innovative roles and practices and remove the restrictions of traditional assumptions and educator preparation. Preparing teacher candidates for

21st-century classrooms requires a further examination of authentic clinical experiences that provide practice-based opportunities to plan, instruct, and assess student learning in varied learning environments.

In 2020, the Higher Education Institution (HEI; blinded for review) placed over 1,800 students in the field for their clinical experiences. In March 2020, teacher candidates across the country lost access to school-based clinical placements, students, and mentor teachers. District partners struggled to manage multiple instruction modes and adhere to strict social distancing protocols, resulting in few school-based clinical experience options for teacher candidates. As HEI leaders watched educators struggle to shift to virtual instruction, they realized the need to pivot the clinical experience model to ensure candidate preparedness.

Background of the Study

Teacher preparation program clinical practices are critical for candidate development. Like K–12 schools, HEI structures have remained stagnant in clinical theory and practice. According to Putman and Walsh (2021), few states have presented new policies to strengthen clinical practices, as the net effect has remained virtually unchanged since 2015. The COVID-19 pandemic caused educators to enter uncharted territories and showed the need to prepare teachers for online, remote, and hybrid teaching like never before. The pandemic showed the need for U.S. teacher preparation program leaders to adopt nontraditional, innovative, and progressive approaches to maintain preparation integrity and acknowledge future educators' need for digital teaching competence (Keefe, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic showed how little preparation teacher preparation programs provided teacher candidates for various learning environments. During the pandemic, numerous difficulties regarding novel perspectives of online education and its technological complexities

emerged in the change process in the education system (Mishra et al., 2020). In its *2017 National Technology Education Plan*, the U.S. Department of Education recommended developing "a teaching force skilled in online and blended instruction" (Koenig, 2020, p. 40). Many teacher education programs focus on theory and overlook rapidly adapting teaching and learning modalities.

Teacher preparation programs address technology infusion without providing the pedagogical training needed for online or hybrid instruction. Proficiency in online pedagogy does not result from standalone technology courses but from educational technology experiences modeled by teacher preparation faculty in all courses (Koenig, 2020). Unfortunately, students have not learned what it means to teach in an online, hybrid, or flex-model environment.

This research was an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) study. IPA is a way to explore how participants make sense of their personal and social worlds through the meanings they attribute to experiences, events, and states (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Accordingly, this qualitative study focused on the lived experiences of the faculty pushed into online teaching and working with students in online clinical experiences. Understanding faculty perceptions of the effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences could result in new opportunities for clinical practice. The study's findings present the themes that emerged from the faculty's descriptions of their experiences of online teaching and working with students in online clinical experiences due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Five HEI faculty who have worked with teacher candidates in online clinical experiences consented to participate in the study. Data collection occurred with a semistructured interview process. The interview protocol included questions and a schedule, which the researcher used to

guide rather than dictate the interviews (see Smith & Osborn, 2015). Semistructured interviews enable researchers to build rapport with participants, who can fully tell their stories and experiences.

Reliability and validity throughout the interview process will show the accuracy of the participants' experiences. A researcher journal will be the instrument used to engage in a reflexive process during the data analysis. Zoom, a web-based program that provides audio transcription, will allow for recording the participants' responses. Member checking occurred to verify the accurate capture of participants' responses. Also known as participant or respondent validation, member checking is a technique for improving a study's credibility (Birt et al., 2016). Coding took place after transcription to find emerging themes from the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, and challenges. The final step of the analysis was comparing the themes to Mezirow's (2008) seven transformational learning phases.

Purpose of the Study

A qualitative IPA approach was appropriate to explore faculty perceptions of the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences. This study was relevant, significant, and timely for teacher preparation. The findings regarding faculty perceptions of online clinical experiences could enable HEI leaders to determine their faculty's attitudes and beliefs about teacher preparation. This study provides insight into faculty experiences and perceptions of the advantages, disadvantages, and opportunities of online clinical experiences for future clinical experiences. The study contributes to the literature on faculty perceptions of the effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online clinical experiences.

Context and Theoretical Framework

A conceptual framework is a means of explaining "the main things to be studied—the key factors, constructs or variables—and the presumed relationships among them" (Gregory, 2020, p. 136). Mezirow's (2008) transformational learning theory and Knowles' (1978) andragogy theory provided a framework to evaluate HEI faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning. St. Clair (2002) described andragogy, or adult learning theory, and its four key assumptions:

- Teachers have a responsibility to help adults in the normal movement from dependency toward increasing self-directedness.
- Adults have an ever-increasing reservoir of experience that is a rich resource for learning.
- People are ready to learn something that enables them to cope with real-life tasks or problems.
- Learners see education as a means to develop increased competence.

St. Clair later added two assumptions:

- Adults need to know the reason for learning something.
- The most potent motivators for adult learning are internal, such as self-esteem.

Transformative learning theory is the process of effecting change in a frame of reference (Mezirow, 1997). Adults acquire a coherent body of experience—associations, concepts, values, feelings, and conditioned responses—that become frames of reference for their life worlds. HEI faculty also have such frames of reference. Despite the significant emphasis on technology integration and technology within classrooms and its role in teacher preparation, there has been little focus on the frames of reference posing barriers to changes within teacher preparation programs and clinical experiences.

Frames of reference have two dimensions: habits of mind and points of view (Mezirow, 1997). Habits of mind are the broad ways individuals think and feel about certain codes, such as pedagogical training and preparation. Points of view continuously change as individuals reflect on the content or process they use to solve problems and identify the need to modify their assumptions. Learning occurs through four distinct processes: expanding on current viewpoints, creating new viewpoints, changing viewpoints, and increasing awareness and reflectivity of personal biases and assumptions (Sweetman, 2018). This study's analysis occurred with transformative learning theory and andragogy to address faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of online clinical experiences and the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges.

Transformative learning theory has 10 phases (Mezirow, 1978):

1. Disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. Critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisional trying of new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life based on the conditions dictated by one's perspective

This study was an exploration of HEI faculty experiences to better understand their perceptions of online teaching and learning and its advantages, disadvantages, and challenges. Mezirow's (1978) theory closely connects to adult learning theory, or andragogy. Foote (2015)

described adult learning theory as a simple transformation of a belief or opinion or a radical transformation of total perspective, and learning can occur abruptly or incrementally. This IPA study focused on how faculty perceive online teacher preparation and how their experiences influence their perceptions. Learning to reevaluate and re-story prior learning experiences could enable adults—in this case, HEI faculty—to make sense of their experiences with online teaching and find new identities (Foote, 2015).

Methodology

Grounding this qualitative study will be social constructivism, which indicates the journey is just as important as the destination (Sweetman, 2018). Social constructivism suggests that all knowledge occurs via social interaction and language use (Lynch et al., 2018). Therefore, knowledge is a shared rather than an individual experience.

This study's methodology was IPA. Many researchers and practitioners view IPA as the most participant-oriented qualitative approach, as it shows respect and sensitivity to the participants' lived experiences (Alase, 2017). Purposeful sampling was useful to select participants who meet the following criteria:

- Be full-time HEI faculty within the College of Education (COE).
- Have at least one semester working with students in online clinical experiences.
- Have a least one semester working with students in traditional face-to-face clinical experiences.
- Have taught at least one semester online synchronously during the pandemic.

The qualitative phenomenological approach was appropriate to focus on the participants' lives, lived experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feelings (Kosar, 2021). This study addressed faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of online clinical experiences to determine how prior

experiences affect the perspectives of new phenomena and learning experiences. Chapter Three has an in-depth discussion of the research design and methodology.

Researcher Positionality

Research requires disclosure of the researcher's relationship to the phenomenon under study. I am the HEI's Assistant Division Director. For the last 15 years, I have held PK–12 school administrative roles, served as an instructional coach, and been a teacher. Most recently, due to the pandemic, I have reflected on the need for change within the clinical experience model. Increasing flexibility and access to high-quality clinical experiences during the pandemic was a key driver of the online clinical model.

During my work as Assistant Division Director, stakeholders generated solutions to account for school closure impacts on clinical placements. Through partnering with an online K–12 school, the COE maintained a clinical experience model that was fully online. Due to the closeness of my work with the COE, I ensured that my personal biases did not impact the data collection and analysis by employing a member-checking process. My goal was to assist the HEI leaders in evaluating faculty perceptions to drive change and improve the clinical experience model. Accordingly, I framed my study with transformational learning and andragogy theories.

Researcher Biases

The participants knew the researcher, so the study could have had bias.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

An assumption was that faculty would have different attitudes and beliefs about online learning; therefore, this study focused on online clinical experiences. Another assumption was

that the faculty would answer the interview questions honestly and to the best of their abilities based on their lived experiences.

Limitations

The study's limitations included my personal bias and connection to the work. As shared in the researcher positionality, I identified solutions for maintaining a high-quality clinical experience model during COVID-19 school closures.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the parameters to create defined boundaries and a research synopsis that is not germane to the research question (Finn, 2017). The study's delimitations were:

- The sample was five full-time clinical faculty from multiple program areas. Researchers conducting IPA studies do not produce theories or general claims. Instead, they provide in-depth, case-by-case analyses of the perceptions and experiences of small homogenous groups within their contexts (Al-Freih, 2021).
- The study focused on faculty who have engaged with teacher candidates in online clinical experiences and have experience working with teacher candidates in traditional face-to-face experiences. The study did not include the perceptions of faculty who have not worked with students in online clinical experiences.
- The limited literature and research on faculty perceptions of online clinical experiences in teacher preparation was the motivation for the study; however, it was also a study limitation.

Definition of Terms

Asynchronous: Learning that occurs autonomously, typically with a learning management system.

Andragogy: An approach in which the adult learner is a primary data source for making sound decisions regarding the learning process (Knowles et al., 1998).

Clinical experience: A teacher candidate's placement experience within a school or online classroom setting.

Clinical faculty: A full-time professor primarily responsible for serving in a field-based instructional setting.

Communities of practice: Groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly(Wenger, 2011).

Interpretive phenomenological analysis: IPA studies focus on examining how individuals make meaning of their life experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

Mentor teacher: A certified teacher with a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience and a track record of successful PK–12 teaching experience.

Online teaching: Learning that occurs asynchronously or synchronously via a learning management system or other web-based platform.

Social constructivism: A social learning theory by Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1978) suggesting that individuals are active participants in knowledge creation.

Synchronous: A term for the delivery of live remote instruction via a web platform, such as Zoom, Google, or Microsoft Teams.

Teacher candidate: A junior or senior student enrolled in a clinical experience at the COE.

Transformational learning: Learning that occurs by critically reflecting on an experience to make sense of it and construct new knowledge (Mezirow, 2006).

Overview of the Study

Chapter One provided the problem statement, the background of higher education, and clinical experiences within COEs. The chapter presented the study's context, theoretical background, and research questions. There were also discussions of the study's purpose, significance, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations.

