Impact of Online Classes on Student’s Emotions During Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The current research aimed to examine the different impacts of online classes on students’ emotions of the University of Education Attock campus during Covid-19. The objectives of the study were to explore: the positive effects of online classes during Covid-19 on students’ emotions and the negative effects of online classes during Covid-19 on students’ emotions.

**Design/Methodology:** The design of the study was qualitative in nature. The population comprised 315 students from the University of Education Attock campus, who went through this online education system. The sample of the study was 30 students. A convenient sampling technique was used. Data was calculated using the interview technique. Questions asked were 8. Themes were taken out from each question. Frequency and percentage were calculated.

**Findings:** The results of the current study indicated that the online education system had a great impact on students’ emotions either positively or negatively. Some students were satisfied with the online education system but some students faced different difficulties one of them was an emotional disturbance. Students were anxious, depressed, and fatigued with this new online education system.

**Implications/Originality/Value:** The current study is helpful for the administration of all educational departments. This study will help them to improve the online education system, to manage it perfectly, and to make it student’s emotions friendly.

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**Introduction**

A newly picked out coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, has created a worldwide pandemic of respiratory illness, known as COVID-19. Wuhan, a city in China, first identified Corona Virus in December
2019. Early hypotheses thought it may be linked to a seafood market in Wuhan, China. But in Jan 25, 2020 a study came out in which the individual with the first reported case who became ill on Dec 1, 2019, had no association with the seafood market. Investigations are ongoing about the spread and origin of this virus. Within 14 days of vulnerability to the virus, symptoms show up in people. Mild cases of COVID-19 may appear similar to the flu or a bad fever. Test through laboratory can confirm the diagnosis. For now, there is no a specific treatment for the virus. Affected people with COVID-19 are treated with supportive measures to alleviate the symptoms. Coronavirus is named due to its appearance. It looks covered with a pointed structure that surrounds it like a crown. After COVID-19 came to light, places of worship, restaurants, and markets began to close also, and varsities sent student’s home. Universities and students were not prepared for extended closures. Both face a variety of challenges and pitfalls in prolonging the closure of universities.

After COVID-19 came forth, the terms “social distancing”, social isolation” and “quarantine” were used enormously in public, in the media, and also in scientific papers. “Quarantine” refers to restraining movement, “social isolation” refers to the restraining social movement of those people who are infected with the disease, and “social distancing” refers to creating physical distance between people (Pedrosa et al., 2020). Regions with stronger social network connections gained more chances of COVID-19 proliferation. These types of areas generally had more confirmed cases at the end of March. These social ties were taken care of through geographic distance (Kutchler et al., 2020). After the calamity in China, Italy was the first in Europe to face the COVID-19 holocaust. Within 2 weeks, the number of positive cases were 30,000, and 2,500 deaths were reported on 18 March 2020. The region of Lombardy was affected most, while the government of Italy imposed a lockdown nationwide. On 14 March Spain declared a state of emergency. World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a ‘pandemic’ after cases approach 2 Lac patients and 8000 deaths in over 160 countries (Spinelli&Pellino,2020).

The expeditious spread of COVID-19 forced the governments to implement lockdown and school closure, to reduce the infection rates. By April 10, 2020, 188 countries imposed a lockdown and closed their educational institutions. This affected more than 1.5 billion learners emotionally across the world. However, during COVID-19, school closures kept on as an object of debate (Neidhofer et al, 2020). In the world, Pakistan was among the first countries to impose closure of educational institutes during COVID-19. These institutes in Sindh were closed starting on February 27, 2020. In the rest of the country, the closure of educational institutes started on the weekend of March 14, 2020. After a while, in September 2020, schools began a staggered opening, and all students whether of private or public institutes attended classes on alternative days (Geven & Hassan, 2020).

