The Impact of Faculty Experience with Emergency Remote Teaching: An Interpretive Phenomenological Study

Maha Al-Freih
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University
Saudi Arabia

Abstract

The aim of this phenomenological study is to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of remote teaching on instructors' perceptions of online learning and future teaching practices amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to analyze open-ended semi-structured interviews conducted with five higher education faculty in Saudi Arabia. Three major themes were identified: enhancing student engagement; increased awareness of technology affordances and constraints; and moving from emergency remote teaching to technology-enhanced and blended learning. Participants of this study were mainly concerned about finding ways to support active student engagement in this new learning environment, which in turn increased their awareness of the educational affordances and constraints of online learning and technologies. Participants' deeper understanding of the potential of online technologies in supporting student learning, as well as their own and students' increased familiarity and comfort with online learning and technologies, served as the main drivers for potential future implementation of blended learning and technology-enhanced teaching practices. With that said, participants were still apprehensive about engaging in fully online teaching, arguing that blended strategies and enhanced-technology integration are more likely to overcome some of the limitations of face-to-face teaching and improve the overall learning experience for their students. Discussion of these findings in relation to the extant literature and their implications for higher education institutions moving forward are provided.

Keywords: COVID-19, emergency remote teaching, faculty professional development, faculty support, online teaching

The global spread of the coronavirus has impacted – and continues to impact – many aspects of human life, including education. Higher education institutions around the world responded by pivoting to distance and online education to reduce or eliminate in-person classes, significantly disrupting the education of what is estimated to be over 220 million post-secondary students, or 13% of the global student body (World Bank, 2020). In Saudi Arabia, higher education institutions faced numerous challenges in their sudden move to remote teaching, as was the case for the majority of institutions around the world. The change to remote education occurred overnight – literally in many cases – placing an enormous pressure on institutions due to the lack of time normally required to design and develop pedagogically sound online courses and the absence of support structures that can accommodate institution-wide adoption of online and distance education. This has led many to argue that the emergency plans put in place to mitigate the impact of the pandemic cannot be considered true online learning, but constitute rather a mere shift in delivery method that allows students access to learning solutions that would normally be delivered face-to-face (f2f). Consequently, the term emergency remote teaching (ERT) will be used throughout this paper in reference to teaching and learning practices implemented during the coronavirus pandemic (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Hodges et al., 2020).

In light of the unique circumstances driving this change, this shift has created many new experiences for higher education faculty. It has forced many, who would otherwise hesitate to integrate learning technologies or adopt online teaching practices, to utilize online-learning platforms and tools. Even those educators who are already comfortable and familiar with online learning technologies and practices have had to rethink their course design and use online learning tools and platforms in new ways to accommodate a fully online delivery method (Johnson et al., 2020). The unique context and conditions under which this shift to ERT happened have raised some concerns about the impact of this experience on teaching faculty, calling for the need to examine the "social constructions and meaning-making of various stakeholders" (Kerres, 2020, p. 4) during ERT and its impact on faculty perceptions about online learning and future teaching practices (Cutri & Mena, 2020; Kearns, 2016; Kerres, 2020).

It is with this purpose in mind, and within this unique context, that this study is conducted. The purpose of this interpretive phenomenological inquiry is to capitalize on these new experiences by unpacking higher education faculty members' experiences during the mandated shift to ERT, and to explore how these experiences might have shaped and/or reshaped their attitudes toward online learning and the impact this could have on their future teaching practices. An examination of such experiences will help institutions and administration understand the technological pedagogical challenges and practices that have emerged during this period, and instructors' motivations and plans regarding possible future pedagogical changes and directions. These insights, in turn, can guide institutions in shaping effective support systems and structures aligned with faculty experiences and needs to support more innovative and effective use of learning technologies and online teaching practices in the future (Johnson et al., 2020; Kearns, 2016). The topic of inquiry that guided this study was:

- What was the impact of the ERT experience on higher education faculty, in terms of their perceptions and potential future adoption of online teaching practices?