Chapter Two will present the literature on higher education online teaching, clinical experiences, and faculty perceptions. Following a review of the literature on transformational learning and andragogy will be the research presented in three salient themes: (a) the current state of higher education and online learning, (b) faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning and its advantages, disadvantages, and challenges, and (c) viewing the existing literature through the transformational learning and andragogy lenses.

Chapter Three will present the study's methodology and research design. The study occurred during the 2022–2023 fall and spring semesters. The chapter addresses research integrity and informed consent. Further discussions will pertain to the qualitative instrument, data collection procedure, coding, and analysis.

Chapter Four will include the study's key data and findings. The following research question framed the study's focus: What are faculty's perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? The subquestion was, What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences? The study's purpose was to address the research question and subquestion. Chapter 4 will present the study's emergent themes with tables and figures used to show key findings.

Chapter Five will address the key findings, results, and implications for future research. A discussion of the implications for practice and future research needs will follow. Finally, there will be a summary of how the study contributes to the extant knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature search occurred with the following databases: Google Scholar, ERIC, and ProQuest. The following search terms were appropriate to obtain research pertinent to the topic: *transformational learning, adult learning theory, online teaching, faculty perceptions,* and *clinical experiences*. The literature review process included reviewing and summarizing abstracts and articles aligned with the theoretical framework and research question. This study focused on faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning during the pandemic and the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences.

There are many reasons faculty might have reservations about online teaching. In my experience supporting faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic, I found that many viewed the effectiveness of online teaching and clinical experiences with skepticism and uncertainty. Despite the urgency for all COE faculty to adapt and adjust their clinical experience designs, they perceived online experiences as not providing adequate postgraduation preparation.

The literature review focuses on studies that align with the research focus: faculty perceptions and how their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes can impact online teaching. The literature review includes perceptions of online teaching and learning, including its benefits and challenges, and transformational learning and andragogy literature. Excluded from the review were studies on online teaching and learning in K–12 settings.

Literature Review

Current State of Teacher Preparation and Online Teaching and Learning

In March 2020, disruptions occurred across the HEI infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted course delivery, student engagement, and clinical placement.

By definition, disruption is a sudden break or interruption. When applied to education, disruption is a break from traditional, established educational knowledge transmission models (García-Morales et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic impacted HEI and COEs. The forced transition to online learning imposed restraints on the experiences in which teacher candidates could engage in their programs.

Pedagogy is the interaction between the teacher, student, and teaching-learning environment (Sharma et al., 2021). Carrillo and Flores (2020) discussed how educators described online learning. There is abundant literature surrounding online teaching and learning, with concepts sometimes used interchangeably despite different meanings (e.g., distance education, online teaching, emergency online education, remote teaching). This review focused on online teaching with remote instruction delivery. How professors and students interact with the school environment has changed dramatically. More recently, the pandemic has impacted the HEI landscape and how faculty deliver instruction via multiple learning modalities. Many faculty have a high level of content knowledge but lack the technological pedagogy needed for high-quality teaching online (Sims & Baker, 2021). The shift in teaching and learning required HEI leaders and faculty to think differently about clinical experience design.

Little research has focused on online clinical experience models in teacher preparation programs. Currently, teacher education programs "rarely include courses either about online teaching or conducted through distance learning" (Compton, 2009, p. 2). This research addressed the literature gaps by presenting faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning experiences and the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of the online teaching experience and online clinical experience model.

Transformative Learning Theory and Online Teaching

Social constructivism is a component of transformational learning and andragogy. Vygotsky defined three core concepts of social constructivism: the zone of actual development (where the student is developmentally, both actually and currently), the zone of potential development (where the student potentially should or could be), and the zone of proximal development (the amount of assistance required for a student to move from the zone of actual development to the zone of potential development; Deulen, 2013). During the pandemic, HEI faculty entered the zone of actual development. The faculty were the critical drivers of the shift from proximal development to potential development and faced challenges due to a lack of experience with online teaching and learning. Transformative learning theory indicates that teachers are adult learners who continuously transform their meaning of online teaching through ongoing critical reflection and action (Baran, 2011). Baran (2011) described transformative learning theory's three themes: the centrality of experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse. Lived experience with online teaching, either as the learner or the teacher, can affect perceptions and beliefs; however, individuals can change their perceptions and beliefs through critical reflection. During critical self-reflection, the learner questions "the integrity of assumptions and beliefs based on prior experience" (Baran, 2011, p. 17). Therefore, critical reflection "is most essential for the transforming of our meaning structures—a perspective transformation" (p. 17).

Moran and Maloney (2022) described transformative learning as how individuals make meaning, interpret experiences, and question, reflect on, and converse about these experiences to develop and grow. Scholars have evolved the theory to explain understanding, validating, and reforming the meaning of experiences (Mehmet, 2018). Transformative learning is a teaching

approach based on promoting change. Educators challenge learners to critically question and assess the integrity of their deeply held assumptions about how they relate to the world (Moran & Maloney, 2022).

Andragogy

Andragogy, or adult learning theory, will serve as the framework to investigate HEI faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of online clinical experiences. HEI faculty are adult learners; therefore, these theories will enable the evaluation of how assumptions can be barriers to perceptions. Knowles (1984) proposed a model of adult learning called andragogy, with the adult learner a primary data source for making sound decisions about the learning process (Knowles et al., 1998).

Knowles' (1984) andragogy definition includes four interconnected assumptions about adult learners:

- Self-concept: As individuals grow and mature, they move their self-concept from total dependency (the reality of the infant) to increasing self-directedness. Adults could be more likely to resist or resent when others impose their will (Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

- Role of experience: Adults enter a learning situation with a wealth of experience that can be a resource for meaningful learning. Estes (1991) stated, "Learning consists, not in modifying the units (or experiences), but only of establishing associations between units" (p. 6). However, prior assumptions can be barriers to learning (Kagan, 1992; Slotta et al., 1995). Therefore, there is a need to determine ways to challenge the assumptions causing the barriers.

- Readiness to learn: Unlike children, adults need to know the utility and value of the content and how it applies to them and their future careers (Knowles et al., 2005). Tough (1979) argued that the first task of a teacher is to help adult learners become aware of the need to know.

- Orientation to learning: Adults are life- and problem-centered in their desire to learn. They learn best and are the most motivated when educators present knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the context of real-life problem-solving (Knowles et al., 2005).

Adult Learning Theory and the Online Classroom

Online teaching and learning present a unique challenge for pedagogical approaches to teaching. Andragogy does not focus on the instruction's broad goal but on "the characteristics of the learning transaction" (Williams, 2016, p. 22). Andragogy within an online learning space focuses on how adults engage with the teaching and learning experience. The current generation of students expects varied instructional styles and interesting and engaging activities that educators may struggle to incorporate into traditional lectures (Arghode et al., 2017). Online teaching and learning differ significantly from the face-to-face classroom learning environment with which most professors are familiar. Professors play a critical role in facilitating student learning experiences. For most HEI professors, online teaching and learning is an unfamiliar skill requiring a substantially different pedagogical approach.

Faculty Perceptions of Adult Learners

Woodson Day et al. (2011) described adult learners as tenacious, more committed to education, more focused, and working harder in class. Adult learners bring a wealth of experience that has impacted their worlds. Intrinsic motivations affect adult learners' maturity and zest for learning.

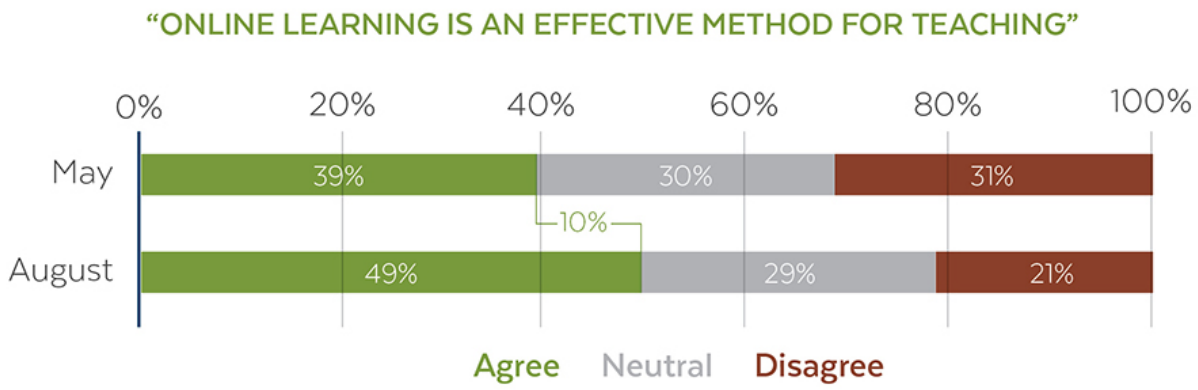
Teaching adult learners can require adaptations to pedagogical strategies used in the classroom. Drawing on adult learners' experiences and active learning techniques could contribute to the adult learning experience. Scholars have addressed faculty training in adult learning theory and andragogy. In Day et al.'s (2011) study, three participants had no formal training in teaching, three had informal training, and two had formal training as educators before teaching in higher education. The participants discussed how their approach to teaching adults impacted their teaching models, strategies, and techniques.

Historical Attitudes of Online Teaching

Much remains unknown about the relationship between pedagogical interactions as a learner and how it could impact attitudes and beliefs of online teaching. Figure 1 presents faculty perceptions of whether online learning is an effective method for teaching. Although the figure shows a modest increase in positive attitudes during the pandemic, many faculty considered online teaching less effective than traditional in-person modalities.

Figure 1

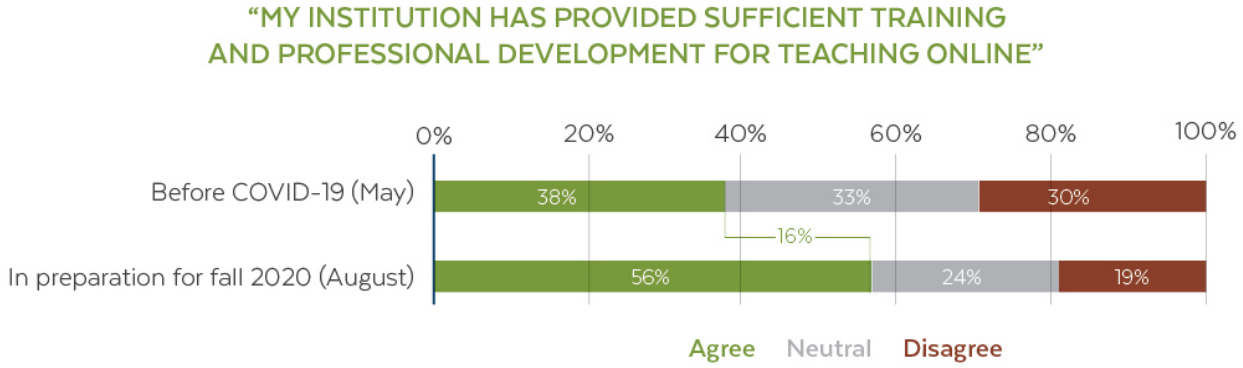
Faculty Perceptions of Online Learning as an Effective Teaching Method



Training and preparation to teach in an online environment also impact perceptions of online teaching and learning. Figure 2 presents faculty perceptions of institution-provided training support. Only 38% of those surveyed felt they had sufficient knowledge and training to teach online before the pandemic. As they prepared for fall. over 50% of respondents believed their institutions had provided substantial support as they entered the pandemic's new normal.

