

## **The Psychological Impact of Online Learning on The Graduate Students of Peri-Urban Areas of Karachi**

**Muhammad Yaseen**

Assistant Professor at Department of Sociology,  
University of Turbat, Pakistan.  
Email: Muhammad.yaseen@uot.edu.pk

**Najeeb-ul-Rehman**

M.Phil. Scholar at Department of Sociology,  
University of Karachi, Pakistan.  
Email: najeebrasheed656@gmail.com

**Gul Hasan**

Dean Faculty of Legal Education,  
University of Turbat, Pakistan.  
Email: drgulh@uot.edu.pk

### **Abstract:**

*The present study was conducted to know the psychological impact of digital online learning on graduate students of peri-urban areas of Karachi, during the covid-19 pandemic crisis. The study opens the policymaker's eyes to the new and modern policies in the academic sector. The study has explored how low-income students are suffering from the shifting of learning from physical to online learning. The study comprised 10 female students aged 21-30 years. To guarantee data accuracy and consistency, the participants were interviewed in Urdu, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed into English. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, and numerous procedures, including member verification, peer debriefing, and data source triangulation, were employed to verify the reliability and validity of the data. The study adhered to ethical standards, and all subjects provided informed consent. After the analysis the researcher has explores that there are no defined standards of training and development in the academic institutions. The courses and training are outdated. Still, blackboard and white chalk are being used in the academic institution. The researcher has concluded that responsible institutions need to take steps for the development of education in the modern era.*

**Keywords:** Online Learning, Pandemic, Thematic Analysis.

### **I. Introduction**

Today we are living in a briskly changing and tremendously developing globe where contemporary electronic components are being transpired and they are making life thornier. In the present time, we are living in an era that is being digitalized over time. The fact cannot be denied that the globe is being digitalized. Electronic devices are predominantly praxis by young people and adults. The rest of the people are using the internet of their interest. People communicate instantaneously with the help of Electronic mail (E-mail) from one side of the world to another side. E-commerce has become a

major part of daily life. Either the organizations are private or they are government-based organizations that are shifting to the digital world or are being digitalized (Avgerinou & Ericson, 2022). There is no doubt in the fact that everything in the universe is being digitalized due to the rapid population of the world. The population of the world is increasing day by day and the resources are being less due to the industrial revolution. Despite all these circumstances, the development of machines is a positive point for the students of underdeveloped countries. The use of technology in education has increased over the past 20 years as a result of technical advancements and the expansion of service infrastructures, including stronger internet connections and more widespread access to generation (Becker et al, 2017).

The scarcity of energy is one of Pakistan's major barriers to encouraging domestic virtual communication. One of the additional infrastructural concerns is internet bandwidth. Technologically advanced countries are the source of the present prevailing digital mastering trends. Although such trends follow worldwide standards for virtual learning, localization isn't often given much attention. As a result, integrating pedagogical layout in digital learning in a small-scale context is uncommon (UNICEF, 2020). Additionally, it needs to be taken into consideration that rural learners may not have easy access to digital competency facilities. There are pedagogical concerns, including that most students can only clearly understand fundamental English. For learning via the Internet, conventional resources designed for in-person instruction are inappropriate. The prevalent multimedia sources cannot satisfy the many needs of distant, uneducated people. To focus on the aforementioned challenging issues, Pakistan needs a standardized digital learning version that conforms to both national and international standards. It might be studied to take into account the local digital infrastructure that is accessible and it is potential in order to suit the needs of surrounding college students (Rhema & Miliszewska 2014). These parameters might serve as a foundation for the development of a more comprehensive virtual learning paradigm. Pakistan offers a lot of promise for digital learning if obstacles are quickly and effectively overcome. According to the technical infrastructure that is now in place, surrounding college students have many possibilities and are eager to use cutting-edge distance learning techniques. For rising nations, especially Pakistan, a uniform digital learning paradigm that conforms with all national and international virtual learning criteria is sorely desired. An online pedagogy, a scholar model, a communicative interface, and a content version might all be included in the version. To expand and put into exercise policy, planning is crucial. there may be a few primary literatures accessible approximately the method and execution of policy. The areas that want development can be covered in exclusive steps of a policy (Tarus et al, 2015). Such an identity is possible with the availability of trustworthy facts and an innovative dialogue strategy. This step is crucial because obfuscating the image at this point can be desired if stakeholders are not consulted or if inaccurate information is relied upon. The second crucial step entails creating goals and selecting the specific path of action to deal with the identified areas that require development. The capacity had too many unrealistically lofty aspirations (Sana & Mariam, 2013). The objectives must thus be set while taking into account the financial, human, and physical resources that were accessible at the time and that would remain so for the duration of the implementation period. Other crucial considerations to keep in mind while designing goals are the ownership of the objectives by various stakeholders and how they are compatible with indigenous lifestyles and values. Implementation, the third step, is very important since poor execution frequently leads to plans failing, especially in developing nations. A

successful execution strategy requires a radical action plan, meticulous coaching, and the assignment of specific duties to different human and corporate companies (Ahmed, Sangi, & Mehmood, 2017). There shouldn't be any ambiguity regarding who is in charge of what task or any overlap between tasks. Departments, groups, and businesses involved in related tasks must work extraordinarily well together. Without such coordination, activities remain fragmented and there is no way to predict a successful conclusion.