Literature Review

The Online Teaching Experience
Online teaching is a complex process requiring a change to the traditional roles of instructors and a shift in their beliefs, pedagogical thinking, and teaching practices (Ferrario et al., 2013; Jääskelä et al., 2017; Marzilli et al., 2014; Sinacori, 2020). Bawane and Spector (2009) identified eight different roles or competencies that online teaching faculty need to be effective online instructors: pedagogical, professional, evaluator, social, technologist, administrator, researcher, and advisor counselor. This shift in traditional roles and normal practices can pose some challenges for faculty. For instance, faculty members who are teaching online experience a time burden due to the intensive work needed to prepare and facilitate online learning, which comes at the expense of their other academic and scholarly responsibilities and institutional expectations (Cutri & Mena, 2020; Marzilli et al., 2014; Rogers et al., 2018). A lack of resources and proper institutional support through effective professional development and policies that enable quality online teaching practices has also been identified as a great challenge for faculty teaching online and can negatively impact their satisfaction in doing so (Al-Zahrani, 2015; Sinacori, 2020; Wingo et al., 2017). The shift in their traditional roles and practices can lead to intense emotional reactions and anxiety among faculty resulting from a sense of identity disruption and professional vulnerability, such as concerns about tenure, promotion, and professional image (Cutri & Mena, 2020; Wingo et al., 2017). That said, studies have found that once faculty begin to engage in online teaching, they appreciate the unique opportunities it affords, such as its flexibility in expanding learning opportunities for their students and providing the space to support more individualized learning experiences. However, faculty who are new or have limited experience with online teaching tend to prefer hybrid and blended formats over fully online courses. This preference is mainly due to concerns about the loss of humanistic values and interaction as well as students' ability to engage effectively in this new learning space, concerns that seem to subside as faculty gain more experience teaching online (Jääskelä et al., 2017; Marzilli et al., 2014; Mejia & Phelan, 2014; Rogers et al., 2018; Walters et al., 2017; Wingo et al., 2017).

A few studies have investigated faculty experiences and reactions during the rapid transition to ERT in the spring of 2020 (for example, Haslam et al., 2020; Johnson et al., 2020). These investigations reveal that most instructors, with and without prior online teaching experience, had to adjust their course requirements, teaching methods, and learning activities. Due to the scale and urgency of this transition, many relied on self-help and collegial support, raising some concerns about the sustainability of these plans in the face of an ongoing pandemic and the possible impact of this shift in support structure and roles on faculty perceptions and attitudes toward online teaching (Johnson et al., 2020; Kerres, 2020).

The Impact of Teaching Online on Faculty Beliefs and Teaching Practices
A number of studies have examined the impact of teaching online on faculty beliefs, attitudes, and teaching practices surrounding technology, across different modalities and settings (Jääskelä et al., 2016; Kearns, 2016; Scott, 2016; Wingo et al., 2017). Consistent with other research (for example, Walters et al., 2017), Wingo et al. (2017) found that as faculty experience with online teaching increased, so did their satisfaction with the experience, their intention to continue to teach online, and their positive perception of its ability to support student learning.

Both learning to teach online (Foulger et al., 2019; McQuiggan, 2012) and actually teaching online (Kearns, 2016; Scott, 2016; Sinacori, 2020) require a shift in pedagogical thinking and

practice, thus providing the impetus for instructors to critically reexamine their assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning. One impact that has been noted in the literature is a shift from teaching-centered to more student-centered practices (Kearns, 2016; McQuiggan, 2012; Scott, 2016). In a phenomenological study aimed at understanding the experience of changing one's f2f teaching practices and assumptions as a result of teaching online, Kearns (2016) found that as faculty engaged in converting their course materials and activities to fit the online medium, they became more critical and deliberate in their thinking about how students learn. As a result, faculty became more explicit in the structure and organization of their f2f classes, redesigned their f2f courses by incorporating online asynchronous activities to maximize the value of f2f time with their students, and integrated technology tools to support active learning and enhance peer and instructor interactions. Scott (2016) highlights the critical role that online teaching itself has on change in faculty beliefs and practice, especially when student online learning preferences and experience clash with faculty expectations.