Figure 2

Faculty Perceptions of Training and Professional Development for Teaching Online



Faculty Perceptions of Online Teaching and Learning

There is a need to consider the perspectives of individuals and groups with a vested interest in the online modality of the curriculum provided by teacher college programs. It is also necessary to obtain faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning to understand the perceived effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online clinical experiences. Despite the increased popularity of e-learning, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement report, which focused on faculty beliefs about engaged learning, showed that none of the respondents taught online (Perrotta & Bohen, 2020). The survey provided no data on the actual faculty experience, which is problematic. HEI leaders need insight into online faculty's unique challenges and opportunities as e-learning programs expand.

A phenomenological study on faculty experiences and perceptions showed that faculty perceived designing and planning as more time intensive than teaching face-to-face courses (Sims & Baker, 2021). The respondents described online tools, platforms, and functional online course development as time-consuming. The participants also predicted less student success due to unreliable technology infrastructure. Al-Freih (2021) expressed concern about student readiness for fully online learning and its impact on experience quality. The faculty had strong

beliefs about their teacher identities and best teaching practices. Saltmarsh and Sutherland-Smith (2010) stated, “The practice of teaching represents much more than content and course delivery” (p. 15), indicating deeper issues and disruption to teacher beliefs, values, and practices with technology-mediated teaching and learning. Recognizing how faculty view online teaching could enable HEI leaders to better understand faculty experiences working with students in online clinical experiences.

Advantages and Disadvantages/Challenges of Online Learning

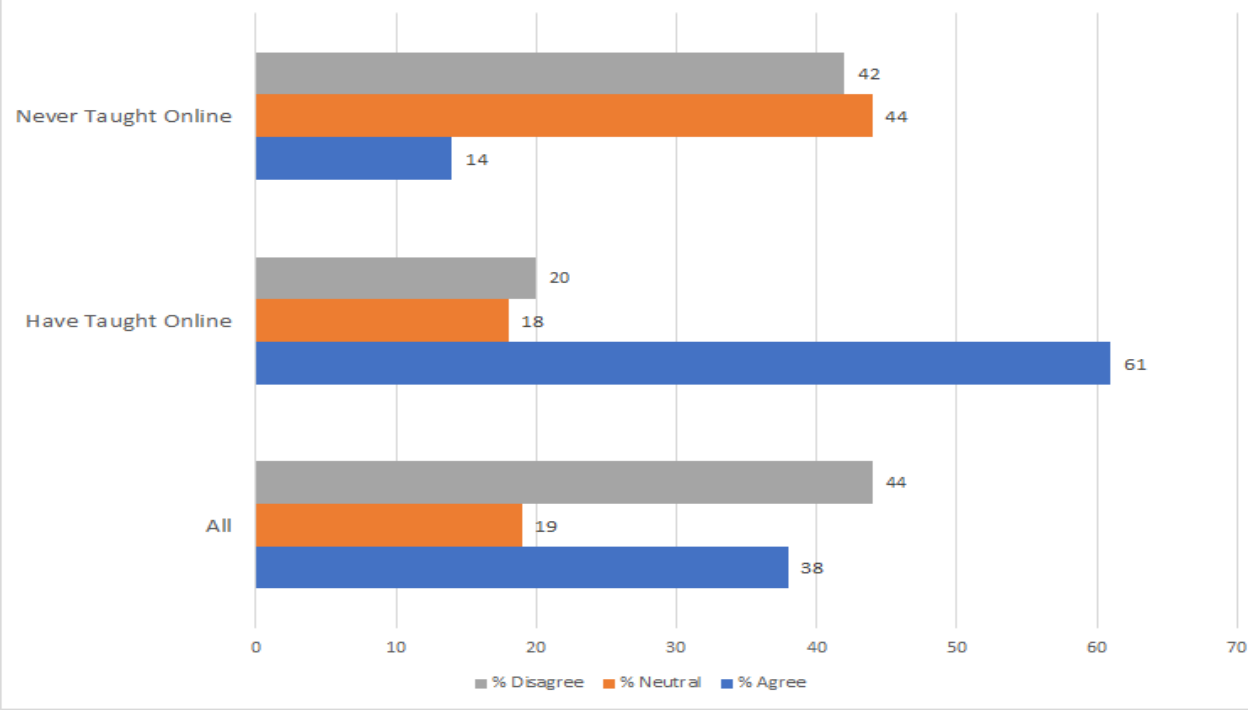
Online teaching is a complex process that requires educators to shift from traditional roles, beliefs, pedagogical thinking, and teaching practices (Al-Freih, 2021). Most traditional higher education faculty feel apprehensive about changing their role within the classroom and leaving their pedagogical perspectives and training. Shifts in traditional educator roles could cause intense faculty reactions and anxiety due to identity disruption, professional vulnerability, and concerns about tenure, promotion, and professional image (Al-Freih, 2021).

Several studies have focused on online learning’s advantages and disadvantages. Various factors contribute to faculty hesitancy about online teaching. According to Perrotta and Bohen (2020), some instructors “find it challenging to adjust [to a] new pedagogical form” (p. 51). Many college instructors teach as they were taught; therefore, they might lack examples of effective online teaching, especially if they have not taken online courses themselves. Educators might not have experience in effectively supporting and working with students in online clinical placements. Faculty’s fear of lacking the skill, knowledge, or disposition to successfully support students online could be a barrier. A 2017 Educause survey found that most faculty who did not teach online “strongly disagreed that online learning helps students learn more effectively” (Perrotta & Bohen, 2020, p. 51).

Figure 3 presents faculty views on whether online courses produce the same student learning outcomes as in-person courses. Professors with online teaching experience had more favorable opinions of online learning outcomes and achievement. In contrast, professors who had never taught online had less favorable opinions.

Figure 3

Professors' Views on Whether Online Courses Can Produce Equivalent Student Outcomes



According to Sims and Baker (2021), there is no significant difference in performance between online and face-to-face students.

Advantages

Some faculty might believe online instruction disrupts HEI teaching and learning structures and systems. However, online instruction can have many benefits for students, such as increased access, flexibility, and curricular access. Faculty respondents in Windes and Lesht's (2014) study identified a wider education reach as a benefit of online teaching. Online delivery

addresses many barriers to college attendance, presenting less of a burden regarding finances, travel, relocation, employment, and time or space (O'Shea et al., 2015).

Access and personalization are key advantages of online learning. A course with flexibility in engaging with the content and curriculum can motivate students. Emerging technologies provide new and innovative opportunities for student engagement and novel and diverse ways to reach academic goals.

Disadvantages/Challenges

Online teaching poses challenges for real-time problems, such as pivoting from face-to-face classes due to emergencies. Student readiness for online learning was an emergent theme in several studies. Al-Freih (2021) found that students lacked the required technical experiences at the beginning of the transition to online teaching, did not understand basic remote learning concepts and requirements, and thought of remote learning as a chance to gain undeserved grades. Another emerging theme in Al-Freih's study was active online engagement. Student engagement is a common concern for professors in face-to-face and online learning environments. In a study of professors, Windes and Lesht (2014) found that 66% of respondents considered their online learning outcomes inferior or somewhat inferior to face-to-face course outcomes. The participants expressed concern about how online learning could impact organizational direction and whether they would be replaced by online classes.

Despite the perceived challenges and disadvantages of online teaching and learning, many HEI leaders believe online education is critical for maintaining relevance, flexibility, and personalization for students (Dumford & Miller, 2018). Almost 70% of HEI leaders in the United States considered online education crucial to their long-term strategies (Allen & Seaman, 2013). According to the U.S. Department of Education, the number of distance education students at

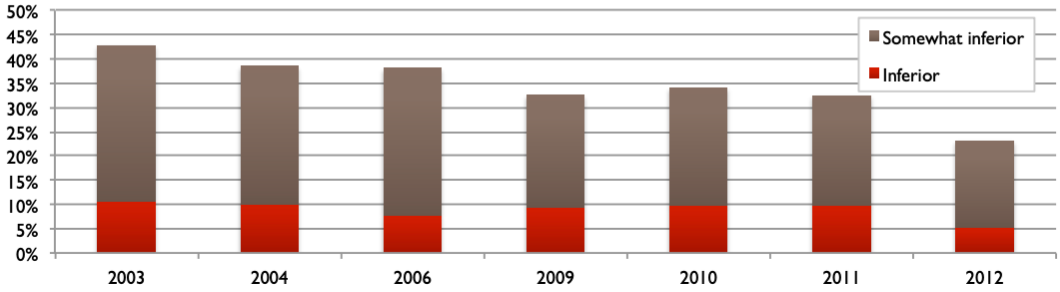
degree-granting higher education institutions exceeded 20 million in 2016, with more than 5.5 million students taking at least one online course (Young & Bruce, 2020).

Learning Outcomes Comparison: Face-to-Face Versus Online

Opinions vary on the quality and rigor of online learning and the impact on student outcomes. Following a 10-year analysis, Allen and Seamen (2013) discussed the trends of online learning. Despite an increase in the percentage of academic leaders holding positive views of the relative quality of online learning outcomes, a sizable minority continues to perceive face-to-face learning as superior to online education (Allen & Seamen, 2013). Figure 4 shows the percentage of academic leaders identifying online education as inferior to face-to-face learning outcomes.