Online classes became a common component of higher education, due to COVID-19. Colleges and universities in most the countries counted on fully online classes to teach students. On the impact and effectiveness of online classes, a large literature has developed. Apart from the drawbacks of online learning, these studies concluded that in comparison to traditional classes, there are students who were satisfied with online classes (Kearsley et el., 2020). During COVID-19, the much-discussed online education in Pakistan and other countries has challenged the educational institutes, teachers, and student’s emotions and also uncovered the lack of technology in Pakistan that has hampered the quality of online learning. The country’s educational institutions adapted to the world of online learning, due to urgent lockdown (The Nation). As Pakistan is an under-developed country, from decades Pakistan has been struggling in the education sector on various fronts, so from this pandemic salt has been added to the wound. The increase in the class divide in multiple education systems has not fulfil the needs of the population as a whole. For a rather long time, it was a wrestle between English-medium and Urdu-medium only but after COVID-19 erupted, virtual schooling has come out of the blue and
became a new grapple. These unforeseen circumstances can be made easy by providing appropriate training and equipment to the teachers (Raja, 2020). The other primary concerns about deficiencies of online learning were frustrations associated with hardware and software problems, the time wasted by faculty to conduct courses, the limited communication skills, and lack of timely response from instructors, due to which emotional disturbance was faced by students (Kearsley et al., 2020).

The importance of research is once again in the public eye after this global pandemic. There are several studies about COVID-19 and its impacts on human beings (either emotionally or physically) and the interest of people around the globe in these studies is unprecedented. The purpose of my study is to cover the newly emerged pandemic and conduction of online classes. The online education system in Pakistan was new, and many students around Pakistan faced many problems, mostly emotionally including Students of the University of Education Attock campus. This research revolves around emotionally disturbed students of the University of Education Attock campus, due to online classes, during COVID-19. It is based on the problems they faced during online classes, the amendments they want in the online education system, how was their learning experience during these classes, the benefits of the online education system and etcetera. This study identifies the causes of students’ less interest in online classes, during COVID-19. After being aware of those cases, students will work on those things which will boost their interest level in online studies.

Through this study parents of the students will be informed about the online education system. The problems their children bare during online classes. Also, their children’s motivation level and interest in these classes. So, parents will help their children and will show a supportive attitude during the online education system. This study also explores the teacher’s attitude toward students during online classes, whether their attitude was supportive or not towards students. So, teachers will be aware of their attitude, and if some of the students found it unsupportive, the teacher will work on it.

This study will be beneficial for the authority of the University of Education and Higher Education Commission. The results of this study can be utilized by bringing amendments to online education system. By solving students’ problems, they are facing in online classes. Also, this study will be a helpful step in bringing awareness regarding the online education system

Objectives of the Study
The objectives of the current study were to:
To explore the positive impacts of online classes during Covid-19 on students’ emotions
To explore the negative impacts of online classes during Covid-19 on students’ emotions

Research Design
The study was designed to determine the impact of online classes during Covid-19 on students’ emotions. This study is qualitative and descriptive in nature. Data was collected through interview. The researchers met students of different departments of the University of Education Attock campus. Self-designed questions were asked to them. They give their views which the researchers wrote as well as recorded with them by student’s consent.

The interview consisted of 8 questions. The questions like; were they satisfied with online classes, were online classes effective, was learning boring or interesting, were there any effects of online classes on their mental health, did they face any fear or anxiety, how did they overcome it, was their family supportive and what are their thoughts regarding online classes were included. The interview was conducted to get a better response and especially views of students of the University of Education Attock campus regarding the impact of Covid-19 and online classes on
their emotions

Sampling Technique
A convenient sampling technique was used.

Validity
The questionnaire was validated through expert opinions available at the University of Education Attock campus. Their suggestions and opinions were incorporated into the questionnaire to make it useful and appropriate.

Description of Population and Sample
The population comprised 315 students and the sample of the study was 30 students from the University of Education, Attock campus.

| Courses             | Population | Sample |
|---------------------|------------|--------|
| Bs. Mathematics 7th | 45         | 04     |
| Bs. Mathematics 3rd | 37         | 03     |
| B.Ed secondary 3rd  | 13         | 05     |
| Bs. Chemistry 7th   | 37         | 04     |
| MA. Education 3rd   | 43         | 03     |
| Bs. English 7th     | 32         | 02     |
| M.Phil Education 3rd| 12         | 02     |
| B.Ed (Hons) 7th     | 24         | 04     |
| Bs. Chemistry 3rd   | 40         | 01     |
| B.Ed (Hons) 5th     | 32         | 02     |