The conditions surrounding the mandated shift to ERT due to global health concerns provide a different teaching context compared to those studies that have been conducted in non-emergency situations (Kearns, 2016; Kerres, 2020). Further, most of the studies conducted on faculty experience during ERT so far are mostly large-scale studies aimed at uncovering general patterns of faculty practices during ERT. The present study adds to the growing body of research on ERT by examining the potential impact this experience might have on faculty's attitudes about online teaching and future teaching practices through the lens of interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA).

Methods

IPA's phenomenological, ideographic, and hermeneutic principles provide an appropriate lens through which to examine unique and complex experiences such as faculty's shift to and implementation of ERT, and the impact this experience could have on their perceptions about online teaching and their future teaching practices (Noon, 2018; Smith, 2004, 2011). This approach to research is phenomenological in that it aims to uncover individual perceptions and views of an event or object under investigation (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Deep and intensive exploration of individual experiences, and the researcher's active role in interpreting the meaning participants assign to those experiences, are central to IPA, highlighting its ideographic and hermeneutic nature (Noon, 2018; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith, 2011).

Due to IPA's focus on individual perceptions and sense-making, Smith and Osborn (2008) recommend the use of non-directive, semi-structured interviews as the main data-collection method, to allow for additional probing based on participants' responses. A flexible interview protocol was used, and additional probing questions were asked during interviews to allow for a deeper exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions of teaching remotely (Noon, 2018; Smith & Osborn, 2008). Typical interview prompts included "What were the main challenges you faced when teaching remotely?", "What technology tools did you use in your course? Why did you choose those tools?", and "Will you continue to use these tools in the future and why?".

Sampling and Participants
Convenience and networking sampling was used to identify and recruit participants for this study. A total of five female participants (see Table 1) from three different higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia agreed to be interviewed. Smaller, homogeneous samples are commonly utilized in IPA due to its idiographic nature, which requires intense, immersive, and

deep exploration of individual cases that hold relevance and personal significance to participants. Thus, five female participants were deemed sufficient for this study (Noon, 2018; Smith, 2011; Smith and Osborn, 2003). All participants had experience using a learning management system to support their f2f teaching prior to the pandemic, but only one participant had previous experience teaching fully online courses.

Table 1. The participants

Pseudonyms	Age	Current position	Years teaching
Julie	39	Associate Professor of Law	18
Nora	36	Associate Professor of Management Information Systems	8
Helen	52	Assistant Professor of International Marketing	15
Sarah	+40	Assistant Professor of Law	9
Susan	40	Assistant Professor of Finance	17

Data Analysis
The analytical process for this study followed that described by Noon (2018). The process began with reading each interview transcript in its entirety to obtain a general sense of each participant's account. Transcripts and initial notes were then reread, and comprehensive annotations, reflections, and interpretations were made regarding interesting quotes, which was organized into tables to sustain alignment between analysis and raw data/evidence. Codes and emergent themes were then identified based on the extensive annotations performed in the previous step. These initial themes were defined and tentatively organized according to conceptual similarities to establish their interrelations.

The preceding steps were repeated for each interview case. Once emergent themes for each subsequent case were identified, previous themes were reviewed in relation to the annotation and quotes from which they emerged and either dropped, if the themes did not appear in at least three of the five cases, or amended (Smith, 2011). This flexible iterative process ensured a balance between the collective/shared themes and the distinctive voice/experience of each individual. The final step in this process was writing up the results of the analysis. In IPA research, write-up is an extension of the IPA analytical process. Due to the interpretive flair of IPA, themes emerging from analysis are not only thematically described, but also accompanied by the researcher's narrative interpretation in relation to the extant literature. According to Noon (2018), this can be done either concurrently in a combined 'results and discussion' section, or in separate 'results' and 'discussion' sections. The latter presentation style was followed here. Following Smith's (2011) recommendation for validity and rigor in IPA research presentation, extracts that highlight convergence and divergence across cases from at least three participants are presented in the discussion of each theme.

