

STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR AND ISSUES IN ONLINE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES WITHIN A NEWLY ESTABLISHED UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) forced the stay-home-policy in all the affected countries and all the universities were closed. This led to the transition from the traditional mode of learning to the online mode and it came with many challenges faced by students, teachers, and educational institutes. This study sought to explore the students' behavior and issues faced by them in online classes. Qualitative research approach was adopted, six students from six different departments of the University of Okara, Pakistan were selected as a sample, and semi-structured interviews were conducted. After the data analysis procedures, different themes emerged related to the behavioral issues of the students. These were a lack of motivation and interest in the study and an informal attitude during the class. The other issues included health issues, family issues, domestic responsibilities, and level of student-teacher and student-students interaction. Since it is unknown when the COVID-19 will fully end, and there will be no more waves of coronavirus, the online mode of education will stay functional and this study helps create strategies to eliminate the issues faced by students during online studies

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic posed similar challenges to the education system as it did to other government and private sectors. Under conditions of lockdown, all the sectors were forced to either close or convert their business and other activities to online platforms. The firms that were aware of the use of technology in business and were already utilizing the online tools to communicate with their workers and allowing workers to work from their homes adapted to this new change without much struggle. However, increased reliance on online education created serious problems for education systems (Daniel, 2020). Schools, colleges, and universities are conducting teaching activities through the internet. Education institutions have been using the internet and other online teaching platforms to assist the regular form of education. However, in this crisis, educational institutions are switched to 100% online teaching (Alshehri et al., 2020; Abid et al., 2021).

Developed countries were well-equipped with technology-built-up systems, and the shift of education system to the web-based platform has just been an easy task, although their teachers also took this sudden shift as a challenge or threat due to obliviousness to the online teaching system (Daumiller et al. 2021). However, many developing countries tend not to ensure fully online education mainly due to a lack of technological infrastructure and some other constraints like high rates of students from lower-income families not being able to purchase the internet and devices for online education (Ramij and Sultana, 2020).

The rapid, unexpected, and 'forced' shift from traditional to online teaching has entailed numerous challenges and constraints that need to be addressed. Existing literature points to an 'emergency remote teaching' (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020; Vlachopoulos, 2020) or 'emergency eLearning' (Murphy 2020) as compared to cautious designing and development of instruction (Branch & Dousay, 2015; Hodges et al. 2020).

Zhang et al. (2020) reported difficulties related to poor online teaching infrastructure, teachers' competencies, the information gap, and the complex environment at home. In addition, lack of mentoring and support (Judd et al. 2020) and issues related to teachers' competencies in the use of digital instructional formats (Huber and Helm 2020) have also been identified. Descriptions of how institutions and stakeholders adapted to the new scenario

created by the COVID-19 pandemic (Bao 2020; Flores and Gago 2020; Quezada, Talbot, and Quezada-Parker 2020; Zhang et al. 2020) as well as training strategies and experiences of innovation (Ferdig et al. 2020) have been reported.

Noor et al., (2020) reported the challenge of improper study environment, inequality in the availability of gadgets, insufficient online study material, no access or slow internet speed, load shedding, weak eyesight, overweight, sleep deprivation, and behavioral issues among students during online classes. Connectivity issues, a proper learning management system, and low-tech software in online classes were reported by (Dube, 2020). Ramij and Sultana (2020) reported that the majority of the students marked lack of technological infrastructure, high cost of internet, low speed of internet, the financial crisis of the family, and mental pressure for the students are the prime hindrances to online education in Bangladesh. Paudel, (2021) found time-management skills, more freedom for the teachers and learners, and reliable internet in the workplace as the extreme challenges.

During this pandemic, many researchers have reported the opportunities and challenges of online teaching throughout the world (Donitsa-schmidt&Ramot, 2020; İnce & Ahmet Kabul, 2020; Huang et al., 2020; Miguel & Marco, 2019; Mouchantaf, 2020; Ogbomo, 2011; Pegu, 2014; Sepulveda-escobar et al., 2020; Rahiem, 2020; Shehzadi et al., 2020). Studies in Pakistan also pointed out a few challenges (Manzoor, 2020; Mukhtar et al. 2020; Adnan and Anwar 2020; Bao 2020); Aziz et al. 2020). However, the studies in this regard were conducted in developed and old universities. This study was conducted at the University of Okara which is a newly established university and is still in the developmental process. This study aimed to explore the behavior of the students and the issues they faced during online education during COVID-19.

This study helps to fill this gap and investigates the behavior of the students and the challenges that are faced by students of this university in online classes. This study will consist of Students of Okara who are beneficiaries of this study as this research aims to identify their challenges in getting an education in the online learning environment.