To adequately monitor performance during the implementation phase, a continuous monitoring system must be in place. A competent assessment procedure is also necessary to assess the objectives, implementation, and outcomes of a policy. The stakeholder's ought to receive the evaluation report (Jones, 2018). The present study was conducted to know the psychological impact of digital online learning on graduate students of peri-urban areas of Karachi, during the covid-19 pandemic crisis. This study is only focused to know the psychological effect which are drawn by the pandemic of covid-19 on the graduate students of the peri-urban areas situated in Karachi.

## **II. Literature Review**

Nambiar (2020) states that when it comes to regulating online methods of teaching and learning so the comfort of the pupils and the teachers cannot be denied, furthermore she has demonstrated that technical support from the academic institution is much more necessary to attend classes, either teachers and students both of them need technical support from the institutions in which they are registered. She further explores that the rest of the people who are living in peri-urban areas, still believe in white chalk and blackboard system of learning, in such areas, people need to be aware of the online mood of learning. People need to be motivated to be a part of the digital learning system. There is no fact in it that the world is being digitalized over time.

Salamat et.al (2018) concluded that the digital learning system is the induced system of learning in the present era for academic purposes especially when it comes to distance learning because it is a system that provides time flexibility to the students and to the teacher as well, which engages the students in multiple tasks. Meanwhile, teachers play a significant role in the student's requests and their feedback is useful for students and they can gain help from the online website for multiple tasks. It is further demonstrated that students face multiple problems by using online platforms, but this problem can be sorted out if pupils join multiple online platforms to learn digital skills.

Ruiz et.al (2006) concluded that e-learning refers to the use of Internet technologies to deliver lectures that enhance the learner's knowledge and performance. The innovation of e-learning is not the worst thing but the societies and the underdeveloped communities must be involved in it. Apart from this, the medical students must be not ignored in it. The evaluation of e-learning should include a peer-review process and an assessment of outcomes such as learner satisfaction, content usability, and demonstration of learning. Faculty skills in creating e-learning may differ from those needed for traditional teaching; faculty rewards for scholarly activity must recognize this difference and should be commensurate with effort.

Akuratiya et.al (2020) stated that students must be provided IT support for the online learning. Furthermore, it is explored that students would have to manage their inner capabilities of online learning by using the technical support of the tools. It is

highly recommended that we should not underestimate the challenges that we have faced during the covid-19 for academic purposes, so in this regard, a state needs to be morally strong for such kind of circumstances.

Mukhtar et.al (2020) explores that online learning is a new innovative system of learning for all students but it does have some kinds of shortcoming for medical students as well as for those students who need to go back to work in a field. No doubt online learning is a learning place for those pupils who has a background in I.T., before shifting the classes from physical to online there should be a strategy for pupils.

Mulyono et al. (2021) concluded that during the covid-19 most of the states shifted their mood of taking classes from different web platforms, i.e. Whatsapp, Instagram, and many more. It has been noted that most of the students from low socioeconomic backgrounds cannot support to buy electronic gadgets for the online classes therefore it was mandatory to deliver lectures with the help of social media apps which are being used by mobiles.

Chandrasiri & Weekrakoon (2022) concluded that online learning appears to be an efficient learning strategy that can save time and enables the courses to complete quickly. It has been noted during the pandemic covid-19. However, it has been less productive because of the numerous challenges involved if these challenges would be sorted out so it would remove many challenges faced by the pupils.

Liu et al. (2021) concluded that the trend of online learning was unstoppable during the covid-19 pandemic in many fields of high education. However, management, environment structuring, task strategies, adapting strategies, time management, self-evaluation, and help-seeking in the learning process need to be managed accordingly. Furthermore, it is stated that students need to manage their daily activities for the upcoming time of an Artificially intelligent learning environment.

### **III. Method**

The present study is sought to investigate the impact of digital media on higher education During the Covid-19 Pandemic. The study used a case study technique and qualitative research design. The research included 10 students, who were chosen based on their interests to participate. In-depth, semi-structured interviews in Urdu, the participants' native language, were used to collect data. The researcher, who is proficient in Urdu and English, conducted the interviews, which lasted 25 to 30 minutes.