Research Procedures
After securing Institutional Review Board approval for this research, the researcher recruited higher education faculty by email and asked for network referrals of other potential participants. Faculty were invited via email to participate in one-hour semi-structured virtual interviews to explore their ERT experience. The email recruitment message explained the purpose of the current study and the procedures being followed, and included an online consent page for participants to indicate their consent to participate and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Three interviews were conducted virtually using Zoom, an online

synchronous communication platform, and two were conducted via email due to technical or personal issues related to participants. Email responses and Zoom interview transcriptions served as the raw data in this study. Email interviews were conducted in two phases, in which interview questions were sent to participants and their answers were returned, followed by probing questions from the researcher for clarifications or to elicit richer responses to support a deeper exploration of the personal experiences being discussed (Smith, 2004).

Results

The analysis highlighted three common themes: enhancing student online engagement; increased awareness of technology affordances and constraints; and moving from ERT to technology-enhanced and blended learning. In this section, these themes are explored and supported with representative quotations from faculty interviews.

Enhancing Student Online Engagement

A common challenge among all participants was ensuring students' active engagement with instructor, peers, and course material. All participants discussed ways in which they tailored activities/assignments and teaching strategies to encourage student engagement in this new learning environment. Take Helen for example,

> *The main issue faced in moving online was developing a medium that allowed students to talk between themselves, as they would in a class, and not for all communication to be lecturer to student, but also that we managed to succeed in facilitating student-to-student communication as well.*

When first required to shift online, Nora continued to implement her existing f2f plans with no changes; however, she noticed a decrease in student engagement and interaction. Within a week of the shift to ERT she realized that she could not simply *map* the three hours she normally provides in class to the virtual space because it is a *completely different* environment. She recognized that online environments requires *different types of incentives* for students to participate and engage with peers and course material. As a result, she worked on changing some of the learning material and pedagogical use of technology tools, such as discussion boards, to increase student engagement with course topics. For instance, instead of using the discussion board for *discussions and debates* as she did prior to the pandemic, she began to use it for student *reflection* to encourage a deeper cognitive engagement.

Helen, Susan, Nora, and Sara discussed their students' preference for text-based interaction versus audio/video during live sessions. For Helen, this preference was a challenge. She explained, *the 'teaching' was challenging, at least to me; I like to see the whites of students' eyes.* Similarly, when Susan was asked about the most challenging aspect of remote teaching, she replied, *The inability to understand the extent of student understanding. When repeatedly asked, 'Is anything unclear?' very few students used to respond.* Susan found it difficult to assess student understanding of topics discussed during live sessions due to students' reluctance to ask questions, compounded by the lack of eye contact that would allow her to gauge students' reactions and facial expression. So, instead of asking students if they had any questions, she began by asking course-related questions throughout the live sessions and encouraged students to respond via the chat facility, a strategy she found to be very effective as *the chat facility was very active in all my classes.*

For Nora, the lack of student video and audio communication was an indication of students' lack of engagement rather than her personal/teaching preference. She described the difficulties she faced as she tried to engage her students with a guest speaker during one of her live sessions:

> *Out of 32 students, only one student interacted with her during the one-hour sessions that we held. We asked the students to open their videos to interact with her, but all the students, all 31, preferred to have their videos off and said, "We will interact through text," which is not enough.*

On the other hand, Nora did not seem to mind students' passive participation in virtual office hours. As a matter of fact, she recognized the learning benefits this type of engagement provided to her students. She said, *Some of the students, they just came to listen. They didn't ask any questions, but they were learning from other students' questions. I think that is excellent.* She elaborated on this, saying,

> *Normally, not many students take advantage of my office hours. They rush going out to their houses or their part-time jobs or other commitments they have, especially [since] my office hours are fixed at the university. I will keep the fixed office hours, but I will add virtual office hours to my future classes.*

Sara recognized students' preference for text-based interaction and communication, and even went so far as to accommodate them by adjusting course activities and requirements. She explained,