Analysis of Results

Question 1: Satisfaction and dissatisfaction with online classes.
Themes: Useful technology, good result vs Time issue, confront issue, faulty system, badly managed

Some of the students were satisfied and happy with online classes. They responded that, as online classes were new to them, they didn’t learn through new technology in the past which increased their interest level in online learning and they achieved good grades during COVID-19. Plus, they were comfortable studying at home, and due to the online availability of learning material, had satisfied themselves with online classes. According to them, as the classes were attended at home, they managed their chores of a life well during COVID-19, due to online classes. On the other hand, most of the students were dissatisfied with online classes. They believed that, as there was no face-to-face interaction, teachers didn’t know how to run this system, the time and examination system was badly managed and due to electricity and internet issues, they did not satisfy themselves with online classes. Furthermore, they didn’t interact well with their teachers as well as with their class-fellows during online classes. As there was less interaction, the students didn’t convey their problems or queries related to lectures, to their subject teachers.

Question 2: Effective and ineffective online classes.
Themes: Good teaching strategy, heed in learning vs boredom in learning, teacher’s negative attitude, trouble in learning, bland lectures
In response to the second question, few students claimed that online classes during COVID-19 were effective. They took interest in learning, due to which they learned a lot. They observed new teaching methods during online learning, which grabbed their attention towards lectures and uplifted their interest in studies. Contrary to that, many students considered online classes ineffective. Due to the teacher’s negative behavior during online classes, they faced trouble studying, because some of the teachers just posted the lectures in Google Classroom and didn’t take online classes through Google Meet at all. They didn’t understand lectures properly due to teachers neglecting behavior. Moreover, the timetable was not followed by the teachers which caused trouble for students in learning. Most of the students skipped the lectures during online classes, due to the disorganization of the timetable.

**Question 3: Relieved and unrelieved learning through online classes.**
Themes: Interesting vs boring
Few students from the University of Education Attock campus believe that learning was compelling during online classes because they were excited about this new learning technique, due to which they engaged themselves in learning and found online classes relieving. They found learning engaging, intriguing, and exciting. They said that through online learning, their learning capability and curiosity to learn have upheaved. But many students didn’t find this online learning system relieving because they felt tired and bored and learning seemed dull to them. During COVID-19 they found online learning, stiff, dry as dust, and uninteresting

**Question 4: Fixed or unfixed study hours in traditional and online learning.**
Themes: Same hours in both vs no fixed time
Students who had the same study hours during traditional learning and online learning were few. They gave 5 hours to study during traditional learning and during online learning as well. On the other hand, students who had no fixed time during traditional learning, as well as online learning were more. Some said that they gave 5 hours to study during traditional classes and 6 hours to study during online classes and some gave 6 hours to study during traditional classes and 5 hours during online classes. Also, some said that they gave more hours to study during traditional classes than in online classes

**Question 5: Healthy and unhealthy effects of online classes on students’ emotions.**
Themes: Positive effects vs negative effects
Students of the University of Education Attock campus responded to that question in detail. Not as many students believed that there were unhealthy effects of online classes on their emotions. They claimed that there were no negative effects on their emotions, they were relaxed, they learned a lot, and enjoyed online classes. The students insisted that this new technique of learning created a positive attitude towards learning. It created positive impacts on the minds and personalities of students. In opposition to that, most of the students believed that they were no positive effects of online classes on their emotions. They felt frustrated, they felt a burden on their mind, and they were tensed and depressed. Moreover, this online learning system has decreased the interest level of students in studies because lectures were too long and the content of lectures didn’t clarify students’ concepts which created frustration and anxiety among students

**Question 6: Agree and disagree with symptoms (anxiety, fear)/overcome these symptoms.**
Themes: Prayer, socializing, entertainment vs no bad feelings
Many students agreed that they faced anxiety and fear during online classes and they also told how they overcame these symptoms. They helped themselves by discussing their fear with family, they did morning walks to release their anxiety, prayed a lot, played indoor games, and watched entertainment stuff in their leisure time to reduce these symptoms. Moreover, some of them said that they sought help from their friends to reduce their fear or anxiety. Other than that, fewer students’ stance was, that they didn’t feel any kind of bad feelings like anxiety or fear.
They felt more active and energetic during online learning. This new online learning system brought positive impacts on their personalities.