Figure 4

Proportion Reporting Learning Outcomes in Online Education as Inferior Compared to Face-to-Face: 2003–2012

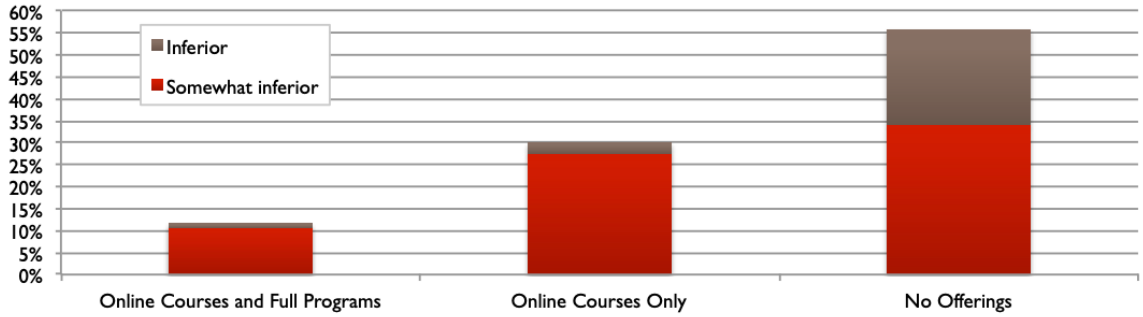


Note. From *Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Education in the United States*, by I. E. Allen and J. Seaman, January 2013. Copyright 2013 by Babson Survey Research Group. (https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED541571.pdf)

Another finding was that employees of institutions with active online learning programs or courses were likelier to report more favorable opinions of online course learning outcomes than at institutions with few or no online learning options (Allen & Seamen, 2013). Figure 5 shows the relationships between institutions with active online course offerings and those without.

Figure 5

Proportion Reporting Learning Outcomes in Online Education as Inferior Compared to Face-to-Face: 2012



Note. From *Changing Course: Ten Years of Tracking Online Education in the United States*, by I. E. Allen and J. Seaman, January 2013. Copyright 2013 by Babson Survey Research Group. (https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED541571.pdf)

Chapter Two Summary

Chapter Two presented a summary of major themes from the body of literature. Throughout the review, I analyzed principal findings and identified a theoretical framework that best supports my study. A summary of key themes follows.

Theme 1: Varying Perceptions of Online Teaching and Learning

Faculty and educational leaders have mixed opinions about online teaching and learning. Faculty perceptions range from accepting to unfavorable depending on experience, training, and teaching context. This finding is relevant as it further supports the need to explore why some embrace online teaching and others do not. The researchers reviewed in this chapter spent significant time exploring the barriers faculty faced with their adoption of or efficacy toward online learning. Few studies focused on how faculty moved through transformational learning phases with respect to online teaching and learning.

Theme 2: Shared Challenges

One commonality across the literature was the shared challenges faculty and higher education institutions faced in transitioning to online teaching and learning. Shared challenges include preparation and training, technology infrastructure, pedagogical challenges, and student engagement. In the present study, the participating faculty shared the challenges they encountered due to pandemic-time teaching and how those challenges impacted their perceptions of online teaching and learning.

Theme 3: Theoretical Frameworks and Innovation Adoption

The final theme from the literature was the use of theoretical frameworks grounded in change adoptions and innovations. Few studies on perceptions of online teaching and learning had learner-centered theoretical frameworks. Several researchers used the technology acceptance model to predict user acceptance and highlight potential design issues before users interact with the system (Koul & Eydgahi, 2017). Although technology acceptance is a consideration when investigating why or why not someone adopts a new or emerging technology, it was not the central focus of this study.

Another frequently used framework was the theory of planned behavior, which focuses on predicting planned human behavior and incorporates the construct of perceived behavioral control (Koul & Eydgahi, 2017). This framework was appropriate to evaluate participants' likelihood to engage in online learning or teach online. This study was not an evaluation of the likelihood of faculty opting to teach online. Instead, this research was an exploration of the lived experiences of faculty transitioned to online teaching and learning to better understand their perceptions of online teaching and learning.

The final framework across the literature was Rogers' (1962/2003) diffusion of innovations theory. This theoretical framework is the most appropriate for investigating technology adoption in higher education and educational environments (Straub, 2009). Similar to the technology acceptance model, the diffusion of innovations theory's focus on the rate at which diffusion occurs did not suit the present study. Although the framework could elicit interesting data surrounding the speed of faculty adaptation and adoption of new way of teaching and learning, that was not a focus of this study.

The reviewed literature indicated a need to explore other theoretical frameworks that better aligned with this study. This study was grounded in social constructivist theory and centered around adult learners, and the research questions focused on the participants' lived experiences. Thus, transformational learning theory aided in understanding faculty's experiences navigating online learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Restatement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

This study focused on the lived experiences of five full-time faculty who pivoted to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study centered on faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning and its advantages, disadvantages, and challenges. Chapter Three presents the study's methodology, population and sample, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Site

A large public COE in the Southwest United States was the study site for participants, interviews, and data collection. Among the COE's numerous program offerings are bachelor's and master's pathways for certification and noncertification. Over the last 4 years, the COE underwent a program redesign for enhanced choice, flexibility, and personalization of the student experience. The learning modality options now include online, traditional face-to-face, and hybrid experiences.

Research Questions

Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

Research Design and Methods

This was a qualitative IPA study. IPA is a dynamic research process to subjectively explore an experience from a participant's perspective (Roberts, 2013), making it a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology provides an understanding of the participant's

lived experiences. Phenomenological researchers develop insights from the perspectives of those involved, who detail their experiences of a time in their lives. Using a phenomenology approach, researchers ask semistructured interview questions to understand the participants' experiences. Because this study focused on faculty experiences with online teaching and learning, IPA was an appropriate design.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA emerged from Husserl's (1911/1965) descriptive phenomenology, a philosophy for understanding the human experience within a particular and specific context as it occurs (Stratman, 2020). Experience with a phenomenon can vary significantly from person to person. Phenomenological scholars begin and end their research with lived, meaningful, and significant experiences of the phenomenon (Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015). This methodology was appropriate for this study as all participants were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and experienced the rapid shift to online teaching.

Participant Recruitment

This study addressed a phenomenon that occurred at a specific time. The participants had substantial knowledge and experience of the phenomenon of interest, which was the immediate pivot to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Phenomenological studies typically include a homogenous group of participants who have encountered the same phenomenon. Recruitment occurred via purposeful sampling, a technique widely used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Palinkas et al., 2015). The sample comprised five participants. A small sample is not a limitation in phenomenological studies because the objective is not to generalize but illuminate the lived experience and context in as much depth as possible (Frechette et al., 2020).

The five participants met the following criteria:

- Be full-time higher education faculty within the COE.
- Have at least one semester working with students in online clinical experiences.
- Have a least one semester working with students in traditional face-to-face clinical experiences.
- Have taught at least one semester online synchronously during the pandemic.

After the Northern Arizona University and HEI Institutional Review Boards (IRB) approved the study, the faculty who met the study criteria received an email invitation with the study's description, goal, and participation risks. The faculty scheduled their first interviews after acknowledging the consent form and agreeing to participate.

Qualitative research presents several challenges regarding participant confidentiality. One challenge is the conflict between conveying detailed, accurate accounts of the social world while protecting the identities of the individuals living in that world (Kaiser, 2009). I maintained participant confidentiality with a dominant data collection approach. In the dominant approach, if researchers cannot collect data anonymously (i.e., without identifying information; Sieber, 1992), they must collect, analyze, and report the data without compromising the respondents' identities (Kaiser, 2009). This study's data resided on a personal password-protected computer with two-factor authentication for security. I was the only person to conduct the interviews and access the data, transcripts, and researcher journal. The participant consent form presented the policy for collecting, storing, and sharing the data.

Data Collection

A small sample allows for in-depth interviews so the participants can retell their experiences and uncover their assumptions about online teaching and learning. Each participant engaged in three in-depth, one-on-one interviews. As the researcher, my role was to listen

intently to the participants. A semistructured approach was appropriate to dialogue with the participants and co-construct their experiences of the phenomenon. The semistructured interview protocol included an outline and suggested questions about participants' lived experiences.

This study's topics included:

Interview 1: Teacher Identity and Pedagogical Experiences

- Types of educational experiences (both student and teacher).
- Confidence in teaching in different modalities.
- Pedagogical training and strategies.
- Assessment of online teaching and learning assumptions.
- Interpret teacher identity.

Interview 2: Advantages, Disadvantages, Challenges of Online Teaching and Learning

- Impact on faculty preparation.
- Impact on teaching style.
- Impact on student engagement.
- Impact on course learning outcomes.
- Impact on clinical experiences.
- Envision the future of professional experience design.
- Confidence in online teaching modalities.
- Interpret overall advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning.

Interview 3: Reflect on Quality and Effectiveness

- Quality of teaching experience.
- Quality of student experience.
- Reassessment of online teaching and learning assumptions.

- Future implications and recommendations.
- Interpret overall quality and experience.

Interview Location

The participants scheduled interviews at convenient days and times. The interviews occurred via Zoom video-conferencing.

Internal Review Board and Participant Consent

I completed CITI training before applying for IRB approval and researching human subjects. I obtained IRB approval to ensure I fully informed the participants of the study's risks and benefits. The participants provided written consent before engaging in interviews. An IRB is an appropriately constituted group formally designated to review and monitor research with human subjects (FDA, 1998). An IRB has the authority to approve, require modifications to, or disapprove research.

Interview Protocol

IPA researchers seek to unveil rich, firsthand accounts of experiences. In this study, the interviews began with easy warm-up questions to make the participants comfortable. The initial interview questions focused on the participants' background information, including demographics, work experience, education, training, and COE roles.

In their interviews, the participants shared their lived experiences. The interview protocol included direct and indirect questions focused on the three topics presented in the consent form and study overview. The interviews had a funnel question flow, moving from general questions for an unbiased perspective and broad domains to specific probes within a domain. Follow-up questions elicited additional details or elaboration. The questions' structure facilitated flow through the interview guide.

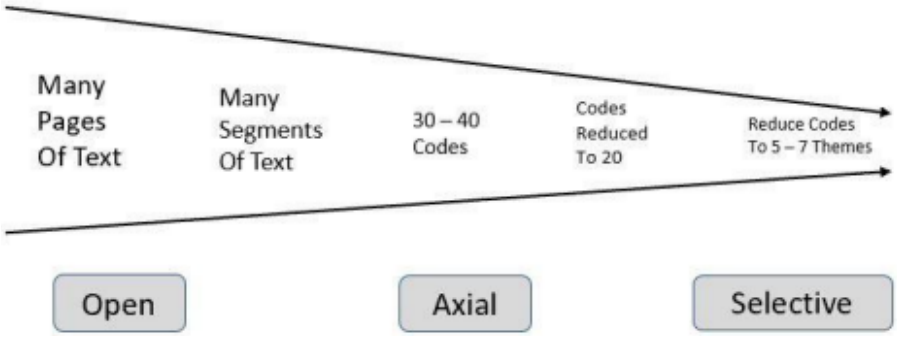
A researcher journal was the tool used to engage in the reflexive interview process. The journal enabled me to maintain and comment on impressions, environmental contexts, behaviors, and nonverbal cues inadequately captured by audio recording. The journal was a small notebook with handwritten notes taken during the interviews (see Sutton & Austin, 2015). I transcribed and maintained the journal electronically and securely on a personal computer.