> *Before COVID-19, students' debates were planned for the international law course since they are very good in realizing the CLO [Course Learning Outcomes] relevant to students being able to formulate legal arguments and perform public litigations and legal debates. However, a number of students were not in favor of having themselves speaking loudly in the Blackboard environment. Therefore, I took the students' circumstances into consideration and I decided to change the format to written debates. I reformulated the assessment rubric and had every two students coupled in a group and asked them to submit their written discussion.*

Increased Awareness of Technology Affordances and Constraints
Participants' awareness of online learning and technology affordances and constraints increased due to their concerns about students' active engagement online. Even though participants are not new to technology and have always used an learning management system to support their f2f teaching, their complete reliance on technology during the pandemic has pushed them to experiment and think more critically about the pedagogical opportunities and limitations present in different technologies that they may have not considered or recognized prior to the mandated pivot to ERT. Nora shifted some of her course activities to Slack, a team communication app. She explained her decision: *I used Slack because it's a good environment for communication with my students, because communication through Blackboard was mainly one-way communication with no interaction, such as emails for instance. I found that Slack supports better communication and discussions.* She went on to describe some of the features that she found particularly helpful in supporting her students' engagement and learning:

> *In collaborating and communicating with the students, I found Slack to be amazing. All students were involved in these discussions, so I like it as a*

> *communication tool. I also used it to send my students video tutorials or articles related to their course topics, and some students as well were sharing back resources. I was able to create a dynamic interactive environment with students and engage them in discussions related to what is important in their field.*

Sara found supporting interactive learning for a large cohort of students online to be challenging. Even though she had not found a clear solution to this problem at the time of the interview, she was cognizant of the differences between f2f and online as learning environments and the need to adjust teaching strategies to take full advantage of the opportunities provided when teaching online: *My F2F lectures are usually very interactive; however, from my recent experience with remote learning, I now understand that online interactive strategies don't work with a big number of students. I'm exploring possible alternative teaching strategies in this respect.*

Julie, who has previous experience teaching fully online courses, took advantage of the flexibility of online learning in supporting self-directed individualized learning paths for students. She noted that there are open-access resources available online that she included as extra reading to support student learning about course topics prior to the pandemic, but that *it was quite sparse at that stage because we were doing so much in the class, I was only uploading certain things. I wasn't overloading them.* This changed as classes shifted online. She did not need to use the full three hours of in-class teaching; instead, she increased the number of open-access resources with different perspectives on course topics and encouraged her students to explore. She said,

> *I was able to give my students examples and scenarios through Moodle and through the online delivery that I would never have got to cover within the classroom, ever. It was up to the students, as they went through, to kind of align themselves to whichever perspective suited their standpoint the best.*

Moving from ERT to Technology-Enhanced and Blended Learning
A commonly mentioned theme among participants that their ERT experience has served as a catalyst for future changes to their teaching practices and course design. The mandated shift to remote teaching forced faculty to experiment with technology and try to find solutions to their immediate problems, which in turn enhanced their awareness of the potential of learning technologies in overcoming some of the limitations of traditional teaching. Take Nora for example,

> *I believe in technology, but this experience has changed me a lot. One of the things I realized is why not use it for my office hours, why not use it for student reflections on some exams, especially after final exams because we don't have a class after that. I can use it to support students when they need it.*

In addition to participants' increased awareness of the affordances of online technologies, their increased familiarity and newfound confidence in their ability to learn and use technology as a result of their ERT experience was also a strong motivator for them to integrate technology tools and incorporate blended learning opportunities in the future. For instance, Susan described how her perception about her ability to utilize technology tools in her courses

changed, *I thought it will be difficult for me to learn, understand, and use them, but it was a great experience and I understood how challenges could be changed into opportunities.*

That being said, participants were still apprehensive about engaging in fully online teaching, arguing that blended strategies and enhanced-technology integration are more likely to overcome the challenges and limitations associated with f2f teaching. This led to the emergence of the subtheme *perceived barriers to fully online teaching.* Two main factors were discussed by participants as a justification for their preference for technology-enhanced and blended learning strategies over fully online teaching: their concern about the loss of social and emotional connections with students; and students' lack of technical and online learning skills. Helen passionately expressed her concerns saying,