**Question 7: Positive and negative attitude of the family during online classes.**
Themes: Supportive vs unsupportive
Students responded to that question in detail that their parents were in favor of online classes, they helped them a lot, encouraged them, and their attitude was constructive. Their parents were very concerned and their attitude was positive. Parents motivated them so that they give full attention to their studies. Their parents created a friendly environment for them so that the students could feel comfortable during online learning and online examination. Hardly any student’s family was not supportive and was not in favor of online learning technology during COVID-19.

**Question 8: Thoughts regarding online classes during COVID-19.**
Themes: Proper system, effective management, provision of resources, proper timetable
This question was an open-ended question and students gave their stances and opinions in detail. Some students discussed their good or bad experiences during online classes and some gave suggestions to improve the online learning system for the future. Students shared their thoughts that online learning is beneficial for students but also problematic. Internet facility is a problem, especially for those who live in villages, plus the online exam system must be modified. In a situation like a pandemic, online learning is a good step but teachers should conduct lives sessions instead of posting lectures in Google Classroom. Furthermore, students believed that effective management is required to run this online learning system, plus teachers should follow the timetable, teachers should give proper attention, Government should train teachers for this online learning system, and should provide proper resources to conduct online classes

**Discussion**
The primary purpose of the study was to investigate the different impacts of online classes during COVID-19 on students’ emotions of the University of Education Attock campus. The results of the current study are in line with the study revealed in July 2011 by the Columbia University Community College Research Center which showed that in Washington community college 90% was course completion for traditional courses and for online classes, it was 82%. Additionally, students who took online classes didn’t complete their degrees. The current study reveals the question about the impact of online classes on students’ emotional health, in that 63.3% of students described different unhealthy impacts of online classes on their mental health. On the other hand, 36.7% of students have healthy impacts of online classes on their mental health. This was also found by Salvador et al, (2021) who reported that only negative emotional states like anxiety, stress, or depression were analyzed among university students and apart from that, they reported feeling some negative emotions intensified like fear, worry, or boredom.

Kokemuller, (2020) says that, tangibly, the most negative effect of online classes is a higher rate of class failure and dropouts. Likewise, the result of the current study revealed that many of the students were dissatisfied and emotionally disturbed with online classes and called the online education system, ineffective. The reason behind that which student mentioned was the administration, which didn’t conduct well online education system. According to them, the system was faulty and the administration managed it very badly. Also, teachers didn’t conduct the online meeting so there was a lack of face-to-face interaction between students and teachers. Teachers didn’t manage time properly.

In addition to that, the current study indicated that dissatisfied students with online classes are 73.3% but in comparison to that satisfied students are less in percentage, that is, 26.7%. This is also found by Raja (2020) who stated that the recent trend on Twitter by students under the name,
#WeRejectOnlineEducation highlights the trajectory of lack of stable internet connections, inequalities in our society, and emotional disturbance among students. Many students from private and public institutions were unable to attend online classes due to a lack of internet speed. The decision of conducting online classes was a hasty one, which did not allow enough training for teachers and students to understand the complexity of this new way of learning. It also highlighted the insufficient ATL skills (approaches towards learning) of teachers.

**Conclusion**
Through this study, it is concluded that the online education system should be made more enhanced so that students can take benefit from it. Higher Education Commission should train teachers regarding the online education system. Government should provide proper technology to students and educational institutes. The online education system should be made affordable for everyone. As Pakistan is an underdeveloped country, so the provision of the best and proper resources like technology and electricity is difficult, so in that case, traditional classes would be the best option. But if due to some reason like Covid-19 authorities conduct an online education system, then they should make this system student’s emotions friendly.

**Recommendations**
This study can also be investigated in other different ways, for example;
Researchers can research impacts of online classes on students’ achievement.
Researchers can conduct the research on impacts of online classes on student’s personality.
Researchers can investigate the impacts of online classes on teachers.
Researchers can investigate the impacts of online classes on students’ learning.
Researchers can use other techniques for the collection of data like observation techniques or collecting data quantitatively.

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