Data Analysis

Two-pronged coding was the process used to elicit thick detail across the data. Content analysis is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2001). The first round was deductive analysis, which entailed a priori coding from the pre-established transformative learning framework. I used an inductive approach during second-round coding to add themes under the a priori codes. This analysis allowed me to create meaning from the data by summarizing and sorting them into categories and themes. Figure 6 shows the inductive analysis process for this study.

Figure 6

Overview of Coding Process



Note. From "A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data," by D. R. Thomas, 2006, *American Journal of Evaluation*, *27*(2), 237–246. (https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214005283748)

Coding focuses on the central concept of representing the interplay of the subjects' and researcher's perceptions of the nature and dimensions of the phenomena under study (Thomas, 2006). Data coding and theme identification occurred with Dedoose qualitative analysis software.

Credibility and Validity

A reflexive process throughout the study allowed me to maintain credibility and validity. Reflexivity is a way to improve transparency in the researcher's subjective role during data collection and analysis and apply the necessary changes for credible findings (Darawsheh, 2014). Researchers must seek clarity and confidence when interpreting participant experiences.

In this study, member checking occurred to ensure credibility and confidence in the participant data. With member checking, participants confirm or deny the accuracy and interpretations of the data (Candela, 2019). Researchers use member checking to ensure the accurate portrayal of participants' voices, experiences, and accounts. During member checking, I asked the participants whether they found the descriptions complete and realistic, the themes accurate, and the interpretations fair and representative. Participants engaged in a transcript review to check the validity of their responses and provide feedback to add additional context or meaning to the data.

Summary of Methodology

Qualitative IPA was an appropriate methodology and design for this in-depth study. Data collection occurred via semistructured interviews aligned with the study's constructivist foundation. I co-analyzed the participants' experiences to make meaning of the phenomenon. Using the selected research design and methodology, I could better understand faculty experiences with online teaching and learning and the impact on future program design.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This phenomenological study involved semistructured interviews with five full-time higher education undergraduate faculty to evaluate their perceptions of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences. Chapter Four presents the findings of the data analysis. The research questions used to drive the study were:

Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

The themes emerged from the data following a qualitative IPA data analysis approach. The process of deductive and inductive coding, analysis, and categorization led to the themes, summary, and conclusions, as discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

COVID-19 transformed many individuals' perceptions of online teaching and learning. I sought to understand how teacher education faculty's perceptions changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. I addressed the overarching research question—What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?—by answering the subresearch question: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

Sampling and Participants

The purpose of the study was to explore the lived experiences of five full-time faculty members and their perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. After obtaining IRB approval, I sent a recruitment email to 20 potential participants. Ten met the inclusion criteria, which were:

- Be full-time higher education faculty within the COE.
- Have at least one semester working with students in online clinical experiences.
- Have a least one semester working with students in traditional face-to-face clinical experiences.
- Have taught at least one semester online synchronously during the pandemic.

From the 10 qualified individuals, I identified a cross-section of program participants from the COE. Upon receipt of signed consent forms, I assigned each participant a number to deidentify them from their transcripts and data. Table 1 shows the participants' program affiliations.

Table 1

Participant Program Affiliation and Study Inclusion Criteria

Participant	Program affiliation	Full-time faculty	At least one semester working with students in online clinical experiences	At least one semester working in traditional face-to-face clinical experiences	At least one semester online synchronously during the pandemic
1	Secondary education	x	x	x	x
2	Elementary/ special education	x	x	x	x
3	Secondary education	x	x	x	x
4	Early childhood education	x	x	x	x
5	Elementary education	x	x	x	x

Data Collection and Analysis

I used a phenomenological approach to analyze the qualitative data obtained through semistructured interviews. Semistructured interviews allow qualitative researchers to elicit thick detail from participants (Barrett & Twycross, 2018). I maintained a researcher journal throughout the study to record notes, keywords, and questions as participants shared their experiences. Given the nature of semistructured interviews, the researcher journal provided a tool to probe details to better understand the participants' lived experiences. Further, to strengthen validity, participants received an emailed copy of their transcripts to annotate and, if relevant, expand upon their responses as part of the member-checking process. Upon receipt of the participants' amended documents, I returned to the researcher journal and made notes. I replayed the audio recordings and reviewed the transcripts before initiating the first round of coding.

This study used elements of content and thematic analysis over a two-stage process (see Weinberg et al., 2020). With the theoretical framework of transformative learning theory, I used an a priori approach to conduct initial coding. Following open, axial, and selective coding, I added categories and themes under the a priori codes. In responding to the interview questions, the participants were to:

1. Describe their teacher identity and pedagogical experiences.
2. Describe the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning.
3. Reflect on quality and effectiveness.

By orienting participants to describe their experiences, I intentionally created opportunities for them to share disorienting dilemmas. By asking about the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online learning, I elicited their negotiations and

actions with themselves, others, and the situation. Finally, by asking them to reflect on educational quality and effectiveness, I helped them look forward to planning and taking focused action.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of data analysis, I first engaged in a peer review process to conduct an external check of the methods and data analysis procedure. Next, I employed member checking, asking participants to review their transcripts for accuracy. Finally, I engaged with a peer reviewer by coding a subset of data to ensure the codes aligned with what the data presented.

I used a priori coding with Mezirow's (1997) transformative learning theory stages as initial codes to understand how the participants' experiences mapped to each stage (see Table 2). Within the stages (or combination of stages), I explored the emerging themes with inductive coding to understand what shared experiences or perceptions of online teaching and learning the faculty had as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the initial coding structure, I further categorized the data using thematic analysis to address the study's research questions. Compared to content analysis, a top-down data organization process, thematic analysis is a bottom-up technique that allows for a rich analysis of the transformational learning phases and further categorizing and classifying the data into shared themes to address the research questions (Weinberg et al., 2020).

Table 2

Stages of Mezirow's Transformational Learning

TL phase	Description	RQ	Description
1	A disorienting dilemma	What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?	Intrapsychic processes: Looking inward Thinking, feeling, and reflecting
2	A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame		
3	A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions		
4	Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change		
5	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions	What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?	Externally-focused processes: Looking outward Making connections, relating to others
6	Planning a course of action		
7	Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans		
8	Provisional trying of new roles		
9	Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships		Behaviorally-focused processes: Looking forward Planning and taking focused action
10	A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective		

Note. TL = transformational learning. Descriptions from "Looking Inward, Outward, and Forward: Exploring the Process of Transformative Learning in Teacher Education for a Sustainable Future," by A. E. Weinberg, C. D. Trott, W. Wakefield, E. G. Merritt, and L. Archambault, 2020, *Sustainability Science*, *15*, 1767–1787. (https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00831-9)

Findings

Transformational learning theory was this study's theoretical framework. Transformative learning occurs when the lens through which people view the world becomes broader, causing them to act in new ways because of that change in perspective (Mezirow, 2000). Tables 3, 4, and 5 present the transformational learning phases and their application to faculty teaching online with representative participant quotes.

Table 3

Stages 1–4 of Transformational Learning in Participant Experiences: Intrapsychic Processes: Looking Inward: Thinking, Feeling, and Reflecting

TL phase	Description	RQ	Representative quotes
1	A disorienting dilemma	Faculty new to online teaching while facing a global pandemic feel disoriented and inadequately prepared	Participant 5: "So similarly, it was kind of like being a new teacher almost there for a while. It was like, I don't know what to do. I don't know how to do it."
2	A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame	Guilt from the lack of training and knowledge to implement high-quality online teaching and needing to conceptualize a course differently	Participant 3: "Scared to death. Heightened anxiety. You know, all of my materials were in a mode to where they would need to be presented in person. I felt like…so transitioning all of that material to online. And I mean, it really made me learn how to use Canvas quickly and efficiently because I was also at the time, I was teaching a math methods course. And a lot of that is writing on the board and modeling the steps and taking tests. So I learned how to make a test in Canvas. I learned a lot of things quite quickly."
3	A critical assessment of epistemic, socio-cultural, or psychic assumptions	Examining methods, strategies, and tools which lead to reflections on effectiveness and quality	Participant 1: "So the way I think about it is like my classroom teaching experience. It's almost the same model. That first year that I was the sole classroom teacher, robot responsible for my students. I almost feel guilty because I was so bad. I didn't know what I was doing. It was an absolute
4	A critical assessment of epistemic, socio-	Examining methods, strategies, and tools which lead to	

TL phase	Description	RQ	Representative quotes
	cultural, or psychic assumptions	reflections on effectiveness and quality	disaster, you know. Everyone says it turned out okay, which is great, but I feel my own performance…was severely lacking compared to where I was 5 years later. I feel the exact same thing about online teaching. I feel sorry for that first group of students that we all had. I feel like they did not get the experience that people are getting today."

Note. TL = transformational learning. Descriptions from "Looking Inward, Outward, and Forward: Exploring the Process of Transformative Learning in Teacher Education for a Sustainable Future," by A. E. Weinberg, C. D. Trott, W. Wakefield, E. G. Merritt, and L. Archambault, 2020, *Sustainability Science*, *15*, 1767–1787. (https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00831-9)

Table 4

Stages 5–9 of Transformational Learning in Participant Experiences: Intrapsychic Processes: Looking Outward: Making Connections, Relating to Others

TL phase	Description	Explanation	Representative quotes
5	Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions	Collaborating with faculty to explore new ideas, resources, and tools. Perspective seeking	Participant 1: "And then building relationships with coworkers in different ways. Kind of relying on each other a lot more than we ever relied on each other in the past. I felt like, you know, just this semester, for example, Sam and I really relied on each other for building content for classes, and so we would use a shared slide deck, and then we'd go back and add things to each other's slide deck, and then we have a conversation about it. We talked through the whole class and wouldn't have done that face-to-face in a face-to-face classroom. I would have had my presentation, she would have had her presentation, and
6	Planning a course of action	Planning and implementing new strategies and techniques, e.g., co-teaching Co-constructing course sessions and activities	
7	Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans	Efforts to expand one's awareness and skills with online teaching and learning through professional learning or other faculty perspectives	

TL phase	Description	Explanation	Representative quotes
8	Provisional trying of new roles	Practicing and piloting technology tools and strategies with colleagues – adapting and adjusting course as needed	we maybe never would have had a conversation about it." Participant 4: "Google! [*laughs*] That's how I prepared. I Googled everything. I even had, like, Googled how to make breakout rooms. I Googled, you know, how, what strategies to use community builders to use. And so that's kind of how I prepared and obviously talk to other site leads, because we are all in the same boat. So meeting with them helped, too." Participant 3: "So I remember going to tech training to implement that into our classes. She piloted it [and] decided that it was not very effective because not all the students used it. "I know that we did…Jenny and I would go to random online tech tool workshops that were available that were free. So, we did a Peardeck one. There was another one that we did. She was more involved in that one than I was, but I— so I forget the name of that one, too. But again, that was like 3 years ago. So yeah, obviously, we didn't incorporate it anywhere. I felt like what we had from the COE was plenty to use."