> *Truly believe that for the full educational experience students need the face to face experience – with teaching staff – support staff and with each other – people are social creatures and having the discipline – structure and the social interaction helps enhance the educational experience. If there are medical – personal – or operational situations that make physical presence difficult – then technology can be used to enhance but really do not believe either for the teaching staff or for the students that technology is the answer – face to face classes are dynamic live entities – teaching staff need to be able to adapt to the requirements of the class – this is almost impossible to do 100% using technology – it is more feasible in the blended model of teaching and learning.*

Four of the five participants discussed the difficulties associated with student readiness for online learning even prior to the pandemic, which posed serious challenges during the initial shift to ERT. Susan noted *student reluctance to reach out with questions or clarifications and rather try to handle everything themselves,* and discussed the importance of students' ability to self-assess and take the initiative in reaching out for help when needed, especially in online courses:

> *I discussed with students the challenges and limitations of online learning, and that a meaningful outcome from each session is possible only when they take full responsibility of attending the class, being attentive, and reaching out when having doubts or difficulties via chat or via email.*

For Sara, these challenges were multifaceted. She explained that many students *did not have the required technical experience at the beginning, did not understand the requirements and basic concepts of remote learning,* and *thought of it as a chance to gain undeserved grades.* This did not come a surprise to her, as she has always faced *difficulties with students' inertia and resistance to online learning.* However, for her and for other participants in this study, these challenges seemed to subside as students became more familiar with online learning tools and requirements, which they described as being a strong motivator for them to build on this momentum and engage students in more blended learning opportunities in the future. Sara said,

I will be more comfortable that students are familiar and experienced in many of the things that I ask them to do or perform on Blackboard and technology platforms. This was not the case before the remote learning experience.

As mentioned, participants discussions about the future changes they are considering revolved around the integration of tools and blended strategies to address some of the challenges associated with traditional teaching such as lecture capture and virtual support that allow student access to course material and support anytime, anywhere; online assessment and blended teaching/learning strategies to help faculty manage large class sections; and improved access to online digital learning resources and material in different formats (i.e., audio/video) to support individualized learning and to accommodate student preferences for written versus audio and video material. It is interesting to note, however, that while participants were sharing their ideas for how to adjust future teaching practices to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by technology, they weren't always sure about the specifics of how to implement them. Nora said, for example,

> *I always have an issue with the number of students in my classes. Now I'm sure I can find ways in which technology can provide solutions to large class sizes. I believe technology can support me to a certain level on how to support my students in these large sections; I just need to think about it.*

Similarly, Julie shared:

> *Google Meets, I hadn't used before. I certainly haven't used it before with students in a way that I have been. I think going forward, I definitely would consider having a portion of my course online now, out of my contact hours. So, whether that's an hour a week or more than that, I need to think about it.*

Discussion

The purpose of this inquiry was to examine the impact of the ERT experience on higher education faculty, in terms of their perceptions and potential future adoption of online teaching practices. The emergent themes and their interrelationships are presented in Figure 1.
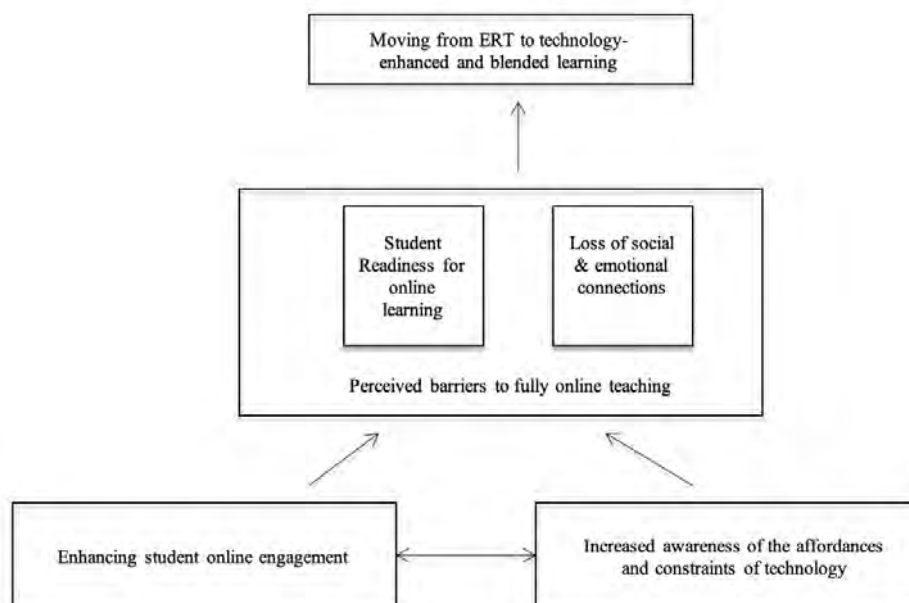

