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Fall 12-15-2023

Designing Effective Online Courses: Exploring the Relationships Amongst Online Teaching Self-efficacy, Professional Development, Online Teaching Experience, and Reported Implementation of Effective Higher Education Online Course Design Practices

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McMahon, Elizabeth, "Designing Effective Online Courses: Exploring the Relationships Amongst Online Teaching Self-efficacy, Professional Development, Online Teaching Experience, and Reported Implementation of Effective Higher Education Online Course Design Practices" (2023). *The Interactive Journal of Global Leadership and Learning Infographics*. 9. https://red.mnstate.edu/ijgll-infographics/9

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# Interactive Journal of Global Leadership and Learning

Vol. 2, Issue 1

Expand





## Designing Effective Online Courses

Exploring the Relationships Amongst Online Teaching Self-efficacy, Professional Development, Online Teaching Experience, and Reported Implementation of Effective Higher Education Online Course Design Practices

> Many factors have an impact on the quality of an online course and the preparedness of faculty to create and deliver a quality learning experience. Faculty may not be well prepared or supported to create and successfully deliver courses that use technology.

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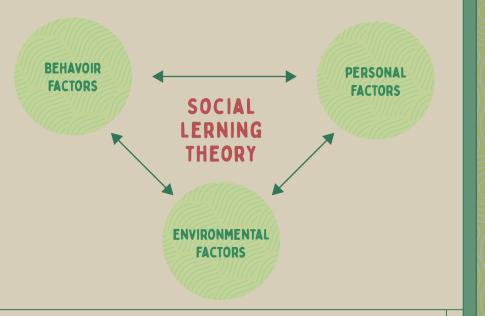
Besides, the continued growth of online programming underscores need for the discussion about the factors that impact course design decisions made by faculty as they design and redesign their courses for online delivery.

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For this reason, the purpose of this study was to investigate what relationships exist between the self-efficacy ratings for online higher education faculty when compared to their teaching experience levels, their professional development, and the degree to which they have implemented effective online course design practices.

# Social cognitive theory





I used the concept of self-efficacy: the people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce effects. This beliefs affect human functioning in various ways including cognitive processes, motivational processes, affective processes, and selection processes.

Individuals with higher self-efficacy set higher goals for themselves and are more committed to achieving them. Those with high self-efficacy beliefs believe they can do something and therefore, see failure as related to the amount of effort they applied. Conversely, those with low self-efficacy beliefs may attribute failure to their lack of ability rather than to lack of effort.

### Methodology

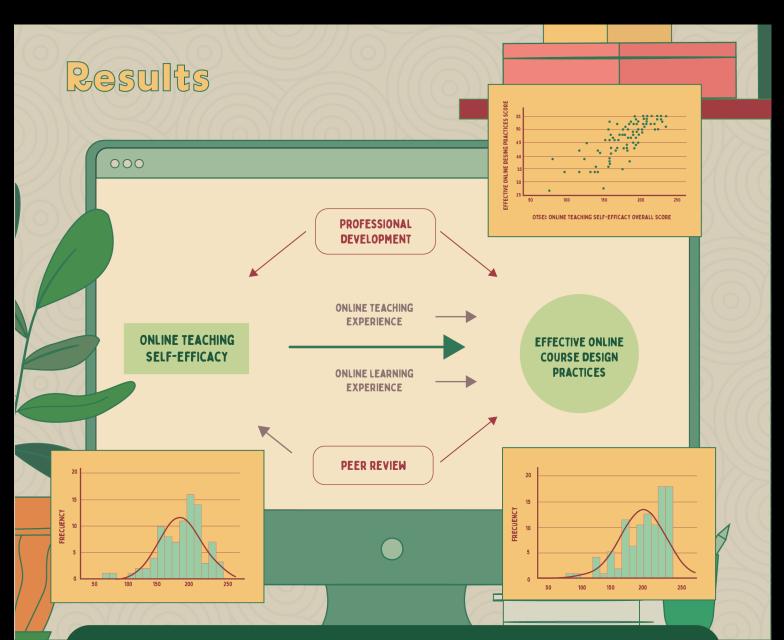
This was a **non-experimental**\* quantitative correlational explanatory study that used a **pragmatic approach**\*\* to inquiry. The study used a convenience sampling method. The target population was community college and university faculty teaching online courses.

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\*Non-experimental study: A way for researchers to learn about things without actually changing them. Researchers collect information by watching and studying people, events, or data that already exist. They use this information to understand how things work or to find connections between different factors.

\*\*Pragmatic approach: An investigation that focusing on what works best in real-life situations. It's like finding the most practical and useful solution to a problem. Instead of getting caught up in complicated theories or rules, a pragmatic approach is all about finding simple and effective solutions that actually get the job done.



What the overall results indicated was that online teaching self-efficacy (OTSE) had a strong positive correlation to the self-reported implementation of effective online course design practices (EOCDP). Completion of professional development (PD) had a large effect size on both OTSE and EOCDP. Participation in course peer review activities had a large effect size on EOCDP and an intermediate effect size on OTSE. Online teaching experience and online learning experience had an intermediate effect size on EOCDP but limited effect on OTSE. No correlations with OTSE or EOCDP were found with age or gender.

#### Conclusions

This study sought to identify how various factors such as online teaching experience, online learning experience, or professional development completion (including participation in a Quality Matters Review) are related to online teaching self-efficacy (OTSE) and the choices a faculty makes in the design of an online learning experience.

The study found that higher education online faculty tended to report high OTSE and that completion of professional development and peer review experience was related to higher levels of OTSE. It also found that professional development, online teaching experience, online learning experience, and peer review experience were related to higher self-assessed scores for implementation of effective online course design practices.



McMahon, E. (2021). Designing Effective Online Courses: Exploring the Relationships Amongst Online Teaching Self-efficacy, Professional Development, Online Teaching Experience, and Reported Implementation of Effective Higher Education Online Course Design Practices.

The Interactive Journal of Global Leadership and Learning, 2(1).

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