TL phase	Description	Explanation	Representative quotes
			Participant 3: "My tech knowledge advanced exponentially. We thought more creatively about how assignment seems to be done. And we looked at making sure that that collaboration was still there."

Note. TL = transformational learning. Descriptions from "Looking Inward, Outward, and Forward: Exploring the Process of Transformative Learning in Teacher Education for a Sustainable Future," by A. E. Weinberg, C. D. Trott, W. Wakefield, E. G. Merritt, and L. Archambault, 2020, *Sustainability Science*, *15*, 1767–1787. (https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00831-9)

Table 5

Stages 9–10 of Transformational Learning in Participant Experiences: Behaviorally Focused Processes: Looking Forward: Planning and Taking Focused Action

TL phase	Description	Explanation	Representative quotes
9	Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships	Developing agency and efficacy to deliver online teaching effectively over time	Participant 5: "But now that we've been doing it for a little while, I have this bank of resources and things that I can go to, and so it's feeling comfortable, and it feels, um, it. I enjoy it, and I'm looking forward to continuing to teach in this capacity." Participant 5 "I think I see it now as something that I can be successful in doing. It's not overwhelming or daunting anymore. I enjoy it. I've come to enjoy it. I have a toolkit of different activities and ways to go about things."
10	A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective	Thinking, feeling, and acting in accordance with a new way of approaching online teaching.	Participant 1: "So I use a lot of surveys now, QR codes, a link there with some resources. Then they can go into groups, in the room, outside—change their environment a little bit to keep their brains going. And in the past, I would have been afraid to use technology like that. I'd be afraid it would fail. But being forced to use it online, I feel like I've kind of mastered some of it."

TL phase	Description	Explanation	Representative quotes
			Participant 1: "You know, in a face-to-face classroom, you're kind of limited. If they don't come to class, you've got to figure out a way to summarize that content and provide it to them. When you're online teaching synchronously, you can record it, and you can record all the interactions and the chat, and when they say, 'Oh, I couldn't make it to class.' But great, here's your video. You can watch the lesson. Let me know if you have any questions. Here's what you're responsible for doing. So. I feel like it's so much better for the kids who can't make it to class every once in a while if they benefit. You know life happens, and there's times they come—life happens. But my options for that have changed. Which is funny, because now I actually record my [classes] face-to-face. So I open up a Zoom window, and I record the classroom. And if somebody can't make it to class, then they have another recording of the class, so it's totally changed the way that I deliver instruction and support kids who aren't there.

Note. TL = transformational learning. Descriptions from "Looking Inward, Outward, and Forward: Exploring the Process of Transformative Learning in Teacher Education for a Sustainable Future," by A. E. Weinberg, C. D. Trott, W. Wakefield, E. G. Merritt, and L. Archambault, 2020, *Sustainability Science*, *15*, 1767–1787. (https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-020-00831-9)

Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

Mezirow (1997) identified the first phase of transformational learning as having a disorienting dilemma. When knowledge and experience align with pre-existing psychological and cultural assumptions, transformative learning is unlikely to occur (Weinberg et al., 2020). In

this study, the common disorienting dilemma was the push into online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Three categories of themes emerged from data analysis.

Table 6

Thematic Analysis

Categories	Themes
Preparation	Navigating the planning and preparation of online teaching.
Implementation	Faculty collaboration and leveraging distributed expertise. Exploration of methods, tools, and resources for online teaching.
Reflection and reintegration	Faculty skills, knowledge, and dispositions built as semesters progressed.

Category: Preparation

Theme: Navigating the Planning and Preparation of Online Teaching

In semistructured interviews, the participants discussed their lack of knowledge and preparation to teach in an online environment. The common disorienting dilemma of needing to quickly transform their courses to an online format was a shared experience. Participants' reflections on their pedagogical experiences and training showed they had little to no training and were creating a version of online classes with no prior experience.

Participant 2 described prior experience with online teaching, stating,

> I literally took the syllabus and just created an online course from my own version. And I don't even know if my version was like anyone else's because I never even took an online course. I just assumed that, if I was a student, these are the materials that I would want at the beginning of the week: know when my due date is, how to get ahold of my instructor, and so on. I tried to keep them engaging and interested in the topic…and tried to have some student…interaction with each other, so that you can learn from your peers. But I was given zero…instruction on how to actually create this online course, and I had no idea if I was doing it right or wrong. I just did it the way I did it. My version.

Participant 1 described a lack of experience with online teaching and learning similar to being a first-year teacher:

> So the way I think about it is like my classroom teaching experience. It's almost the same model. That first year, I was the sole classroom teacher, robot responsible for my students. I almost feel guilty because I was so bad. I didn't know what I was doing. It was an absolute disaster, you know. Everyone says it turned out okay, which is great, but I feel about my own performance. I feel like it was severely lacking compared to where I was five years later. I feel the exact same thing about online teaching. I feel sorry for that first group of students that we all had. I feel like they did not get the experience that people are getting today.

Participant 5 also felt the learning curve associated with teaching online was like being a novice teacher with no training or experience. The participant said, "So similarly, it was kind of like being a new teacher almost there for a while. It was like, I don't know what to do. I don't know how to do it."

Participants developed their skills primarily during the study period due to self-driven professional development and a lot of trial and error. The common disorienting dilemma related to the COVID-19 pandemic and online teaching left faculty members questioning their knowledge and skills as an instructor. This dilemma served as the impetus to explore ways to prepare quickly to meet the instructional needs of their students. Without formalized training in online pedagogical strategies, the participants had to upskill quickly to transform their traditional face-to-face classes into an online learning format. All participants said that leaning on other faculty enabled collaborative relationships that would later allow them to acquire new knowledge and skills and take a new course of action.

Category 2: Implementation

Theme 1: Faculty Collaboration

Before the pandemic, faculty collaboration was not characteristic at the COE. Teachers typically develop and implement courses in isolation when preparing for a semester. With the pandemic requiring faculty members to shift delivery formats, collaboration became a hallmark of how faculty embraced a new course of action. Several participants expressed discontent with

their knowledge and skill levels and shared feeling guilty when they began to adapt their courses online. The intense pace at which faculty needed to adapt to a new way of delivering instruction provided an opportunity for intense collaboration.

Participant 3 described the collaboration experience: “I just felt like we always kept bringing, you know, thoughts to the table and discussing solutions to them, so definitely working together with the team.” All participants described not knowing if they were doing it “right” concerning course creation, engagement strategies, and outcomes measurement. Participant 2 discussed a collaboration with another site lead:

> We just started meeting on Zoom, and I was partnered with another site lead to create an extra opportunity for the students to continue with their field experience. And that was turned into the Sun Devil Learning Lab. We did what we thought was right, but I don’t know if we would change a lot of the things that we were doing because it was good organization. It was good experiences for them, but I don’t know if it was right. Still, we just kind of lived in the moment and did what we were thinking was right for them, and emotionally they came out of it. Coursework-wise, they felt prepared.

Participant 5 noted that collaboration provided opportunities to share and build a bank of resources across the faculty team. The participant said, “It was challenging. But I think one thing that worked in our favor very well was that we collaborated and shared resources.” Participant 2 discussed the opportunities for new and emerging roles provided by co-teaching:

> So, it was trial and error for us because I co-taught with another colleague. And I had a bigger technology background and just knew more about the stuff. So I was kind of that person in our co-teaching team, and then the other co-teacher was more of the socially emotional checking in with students.

Participant 1 saw new relationships emerge that would not have begun without a common disorienting dilemma. The participant reported, “And then building relationships with coworkers in different ways. Kind of relying on each other a lot more than we ever relied on each other in the past.”

Faculty collaboration is one of the key transferable lessons faculty highlighted throughout this study. Participants said that the level of engagement between colleagues was crucial to acquiring new knowledge and skills. Despite the high levels of engagement and collaboration among faculty, student engagement was an emerging challenge.

Theme 2: Student Engagement

During the interviews, it became apparent that participants felt they could not engage students effectively and meaningfully assess their engagement. Participants described their experience with managing the Zoom platform and teaching to blank screens. Participant 5 shared, "The engagement is the hardest part because it…is challenging to teach to a sea of black boxes with names."

Participant 2 identified the challenges of using face-to-face grouping strategies online. The participant found group work in an online setting to be:

> Very difficult, though, to really see if they have met these outcomes, because I think in a regular face-to-face setting, we can have students talking in groups, and I can physically walk around and hear what a group is saying, and how they're saying it, what they're discussing, and I can still over here a group behind me talking about something, and it's not like that in this virtual setting. You can jump from Zoom room to a breakout room, but that's all you can hear. It's isolated in that room.

Participant 2 also found the traditional movement and ability to check in with students challenging in an online platform such as Zoom, explaining,

> So I was kind of that person in our co-teaching team, and then the other co-teacher was more of the socially emotional checking in with students where— are you okay, privately chatting, hey? I noticed, you know, you look a little sad today, or something where I was the full on— I'm in teaching mode—I can't see all the people that I'm teaching to. I'm just teaching and talking and doing. So I think that was big for us to have a co-teacher to be able to check on those pieces, because when you're standing in front of people, you can scan the room. You can see body language. You can see faces. You can walk around…and you can't do that on Zoom. So you can't really see what students are actually displaying. You can't see the engagement,

Participant 4 discussed the challenges in engaging students in Zoom:

> I was a bit worried because I didn't know how to engage students, and I love to have discussions, and because I'm an early child teacher by heart, I feel like you should be doing and experiencing, and so doing that via Zoom is not so much possible.

Furthermore, Participant 4 shared:

> Another thing that's really hard is, I'd love to start every course off with celebrating, like, celebrating everybody's accomplishments, or many people's accomplishments. And on Zoom, you know— In person, you can kind of like, you know, they want to interact with you. But I think on Zoom, the challenges are just to have them interact. Many of them, even though you ask, have their screens off, their videos off, so you can't look them in the eye. You like a lot of people. You're in a meeting like you've got it, these students. You can't look them in the eye. You're looking at yourself. So I think that connectedness is really hard.

Category 3: Reflection

Theme: Faculty Skill, Knowledge, and Dispositions Built as Semesters Progressed

As subsequent semesters progressed, so did faculty knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward online teaching and learning. Participant 3 addressed upskilling technology and pedagogical strategies for online teaching and learning, saying, "My tech knowledge advanced exponentially. We thought more creatively about how assignment seems to be done. And we looked at making sure that that collaboration was still there." Participant 5 expressed an increased affinity for teaching online:

> But now that we've been doing it for a little while, I have this bank of resources and things that I can go to, and so it's feeling comfortable, and it feels… I enjoy it, and I'm looking forward to continuing to teach in this capacity. I think I see it now as something that I can be successful in doing. It's not overwhelming or daunting anymore. I enjoy it. I've come to enjoy it. I have a toolkit of different activities and ways to go about things.