Figure 1: Themes and interrelations

Findings indicate that participants' increased experience and familiarity with online learning – even if forced – has enhanced their attitudes and understanding about the potential of online learning technologies to support student learning. All participants shared the challenges they faced as they tried to support student online engagement and accommodate the variation in their interaction preferences. These efforts, in turn, deepened their understanding of online technologies and increased their sense of confidence in their ability to utilize these tools in their teaching, both pedagogically and technically, not only in online courses, but also in their f2f teaching. However, participants' concerns about student readiness and the loss of social and emotional connections with their students in fully online courses seemed to mediate the impact of this experience on their future plans. They all shared a preference for technology-enhanced and blended strategies, rather than fully online teaching, and shared their intention to adjust their courses in ways that take advantage of the affordances of technology. These findings and their implications will be discussed in relation to the extant literature in the following section.

Key Findings
Consistent with the research conducted so far on faculty ERT experiences during the coronavirus pandemic, participants in this study reported changes to their teaching strategies, learning activities, and course material (Haslam et al., 2020; Johnson et al., 2020). These changes were mainly implemented to support student engagement and interactions with peers, instructor, and course material. Participants' explicit attention to how students learn and the ways in which learning activities and technologies can support students' active engagement is similar to the observations made by Kearns (2016), who found that instructors' actual experience teaching online can serve as the trigger needed to move toward more student-centered practices.

In this study, participants referred to their f2f teaching experience as a way to make sense of the pedagogical changes needed to support student learning, highlighting for them the differences and similarities between online and f2f teaching and increasing their awareness of the educational potential of online technologies in both online and f2f settings. As a result, participants described a number of ways in which they plan to redesign their courses and adjust their teaching practices to take advantage of these technologies (Kearns, 2016). The patterns of thinking described here, derived from participants' explicit discussion of their ERT experience and its impact, highlight the intricate relationship between changes to instructors' beliefs and practices, and the role of practical and experiential knowledge in driving instructor pedagogical and curriculum decisions and beliefs (Jääskelä et al., 2017; Scott, 2016). According to Scott (2016), "when teachers begin using elearning, they may need to elaborate or change their elearning beliefs and practices" (p. 595). Scott (2016) describes a process of change that extends beyond initial online training and course design, one that is closely intertwined with instructors' day-to-day practice, especially as they engage in self-reflection and social discourse with colleagues centered around curricular needs to find alternative solutions to challenges and unmet expectations (see also Ferrario et al., 2013; Jääskelä et al., 2017).

Study participants indicated a preference for blended learning and an intention to adjust their courses to include more technology tools in the future, rather than fully online teaching. This was due to two main reasons: concerns over the lack of social and emotional connection with and among students, and the lack of student technical and learning skills needed to succeed in fully online courses. These concerns are not unique to this sample, especially when we consider participants' limited experience with online teaching. Mejia and Phelan (2014) found that faculty with limited to no online teaching experience view blended learning as a less threating

alternative to fully online courses. Moreover, participants' concerns about student readiness for fully online learning and the impact it could have on the quality of student learning are aligned with those reported in the literature (Jääskelä et al., 2017; Marzilli et al., 2014; Rogers et al., 2018; Walters et al., 2017; Wingo et al., 2017). Participants in this study described a set of skills necessary for student success in online courses that extend beyond technical abilities, such as students' ability to effectively manage their effort and time or to seek help when they need it, skills that are consistent with the those exhibited by highly self-regulatory learners (Zimmerman, 2000). Several scholars have suggested that Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) skills, that is learners' ability to take an active role in their learning by employing specific learning strategies to achieve their goals (Zimmerman, 2000), may be particularly important for students participating in online courses (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004; Rowe & Rafferty, 2013).