The study aims and topics discovered in the literature review guided the development of the interview questions. The questions focused on participants' experiences with online learning and its psychological impact and other factors. The study aims and topics discovered in the literature review guided the development of the interview questions. The questions focused on participants' experiences with sociological position, career affection, daily rotten destruction, limited interactions with family and friends, and their workplace objectives and resiliency.

The interviews were verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings that the researcher had made. To ensure that the data was accurate and consistent, the researcher—who is proficient in both languages—transcribed the transcripts into English.

The translated data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which entails spotting trends and themes in the data and assessing their importance.

#### IV. Result

Table 1 depicts the socioeconomic characteristics of the individuals. There were a total of 10 participants. 50% of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25, while 50% were between the ages of 26 and 30. 100% of respondents were enrolled in graduation, 30% of respondents were suffering from electricity problems, and 50% were having environmental problems. Only 20% of respondents were having internet problems.

Variables	Frequency
<b>Age</b>	
21-25 years	05 (50%)
26-30 years	05 (50%)
<b>Qualification</b>	
Graduation	10 (100%)
<b>Facing Problems with The Online Classes</b>	
Electricity	03 (30%)
Environment	05 (50%)
Internet	02 (20%)

#### A. Qualitative Findings:

To address the alarming issues of the Impact of digital learning on higher studies, at least ten case studies have been conducted in Karachi, Sindh, as mentioned below.

She is 26 years female and about to graduate in the field of journalism. She belongs to a very poor family and very hardly bear the expenses of her study. In part time she used to teach the tuition for the support of her parents. She said that the sudden shift of her study from physical to online learning has changed her entire routine. She said that when I used to go to university so I was able to use the library books for the study, but due to online learning and teaching, now it is not possible.

*"When the classes were physical in the university so, I used to go to the university's library, where it was quite easy for me to access the books, I used to sit in the library for a long time, and I used to make my notes for the examination in the library." - P1*

She is a 27 years female and she is studying in the BS 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Department of Education. She belongs to a middle-class family and her parents bear her education expenses. She told that when it was declared that all of the classes will be online, so her parents brought her a new laptop for her classes. As she was addicted to play games so, she started to escape the online classes, and she used to play games most of the time. She said that physical classes are better than online classes because in online classes there is no one to next you for the monitoring.

*"When I got a new laptop so I used to play games most of the time because I felt bored taking online classes because I used to take classes early in the morning, and after the classes, I spent most of the time playing games." - P2*

She is a 29 years female and she is doing her graduation. She has told me that the sudden shift of learning from physical to online learning has changed my perspective on my learning because for online classes you need to learn about the basic tools and the privacies. She has told that because of the online mode of learning, she was not able to conduct the workshops, seminars, and other academic activities.

*"Being a student of research. It was very difficult for me to attend the workshops and seminars online. Due to the less knowledge of electronic gadgets, I was not able to continue academic activities since all of the academic activities were shifted from physical to online learning."* - P3

She is 27 years female, and she is a student of graduation in sociology. She has told over time all of the activities are going to be digitalized, either it is academic activities or non-academic activities. She further elaborated that we need to accept the change in our daily lives. She has said that due to online learning mode, she has suffered a lot because of electricity. She further said that in her residence area, there is a shortage of electricity.

*"I just want to say that it is the era of technology, everything is getting digitalized. But before going to the digital world there should be facilities among the people. I live in an area where there is most of the time no electricity. As a student, I'm suffering a lot due to electricity. Because for the online classes, there should be electricity in a place where a person is attending the classes."* - P4

She is 26 years female and doing her graduation from the Department of International Relations. She has said that being a student of international relations, they have to be connected with the electronic media. Further, she has explored that to be connected with the globe they need access to digital libraries. They need registered E-mails from the institutions where they are enrolled for the degree program. She has said due to the inability of the access from the university they are unable to be part of the globe. She further said there is an electrical problem in her area.

*"There is no doubt in it that we are very far in academics from other countries, the reason behind this is that most of the talented students do not have access to the globe. Due to the lack of funding the universities are not able to facilitate their students."* - P5

She is 26 years female and she is doing her graduation. She has said that due to the online mood of learning, she has become psychologically disturbed. She said that her eye sights being enervated because of being on screen most of the time. She further said that due to the wearing of the headset for 4 to 6 hours, she is being psychologically ill. She said that it is good for us that we are shifting our learning mode from blackboard and white chalk to screen learning. But the screen learning mode required perfect excellent electronic gadgets such as a headset to listen to lectures and other electronic equipment. She said that it makes her happy when it comes to the research articles, she said that she is having access to a research-based website where she can read the article as much as she

wants, but instead of all this access, she said that online mode of learning can cause many psychological diseases to the pupils.