Participant 1 reported building confidence over time and now integrating a variety of instructional strategies within the online setting:

> I use a lot of surveys now, QR codes, a link there with some resources. Then they can go into groups, in the room, outside—change their environment a little bit to keep their brains going. And in the past, I would have been afraid to use technology like that. I'd be

> afraid it would fail. But being forced to use it online, I feel like I've kind of mastered some of it.

A less-prominent theme pertained to influential factors, including mental health, human connection, and well-being. For example, Participant 2 expressed concern with underlying social-emotional needs going unmet throughout the pandemic:

> I think that there's so many socially emotional problems that happened during the pandemic that were never dealt with. And so here we are in, you know, Year 2 out of this situation. Students, more than ever, are hiding behind screens, not taking some of their course work serious as they once did, because they had to drive somewhere, park somewhere, walk up to the building, sit in the seat, select their seat. Where do I want to sit? And actually be a part of a group.

The undercurrent of ensuring students were taken care of, accounted for, and checked in regularly was evident across all participants.

Addressing the Research Questions

The first question addressed by this study was: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? The subquestion was: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences? During the interviews, the participants showed how prior experiences influenced their perceptions of challenges and disadvantages. Faculty who approached challenges optimistically tended to demonstrate a zest for piloting new teaching methods and strategies and collaborating deeply with others. Those who were novices to teaching online struggled early on but acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to grow in this domain.

Advantages

Most participants identified online teaching and learning advantages, including format flexibility, accessibility, and the integration of new learning technologies. Online clinical

experiences provided flexibility for students to attend their internships. Participant 2 said, "Students have different schedules. With online field experiences, they are not bound to an 8 [a.m.] to 3 p.m. experience. They can choose when to attend." Participant 1 expressed,

> I feel like one of the benefits was that we worked with an online K–12 school. And so those teachers were not new to online teaching. That was their job; that had been their job. They [have] always been doing that. They've been trained to do that. I think putting them in a classroom with teachers that we're still learning the technology, still new to synchronous instruction, would have been an absolute disaster. So it was so nice that we actually had the opportunity to work with teachers who knew what they were doing in an online classroom.

Participant 1 elaborated on the need to expose future teachers to online teaching and learning to develop more well-rounded candidates:

> I don't think everybody should have to do 2 or 3 years of, you know, 2 or 3 semesters of virtual instruction unless they want to. But I think everybody should have exposure to it. I think we all need to be prepared to do this if it's an emergency, but also because it's just a different way of delivering content.

The faculty agreed that online teaching and learning are the present and future of education, including at the COE. They suggested that online clinical experiences could create a new pathway for preservice teachers. In sharing their experiences, participants showed the advantages of online teaching and learning, including collaboration with other faculty and increased student flexibility. Many participants reported experiencing increased anxiety before implementing online teaching; over time, they found a sense of knowledge-building and collaboration from delivering online teaching. Specific to teaching online postpandemic, the faculty emphasized competence, quality, and sustainability.

Disadvantages and Challenges

Disadvantages and challenges that emerged from the study included transferring face-to-face teaching methodologies to an online environment, student engagement, and a lack of

knowledge and skills in online teaching pedagogies. Participant 3 discussed struggling with collaboration in an online classroom:

> Some challenges with teaching online, I think, is that collaboration piece, and me being able to go into or hear all of the groups talking. Being able to go into those breakout rooms and hear them. I think that's the biggest challenge that I have. I think I struggled a little bit with recognizing how much time is needed for [a] discussion to take place, as well as setting the discussion up. So, when you go into your breakout rooms, say hi first. Like, who would have thought that you would have to tell them that, right? And then from there, giving them a question to focus on, and not too many questions or not too many tasks, because then they would come back and nothing was done, so very small tasks.

Participant 1 discussed the impact of isolation on mental well-being and societal health:

> The disadvantages…I think it's the social aspect. I think you lose a lot living in isolation. Not everybody has a family around them. Not everybody has somebody that they can talk to every day. So the fact that you can go to work and be on a computer and virtually, you know, essentially talk to people online is not the same as a human-to-human interaction. And I think, as a society, I think that's bad for us. But I also think, individually, that's not healthy to be so isolated in your world.

Participant 1 expressed the need to prioritize mental health and ensure students receive enough social-emotional support across their course experiences. Discussing personal experiences during the pandemic, the participant shared,

> And you know, some students didn't get enough emotional support. And there were some that were really, really struggling. And I think if it was a face-to-face scenario, the chances of them falling through the cracks, I think, would have been much, much smaller. Somebody would have been checking in on them, making sure they were okay. And when you can't do that, when you just trust, you know, they turn on the camera. And you say, "How is it going today?" And [they] say, "I'm doing great." It's hard to read through that emotion, you know. You can't really tell how someone is doing in this environment. So I think the mental health looking forward is probably the biggest priority for people who are exclusively online.

Summary

Chapter Four presented this study's data collection, analysis, and findings. The findings reinforced the literature surrounding the theme of shared challenges and perceptions of online

teaching and learning. Participants identified gaps in online pedagogical skills, student engagement, and challenges with transitioning instructional content to an online modality.

Chapter Four addressed the research questions by analyzing participant narratives and representative quotes to support emerging advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences. One emerging finding was the rate in which faculty were able to identify solutions through collaboration when faced with a common disorienting dilemma. The phases of transformational learning that faculty members moved through were apparent in participants' narratives.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter Five presents a summary of the research study and the conclusions drawn from the findings. The topics discussed include implications and recommendations for further research. The purpose of the study was to explore the lived experiences of five full-time faculty members and their perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to identify faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences

Recommendations and Limitations

The following recommendations could help COE leaders support their faculty with quick transitions to online teaching and learning. Recommendations address the need for long-range faculty development planning, team-based instructional models and mentorship, and employing communities of practice.

Recommendation 1: Faculty Development

Learning and acquiring a new skill is challenging, even in expected and controlled settings; in a pandemic, the task is even more complex. Before the next crisis, college leaders should design and implement a long-range technology plan incorporating faculty development focused on pedagogical skills, student engagement strategies, and social-emotional support structures. Many researchers have identified student engagement, or student involvement, in educationally purposeful activities, as the strongest predictor of students' learning and personal development (Dumford & Miller, 2018). Thus, understanding how the online environment affects engagement should inform the implementation of online programs. Participants in this study expressed how challenging it was to engage students in an online format. The faculty

members collaborated with colleagues to find new methods and tools for online teaching and learning, and all described a shared experience of decreased student engagement. Providing sustained technology professional development with strategies for effective online teaching would help faculty feel more confident. This study's findings suggest that participants moved more easily through Stages 1–7 of transformational learning (see Mezirow, 1997) but struggled to reach full transformation in Stages 8–9. According to Sims and Baker (2021), leveraging the essential constructs of transformative learning—experience, critical reflection, reflective discourse, and empathy—can yield such learning within higher education online faculty development.

Recommendation 2: Team-Based Instruction Models and Mentorship

Leveraging a team-based approach when quick skills acquisition is necessary will provide essential support to yield higher-quality faculty and student experiences. A team-based model enables the identification of just-right responsibilities that match the faculty members' skill levels. COE leaders should consider leveraging pedagogical experts in online teaching to lead instructors and partner them with subject or content matter experts. Faculty leads could provide modeling and mentorship to novice online instructors, enabling further skill acquisition and development opportunities. A team-based approach allows faculty to conceptualize new and emerging roles within a course that will increase the quality and effectiveness of the course experience for faculty and students.

Recommendation 3: Implement Communities of Practice

The more frequently professionals engage in social practice with others, the more they gain a new understanding of and ways of being in the practice (Clark et al., 2021). Communities of practice provide opportunities for faculty to collaborate and share new or emerging promising

practices. Faculty rarely have the opportunity to participate in formal teacher training with their colleagues. Through communities of practice, faculty members can reflect on their professional identities, engaging in discourse to bring their prior experiences and expertise and develop new skills. As shown throughout the data, collaboration was a key attribute that supported faculty as they pivoted to online teaching and learning. COE leaders should establish, nurture, and encourage structures for faculty collaboration.

Limitations

This study has several limitations, and future research is necessary for a better understanding of the phenomenon of the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of shifts to online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences. First, the small sample size of five makes generalizing the findings challenging. There is also the possibility of bias, as I knew the participants interviewed for this study. The findings of this study are preliminary, and a more detailed study could elicit further data about the online clinical experience model.

Implications

Implications for Practice

Compared to face-to-face teaching modalities, online teaching requires faculty to intentionally prepare and plan for meaningful pedagogies that incorporate social presence and interaction. Instructors must have adaptive teaching styles, offer various learning activities, design active learning experiences, and facilitate ongoing engagement to support social presence (Young & Bruce, 2020). COE leaders must integrate strategic priorities focused on online teaching and learning and implement structures to monitor and evaluate online teaching and learning experiences and effectiveness.

Implications for Future Research

According to Mezirow (2000), transformational learning requires critical reflection about assumptions that guide thinking. Critically reflecting on assumptions can cause a shift in individuals' thinking and have an impact on their practice. As described in this study's findings, participants progressed through the stages of transformation at different rates, and not all moved through all 10 phases. One recommendation for future research is to extend the study length to allow faculty to continue to teach within the online space while simultaneously receiving mentorship, professional learning, and opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues.

This study focused on understanding the lived experiences of five full-time higher education faculty and their perceptions of online teaching and learning. This study did not elicit a deep understanding of faculty perceptions of the online clinical experience model. Further research is needed to better understand the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of the online clinical experience model.

Conclusions

This study was an exploration of faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Amid the changing landscape of higher education, the findings provide timely information to further inform strategic priorities and programmatic design elements within the COE. The pandemic was a catalyst for higher education institutions to embrace drastic innovation. By moving entire programs online, upskilling faculty quickly, and designing an entirely new clinical experience model, the COE could shift traditional programming to a new mode of instruction. This shift did not come without challenges. Few faculty members could move through all transformational learning phases as they navigated new territory and struggled with their assumptions and discontent. Despite facing the same

disorienting dilemma, faculty passed through stages of transformation at different rates, with most remaining in the early to middle stages.

As COE leaders transition to the school's new normal, they must stop and reflect on lessons learned. This study showed how ill-equipped faculty were to make the swift transition to online learning and indicated gaps in faculty training. The findings showed how faculty negotiated challenges and took steps to acquire new knowledge, reimagine roles, and implement and develop best practices. To build off the collective efficacy of faculty groups, COE leaders should design and deploy ongoing faculty development and training supports focused on online pedagogy. Additionally, faculty must embrace a growth mindset to build their skills and competencies in online teaching and learning.