Practical Implications
Institutions seeking to expand their online course offerings and improve its quality should take advantage of faculty members' recent experiences with ERT and build on its momentum. With proper support built on an understanding of the incremental nature of change to instructors' beliefs and practices, and the critical role that online teaching experience plays in shaping and reshaping teaching beliefs and practices, faculty skepticism about the effectiveness of fully online learning could subside with their increased familiarity with online technology tools and confidence in their ability to support effective student learning (Ferrario et al., 2013; Foulger et al., 2019; Mejia & Phelan, 2014; Scott, 2016; Walters et al., 2017). This, however, requires an expanded repertoire of faculty support strategies and new structures that enable embedded on-the-job support and provides in-time guidance and feedback on practical day-to-day challenges (Al-Zahrani, 2015; Foulger et al., 2019; Jääskelä et al., 2017; Mohr & Shelton, 2017; Walters et al., 2017). Moving away from scalable one-size-fit-all training and workshops towards digitally-connected community spaces that allow for context-specific knowledge sharing, dialogue, and collaboration among faculty teaching online, through mentoring or faculty learning communities for instance, can enhance the visibility of contextually relevant pedagogical practices and expose instructors to alternative ideas and experiences that expand their own pedagogical thinking (Jääskelä et al., 2017, Mohr & Shelton, 2017; Pacansky-Brock, 2020; Scott, 2016; Walters et al., 2017). Further, this study highlighted the critical role that instructors' actual online teaching experience plays in shaping their beliefs and practices. These experiences can be leveraged as assets during professional development efforts through one-on-one support and guided self-reflection activities for faculty teaching online. Personalized support strategies allow faculty to form explicit connections between their experiences teaching online and f2f and improve their practices across different modalities (Kearns, 2016; Scott, 2016).

Administrators should also invest in supporting and preparing not only their faculty for online courses, but also their students. Based on the experiences described in this study, concerns over student readiness for online learning and lack of SRL skills seemed to play a strong role in participants' decisions and future plans for online and blended learning (Kebritchi, 2014; Wingo et al., 2017). Simply providing prompts or reminders of effective SRL strategies is not sufficient in promoting the positive effects that SRL has on learners' engagement in online courses. Rather, deliberate design and support for SRL must be integrated and embedded within the online learning environment. Given faculty recent experience with online teaching, enhancing faculty understanding of SRL and how it can be supported through course design and teaching practices is warranted (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2004; Rowe & Rafferty, 2013). Further, institution wide orientation programs for students enrolling in online programs/courses

that address student technical skills as well as their online learning and regulation skills needed to succeed in online courses can help students form realistic expectations of what effective online learning entails, and reduce faculty concerns about teaching blended and fully online courses (Liu, 2019).

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The small sample size of this study could be considered a methodological limitation. However, the purpose of IPA studies is not to generate theory or provide general claims, but rather to provide an in-depth, case-by-case analysis of the perceptions and meanings generated by a small homogeneous group within their own contexts, which is why small sample sizes are commonly used in IPA research (Noon, 2018; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

This study examined the experience of five higher education faculty who were teaching remotely during the coronavirus pandemic, and the influence this experience might have in shaping their attitudes toward online learning and their future teaching practices. Future research should examine the experiences of faculty who are involved the implementation of such changes and identify the conditions under which these planned changes are best supported and enhanced (Kearns, 2016). This should include a nuanced examination of the impact of different types of embedded on-the-job support for online teaching, such as the strategies, timing, and order of support that is most relevant and effective in supporting faculty teaching online (Mohr & Shelton, 2017).

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Corresponding Author: Maha Al-Freih
Email: Maha.Alfreih@gmail.com