Post Covid-19 Pandemic Experience of Architecture Students in Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamshoro Sindh Pakistan

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper deals with the educational experience of the students of the architecture department at Mehran University of engineering and technology, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan during the peak covid-19 pandemic when everyone was working remotely from their homes, etc. This paper shows that when there was the first peak COvid-19 wave from mid-march to August 2020, how do students die with the sudden change in learning patterns from physical classes to online classes?

Methodology: A questionnaire was designed which was then filled by the students of the architecture department. The questionnaire dealt with different questions regarding the experience of remotely learning architecture. The students showed they were very uncertain about the online classes that they took during peak Covid-19(coronavirus),

Findings: Some students were satisfied from the online system whereas many of them were not satisfied with it at all. This paper proves that learning architecture online is a little bit difficult when it comes to study about practical/studio work, whereas theoretical classes can be, teach online very well.

Value: These findings will be helpful for the educational institutes for the future and can provide a good value to work more productive for online education

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Introduction

In December 2019, in Wuhan, China there was an outbreak of a virus that was unknown later it was named Covif-19(Coronavirus). This deadly virus infected many people; he has to isolate
himself from the people around him and has to remain in quarantine for at least 2 weeks. Not only physical health but also mental health, lifestyle, market-places, workplaces, and institutes were affected (Ciotti et al., 2020). After the virus spread all over the world in May 2020 4806299 people got affected and 318599 people died in Coronavirus(Organization, 2020). For precautions it was necessary for everyone to wear mask when they are outside of their homes, moreover washing hands after coming back, changing cloths, applying sanitizers, and keeping 3ft distance from each other were some extra precautionary steps during peak pandemic(Feng et al., 2020).

Covid-19 pandemic effected schooling system a lot in Pakistan and rest of the world too.

Universities, schools, institutes were completely closed due to increasing covid-19 cases all over the country in the mid of march 2021(Khan, Khan, & Saeed, 2020). At the time when Covid-19 pandemic was on the peak in 2020, Pakistani universities decided to move their ways of study to online system from face to face learning. So the students started to learn about their courses on computer screens(Unesco, 2020). Right now in Pakistan, there are around 180 universities and some other higher education institutes, 58% are from public sector and 42% are from private sector, they all started to teach their students via online classes(Ahmed & Jafri, 2020). While adopting new ways of E-learning, the staff and the students should have to be ready and trained for the sessions, it was little bit difficult to adopt the online ways of study during lockdown for students and students have to adjust themselves first(Doucet, Netolicky, Timmers, & Tuscano, 2020).

Architecture field is something where a student has to learn from lectures and studios as well and has to be very attentive in both classes. In the neighborhood country India students of architecture felt difficulty in learning via online as in practical/studio classes via online system(Varma & Jafri, 2020). students from different schools of architecture from Jorden were asked through a questionnaire about the how they feel during online classes experience, they were actually uncertain about their online study, in online classes they needed guidance from teachers, the network issue was there, the application they used was not familiar to them and they were confuse as they were asked to change their mode of study from on-campus to online study(Alnusairat, Al Maani, & Al-Jokhadar, 2020). in the 17 universities of Egypt were asked through a questionnaire where 304 students responded about the online way of study in architecture, they responded that the got some minor phycological problems while studying alone from home without any teachers guidance or friends’ help, moreover they added staff really needed to be trained for online classes(Elrawy & Abouelmagd, 2021). This paper also deals with the post covid-19 pandemic situation in architecture studies in architecture department, Mehran University of engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan. The students of architecture department were questioned about their online sessions during lockdown. Questions were related to their online classes, physical classes, studios, juries, assignment etc.

**Literature Review**

In Covid-19 days the way of education turned to online from physical. In Turkey 2 universities were asked to give answers regarding online education system, through random sampling method. The students were not so happy and satisfied, it was concluded that the online way of learning is not suitable for the students of architecture. But without any doubt there was increase in rate of understanding theoretical subjects. However the practical/applied course are not meant to be learn online, there must be studied or taught at the institutional campuses so that student can understand and learn from applied courses easily(Uluçay, Müezzinoğlu, & Güçlü, 2021).

India was also affected through covid-19 very badly in its peak days. 32 crore (320million) students were unable to study or learn in institutions. Then they started online education system. They used various platforms to educate students for higher education (undergraduate, post graduate programs) for all subjects. The positive impact was A) they got a good knowledge for
online education system. B) As different applications were used to educate students through e-learning the new companies got good opportunities and earnings through this way. C) Only soft copies were in use for assignments and presentation etc., there was no use of hard copies that means there was less waste was produced. D) Collaboration was improved in-between students and teachers. E) During pandemic virtual meeting rise rapidly. F) Things used to share online more like SMS, E-mails, and phone calls etc. Negative impact was A) Students suffered a lot in 3 months when there was no online education system was introduced. B) It affected employment a lot, many people lost their jobs when institutions turned to online system. C) No one was ready for online education system neither, teachers nor students. D) Parents were unable to motivate their children for classes. E) Payment was delayed in many institutions(Jena, 2020).