Higher education has experienced a drastic shift in the delivery of knowledge and information since the pandemic. Online programs will continue to grow and be critical components of teacher preparation programs. This study's findings could inform the COE on programmatic design priorities. Additionally, understanding the faculty experience will aid in removing barriers and building wrap-around support as faculty enter a new stage of higher education teaching and learning.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Title: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Date: _____

Time:_____

Location: Zoom

Interviewee:_____

Pseudonym:_____

Signed consent form:

Notes to Interviewee

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your input is valuable to understand faculty experiences with online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences

Confidentiality of your responses and identity will be assured of confidentiality throughout the research process. Participant information will be encrypted and remain confidential. No identifying information will be released or shared.

Approximate length of the interview: 45 to 60 minutes over a series of three 20-minute interviews.

Interview Protocol

Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

Interview 1: Teacher Identity and Pedagogical Experiences

- Types of educational experiences (both student and teacher).
- Confidence in teaching in different modalities.
- Pedagogical training and strategies.
- Assessment of online teaching and learning assumptions.
- Interpret teacher identity.

Questions:

1. Looking at when you were a student in higher education, how did you experience your teacher preparation program? How is it similar or different?
2. I am interested in learning more about your experience with teaching in different modalities. How would you describe your pre-pandemic experience with teaching in different modalities?
    a. Specifically, online, hybrid, or synchronous
3. What types of pedagogical *training* have you had in online, hybrid, or synchronous teaching environments?
4. How did you feel when you were asked to pivot to online synchronous teaching and learning during the pandemic?
5. Prior to the pandemic, what were your beliefs about online teaching and learning?

Interview 2: Advantages, Disadvantages, Challenges of Online Teaching and Learning

- Impact on faculty preparation.
- Impact on teaching style.
- Impact on student engagement.
- Impact on course learning outcomes.
- Impact on clinical experiences.
- Envision the future of professional experience design.
- Confidence in online teaching modalities.
- Interpret overall advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning.

Questions:

1. How would you describe your experience with teaching online synchronously during the pandemic?
2. Describe how teaching online synchronously is similar to or different from teaching in a face-to-face modality.
3. How did you prepare to teach online synchronously during the pandemic?
4. How did you support students with teaching online during the pandemic throughout their clinical experiences?
5. Describe how teaching online synchronously impacted your teaching style.
6. Following this experience, what do you perceive as the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online clinical experiences?
7. Describe how teaching online synchronously impacted student motivation, engagement, and meeting course learning outcomes.
8. What impact do you feel the pandemic has had on the future of teacher preparation and clinical experiences?
9. Summarize for me the overall advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of teaching online synchronously.

Interview 3: Reflect on Quality and Effectiveness

- Quality of teaching experience.
- Quality of student experience.
- Reassessment of online teaching and learning assumptions.
- Future implications and recommendations.
- Interpret overall quality and experience.

Questions:

1. Now when you look back at the shifts that occurred with course delivery and clinical experiences, what do you think was most valuable during that time?
2. Reflecting on your experience post-pandemic how have your attitudes, beliefs, or assumptions about online teaching and learning changed if at all?
3. What shifts or recommendations would you like to see in clinical experiences moving forward?
4. What recommendations would you make to the COE leadership on how to best support faculty and students in an online teaching and learning environment?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with online teaching and learning throughout the pandemic?

Follow-up Questions:

- Can you expand on that last statement?
- How were you feeling when that happened?
- Can you summarize for me ___?
- What steps did you take to ___?
- How did that impact ___?
- Would you characterize the experience that way?

Appendix B: Initial Recruitment Email to Participants

Hello _____,

My name is Ashley Katikos and I am the Assistant Division Director, Clinical Assistant Professor of Teacher Preparation at Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. In addition, I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership Program at Northern Arizona University. My dissertation work is entitled FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

I would like to ask you to participate in my research regarding lived experiences as a full-time faculty member who has experience with teaching and learning online and online clinical experiences. The specific criteria for study participation is as follows:

- Be full-time higher education faculty within the COE.
- Have at least one semester working with students in online clinical experiences.
- Have a least one semester working with students in traditional face-to-face clinical experiences.
- Have taught at least one semester online synchronously during the pandemic.

This study is personally and professionally important to me because I am passionate about understanding how as a college of education, we can best support faculty with online teaching and learning and better understand the role of online clinical experiences within the teacher preparation program design.

If you participate in this, it will involve an interview held online via Zoom. The interview will consist of a series of questions about your experiences with online teaching and learning and supporting students in online clinical experiences. The estimated time commitment is 45-60 minutes distributed across three interviews. Once the interview has been transcribed you will be provided a copy of the transcript to review and add any additional comments.

This study's data will reside on a personal password-protected computer with two-factor authentication for security. I will be the only person to conduct the interviews and access the data, transcripts, and researcher journal. The participant consent form will present the policy for collecting, storing, and sharing the data. Participants will each be given a participant ID number, and this number will be used to match/link the Zoom discussions. This confidential data will be stored on the ASU secure cloud storage, and only the researcher will have access to the data. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. De-identified data collected as a part of current study will not be shared with others (e.g., investigators or industry partners) for future research purposes or other uses.

All participants meeting the study criteria will receive an email inviting them to participate in the study. The email will include a link to the consent form housed within Qualtrics. Qualtrics provides a signature function that will allow participants to provide their first and last name,

check the consent box and provide a signature. The form will include the background of the study, the purpose of the study, the risks and benefits of the study, and information about confidentiality and data protection. Consenting to the study is strictly voluntary. By submitting the consent form, you are agreeing that the information collected through the data collection process may be used as described in the research project.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to participate in my study. If you are interested in participating, and meet the specific criteria for study participation, please contact me at Ashley.Katikos@asu.edu.

I appreciate your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,

Ashley Katikos

Appendix C: Second Email Notification to Obtain Consent

Project Number: 1960350-1
Approval Date: November 4, 2022
This stamp must be on all consenting documents

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY
Office of Research Compliance

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Principal Investigator: Ashley C. Katikos

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you do not have to participate. This document contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision on whether or not to participate.

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of five full-time higher education faculty.

The following research question will frame this study:
Research Question: What are faculty perceptions of online teaching and learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
Subquestion: What are the perceived advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online teaching and learning and online clinical experiences?

This study is important to me because I seek to understand how as a college of education we can best support faculty with online teaching and learning and better understand the role of online clinical experiences within the teacher preparation program design.

There are no associated risks with the study. This research is relevant in many ways:

1. This research will hope to inform future programmatic and clinical experience design. Understanding the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges with online teaching and student support in online clinical placements could provide programmatic design leaders with insight to faculty development needs, curricular design elements, etc.
2. This research will unpack faculty perceptions of online teaching and online clinical experience models. For example, this research may provide college of ed leaders with knowledge of barriers to implementing a redesigned clinical model
3. This research will address a gap in the literature surrounding the role of online clinical experiences within teacher preparation programs. Online and distance learning has existed for 30 years; therefore, it merits exploring why school and higher education leaders and instructors

Project Number: 1960350-1
Approval Date: November 4, 2022
This stamp must be on all consenting documents

struggled to pivot to remote instruction quickly when the pandemic occurred.

This study's data will reside on a personal password-protected computer with two-factor authentication for security. I will be the only person to conduct the interviews and access the data, transcripts, and researcher journal. Interviews will be scheduled and conducted at times that are convenient for you. The interview time frame is 45-60 mins and will only be conducted by me at a mutually agreed upon time. A variety of times and dates will be presented to accommodate your schedule. You will not be compensated for their participation in the study.

All electronic data (i.e. – transcripts, notes, etc.) will be securely stored on the researcher's password-protected computer for a period of five years. Similarly, consent forms will be stored in a secure, locked safely and will remain sealed for a period of five years. At the close of five years, all participant documentation will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report. Your responses will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this code will be kept in a password-protected file. Only the researcher will have access to the file. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list will be destroyed.

With your permission, I would like to audiotape this interview so that I can make an accurate transcript. Once I have made the transcript, I will erase the recordings. Your name will not be in the transcript or my notes. The information that you give in the study will be anonymous. Your name will not be collected or linked to your answers. Because of the nature of the data, it may be possible to deduce your identity; however, there will be no attempt to do so and your data will be reported in a way that will not identify you. Information collected about you will not be used or shared for future research studies.

The information that you provide in the study will be handled confidentially. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released or shared as required by law. Northern Arizona University Institutional Review Board may review the research records for monitoring purposes.

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact me at 734-233-8474 or Acj39@nau.edu.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Human Research Protection Program at 928-523-9551 or online at http://nau.edu/Research/Compliance/Human-Research/Welcome/.

Project Number: 1960350-1
Approval Date: November 4, 2022
This stamp must be on all consenting documents

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form, and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I affirm that I am at least 18 years of age and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of subject	Signature of subject	Date

AGREEMENT TO BE AUDIORECORDED

Subject Signature:_____ Date:_____

AGREEMENT TO BE VIDEORECORDED

Subject Signature:_____ Date:_____

Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:

To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed the full contents of the study including all of the information contained in this consent form. All questions of the research subject and those of his/her parent or legal guardian have been accurately answered.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent:_____

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Approval

NAU NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY
Office of Research Compliance

Institutional Review Board for the
Human Research Protection Program

525 S Beaver St
PO Box: 4062
Flagstaff AZ 86011
928-523-9551
https://www.nau.edu/IRB

To:	Ashley Katikos
From:	NAU IRB Office
Approval Date:	November 4, 2022
Project:	FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN INTERPRETIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
Project Number:	1960350-1
Submission:	New Project
Action:	APPROVED
Project Risk Level:	MINIMAL RISK
Approval Expiration Date:	November 4, 2027
Next Report Date:	
Review Category/ies:	**The project is not federally funded or supported and has been deemed to be no more than minimal risk.**

This project has been reviewed and approved by an IRB Chair or designee.

- Northern Arizona University maintains a Federalwide Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (FWA #00000357).
- All research procedures should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the guidance.
- The Principal Investigator should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that affect the protocol and report any unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others. Please refer to Guidance Investigators Responsibility after IRB Approval, Reporting Local Information and Minimal Risk or Exempt Research.
- All documents referenced in this submission have been reviewed and approved. Documents are filed with the HRPP Office within IRBNet. If subjects will be consented, the approved consent(s) are available within IRBNet upon approval notification from the HRPP Office.

Important

The principal investigator for this study is responsible for obtaining all necessary approvals before commencing research. Please be sure that you have satisfied applicable external and University requirements, for example (but not limited to) data repositories, listserv permission, records request, data use agreement, conducting University surveys, data security, international, conflicts of interest, biological safety, radiation safety, HIPAA, FERPA, FDA, sponsor approval, clinicaltrials.gov, tribal consultation, or school approval. IRB approval does not convey approval to commence research in the event that other requirements have not been satisfied.