*"It makes me happy that we are shifting our mode of learning but we should keep in our mind that extra use of electronic gadgets can be harmful to mental health." - P6*

She is 22 years female and she is doing her graduation. She lives in a joint family. They only have 2 rooms in the house. She postulated that online classes need an environment to take the classes. She said that if there is a house where only 2 rooms are there along with one kitchen and one bathroom, so in such a situation there are fewer chances of taking classes. She stated that if a person is living in a joint family, he or she cannot take proper online classes because it has been observed by the participant when she was taking online classes that one of the family members uses to make noises during her class time.

*"When I used to take online classes so it too was much disturbing because I live in a joint family. There was no place for me where I could take my classes easily." - P7*

She is 23 years female and she is enrolled in graduation. She has said that due to the online classes, she is suffering from mental health because of the behavior of the teacher in the online class. She said that for the online classes, first the teachers should be trained, she said that many teachers do not have good knowledge of online classes. She further added that before shifting the classes from physical to online. The concerned institution must train the faculties such as how to run the software for an online session. She said that due to a lack of training, many teachers are not able to control the class properly. She further elaborated that a teacher must have a registered E-mail or ID of the software for the class to be conducted.

*"After a couple of months, I have observed that most of the faculties are not trained for the online session." – P8*

She is a 21-year female and is enrolled in graduation. She has said that physical learning is better than online learning because in physical class you learn a lot rather than the online learning. She stated that in online classes, only the teacher delivers his lectures and the students got very less chances of participating. She stated that in the physical classes, she learns how to give presentations, and how to face multiple students in a public sector university. She said that due to the online mode of learning, she is behind bars.

*"I have learned presentation skills in physical mode of classes and I could face thee with other students." – P9*

She is a 22 years female and enrolled in graduation. She stated that for the online classes, she has to go to another house that is far from her house because she does not have an internet facility in her own house. She stated in her own house there is an issue with electricity and the internet. She stated it is very difficult for her to go to

another house daily for the sake of the classes but still is doing it. She said that due to online classes her parents have advised her that she must conclude her studies.

*"My parents told me to conclude my studies because they cannot buy a laptop and other electronic gadgets for me due to the low-socioeconomic condition of the family." – P10*

## **V. Discussion**

As the study was conducted in peri-urban areas of Karachi, the result of the study has become an alarming issue that has created the psychological impact of online learning on higher education. Many studies have been conducted on education but very less studies have focused on the peri-urban areas of Karachi. Education has a fundamental role in the economic, social, political, and structural development of any nation. Many of the economic issues like poverty, overpopulation, unemployment, resource mobilization, inflation, exchange rate drastic fluctuation, housing, infrastructure, and health can be reduced and handled by improving the education system (Abid, 2022).

The biggest problems with Pakistan's education system are its lack of uniformity, education without direction, outdated curriculum, lack of professional development for teachers, lack of qualified teachers, alarming dropout rates, examination system, lax supervision standards, internal and external influences, a lack of resources, a lack of policy implementation, a low budget for education, corruption, the opening of numerous private schools, politics in education, and non-availability of resources. The allocated GDP for education is 1.7% which is the lowest in the region and the current literacy rate is 62.3%, Educational challenge in Pakistan is facing the lack of quality in mainstream educational institutions (Economic Survey, 2022). This includes physical facilities as well as human resources. Curriculum, textbooks, pedagogy, and an effective assessment system. Several surveys reflect that students' performance is far less than the required national standards. It is interesting to note that as far as facilities are concerned, public sector schools have more facilities than private schools. thus the education system should be paid more attention to the development of the country.

## **VI. Conclusion**

Online education is not just an option but a necessary tool that has been proved true during the covid-19 phase when almost educational institutions were closed and teachers and students were forced to switch to online mode. There are countless sources of information on the Internet and a large number of courses from the top universities of the world are available in the form of mass open online courses, however, this requires access to the Internet. Quality is a core challenge for the country's system of education that needs urgent attention from primary to higher education. Yet another aspect of our educational practices is the gap between what is being taught in educational institutions and societal needs. This gap can only be reduced if the curricula are updated regularly, keeping in view the external changes and learners' needs. A major reason for the country's unsatisfactory performance in the domain of education is the failure of policies in the implementation phase.



## VII. Recommendations

- Article 25-A of the constitution which demonstrates that the state must provide free and compulsory education to its citizen, needs to be changed.
- The Sindh Right of Children to Free and compulsory education act, 2013 needs to change with the present requirements.
- Budget allocation should be increased as per the international standards of education for the quality of education.
- Academic institutions should be shifted to solar systems to handle the electricity system.
- Training and personal development programs must be arranged for the teachers.
- The curriculum needs to be updated with the present time of learning.
- The culture of research should be promoted in academic institutions.

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