When it comes to closure of schools caused by the effects of COVID-19, Pakistan is one of very first country whose education was being affected, with effect from 27 February 2020. Initially when students stopped going schools their complete education, learning phase suddenly stopped for several consecutive months. As COVID-19 was affecting globally different steps were carried out by WHO (world health organization) to resume education in different countries, HEC also provided funds to resume home learning. In this research as a result following are the highlighted effects of COVID-19 on education in Pakistan: A) lots of people lost their sources of income in this period and that caused dropouts of huge ratio of students. B) Illiteracy level increased drastically ranging from 70 -79%. C) It was not only education loss it was effecting the economy of the country(Geveh & Hasan, 2020).

**Concept of the paper**

This paper deals with the students who studied online during the peak of Covid-19 cases in Pakistan and there was a complete lockdown in the whole country. Institutes decided to move their mode of study from on-campus to online learning. Many students and teachers were confused about the e-learning process. However, the staff might get some training sessions for online classes but the students did not. So students of the architecture department from Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, Sindh were questioned about their e-learning experience and they gave their reviews through a questionnaire.

**Main Quarries in Questionnaires**

There were almost ten main questions regarding the experience of online classes, which are written under:

1. Is online education easy in architecture?
2. Are online practical/studio classes easy?
3. Are theoretical classes easy?
4. Was internet speed remained well during online classes?
5. Which is the best way to learn architecture (on-campus or online)?
6. What is the best way of studying during a pandemics?
7. Which is the best mode to conduct juries?
8. Did they feel laziness during online classes?
9. Which is the best way of practical/studio work during a lockdown?
10. Did students visit their sites during a lockdown?

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed through a Likert 5-point scale for some questions. Students chose options from strongly disagree to strongly agree and they gave answers according to their experience in online study. A Likert table is used where people’s level of agreement is checked(Zunaira, Kalwar, Sahito, & Memon, 2021). The level of agreement was analyzed via histograms in MS excel. Histograms are provided below.
Figure 1 Online education in architecture is easy
Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 2 Online Practical Classes are easy
Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 3 Online theoretical Classes are Easy
Source: Authors’ compilation.
Figure 4 Internet speed remains good

Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 5: Best Mode of learning Architecture

Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 6: The best way of education during a Pandemic

Source: Authors’ compilation.
Figure 7: Laziness during Online Classes
Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 8: Best Mode of Conducting Juries
Source: Authors’ compilation.

Figure 9: Site Visit During Lockdown
Source: Authors’ compilation.
Results and Discussions

So these histograms show that when students were asked about the ease of online architecture study so students responded as 43.40% said that they strongly disagreed, 30.40% students disagreed, 13% students remained neutral, 0% agreed whereas only 13% of students strongly agreed that the online classes were easy.

In the second question students were asked about the ease of online practical/studio classes so 52% strongly disagreed, 30.40% disagreed 8.70% remain neutral, 8.70% students agreed and 0% students strongly agreed that practical/studio classes were easy during online sessions. The third question was about that how much the easy theoretical classes were back in online classes so, 4.30% of students strongly disagreed, 17.40% disagreed, 39.10% remained neutral, 17.40 agreed and 21.70% of students strongly agreed that the online theoretical classes were easy. The fourth question was regarding internet speed so, 30.40% of students strongly disagreed, 30.40% of students disagreed, 13% of students remained neutral, 21.70% of students agreed and 4.30% of students strongly agreed that the internet speed remains constantly good during online classes.

The fifth question was regarding the best mode of study architecture so 8.70% of students said online and the remaining 91.30% of students said on-campus is the best way to study architecture. The sixth question was regarding the best way to study during a pandemic so, 56.50% of students said theory should be online and practical/studio should be on-campus, 4.30% of students said theory should be on-campus and practical/studio should be online, 0% said both online, 39.10% said that both should be taught on-campus. The seventh question was regarding the mode of conducting juries so 8.70% of students said online whereas 91.30% of students said juries should be conducted on-campus. The eighth question was regarding laziness during online classes so, 82.60% of students said yes and 17.40% of students said no about being lazy during online classes. The ninth question was regarding what were the ways of working for practical/studio classes, 8.70% of students said they worked on sheets, 34.80% of students said they worked on software and 56.50% said they worked on both(sheets and software). The tenth question was regarding site visits during lockdown so, 17.40% of students said yes, and 82.60% of students said no about the site visits during the lockdown.
Conclusion

This paper deals with the experience of undergraduate students in the architecture department at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan, during online classes at the time of peak Covid-19 days. Data was collected from 300 students through a questionnaire, the students were not so satisfied with their exercise regarding online learning during the lockdown. Some faced problems with internet service, some agreed that online education is easy when studying online, some did not visit the sites; some found it difficult to appear on juries in online sessions, and for some students, it was difficult to get practical/studio classes, and so on. Hence, this paper clears that the students were not too satisfied with the online study architecture. There should have been some change system to get everything clear during lectures and in practical/studio classes.

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