Significance of the Study

The Covid-19 pandemic outbreak forced many schools and colleges to remain closed temporarily. Several areas are affected worldwide and there is a fear of losing this whole ongoing semester or even more in the coming future. Various schools, colleges, and universities have discontinued in-person teaching. As per the assessment of the researchers, it is uncertain whether to get back to normal teaching anytime soon. As social distancing is preeminent at this stage, this will have negative effects on learning opportunities (Dhawan, 2020). In past, many institutions were provided online classes but after the Covid-19 pandemic, all the institutions switched from traditional learning environments to online learning environments which are hard to adapt both for learners and educators. In this technological era, many students are comfortable with technology-based education, but still, there is a number of students who prefer traditional learning in the classroom over online classes. Nowadays all the institutions are offering online classes. Thus, a need exists to examine the real difficulties for students in taking online classes and what can be done to meet their expectations. This qualitative study presents an understanding of how students face difficulties in taking online classes. What behavior do they exhibit during online education? Moreover, it paves the way to overcome the difficulties that influence their learning through the online system because it helps faculty and university administrators understand the factors that hinder students to take online. This study assists in understanding the fact that how online classes affect students. Challenges addressed by students through this qualitative

study will help university administrators and faculty to adopt a suitable strategy for online classes.

Research Questions:

- 1) What are the challenges encountered by students in online classes?
- 2) How do online classes affect students' attitudes and personalities?
- 3) What type of behavior is expressed by students when taking online classes?

Methodology:

This study was qualitative in nature. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used as a methodology to explore the lived experiences of students attending classes online. The purpose was to highlight challenges as consciously experienced by students at this university during online classes for attending the first time during the COVID-19 pandemic. This area lacked information provided by students about the challenges faced by them during online classes, which guided the choice of phenomenology (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The descriptive phenomenology assisted the participants in articulating their lived experiences, observations, and viewpoints that were significant to online learning (Creswell and Poth 2016; Morrow et al., 2015).

Participants

Data were collected from students who have attended online classes for one year or more. The sampling technique for this study was purposive. Six participants (students) were interviewed for the study. The recruitment and interviews of participants continued till data reached its point of saturation and new themes stopped emerging (Javadi and Zarea 2016).

The inclusion criteria for the participants in the study were limited to university Students engaging in online classes for the first time in their study career during the COVID-19 pandemic. Only those students were interviewed who were class representatives in their classes as they had more interaction with faculty and students as compared to any other student. Students were recruited purposefully from six different departments of the university.

Interview Procedure

A semistructured interview was used to explore the issues faced by students during online classes, the behavior they exhibited during this period, and the impact of online education on their attitudes and personality. The study also examined the prevailing conditions of stress due to the transition to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions were modified according to the flow of the conversation. The participants responded to questions such as the following:

- i. What is your experience of online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- ii. How would you describe the issues faced during online classes?
- iii. What was your behavior while taking online classes?
- iv. What was the behavior of your fellow students while taking online classes?
- v. How would you compare the traditional form of learning with online education?
- vi. How would you describe your stay-at-home learning policy?
- vii. How has online education impacted your attitude and personality?

After the completion of every interview, the main points related to our study were summarized. Interviewees were also asked to provide a summative conclusion of the interview, additional comments, and feedback. All of these were incorporated into existing data. After completion of the interview process, they were transcribed. Since the interviews were conducted in our native language, they were transcribed accordingly and after transcription, were converted into the English language. A pilot interview was conducted to ensure and increase data credibility (Forero et al. 2018). The data collection and data analysis

processes were carried out stage-wise. The first stage comprised the recruitment of the participant and the time and mode of the interview were discussed and decided. The purpose and objectives of the study were explained to the participants in the second stage. In the third stage, the interview was conducted and the main points were summarized

The Procedure of Data Analysis

Thematic analysis that comprises a six-step model (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was employed to have a deeper understanding of students' experience with online classes and to interpret their behavior. In the first stage, the researcher transcribed the data in Urdu language and then translated it into English. The data obtained was read twice to develop familiarity with emerging themes. Moreover, the important lines were highlighted and the log was maintained. In the second stage, MS Word was used to code the data obtained. Each interview was coded by two researchers to enhance the credibility of the coding process.

Similar codes were grouped and the first emerging themes, and mind maps were constructed using inductive thematic analysis in the third stage (Thomas, 2006). In the fourth stage, the emerged themes were compared with the already obtained codes to check the coherence of the pattern of themes. One of the fellow researchers who had little knowledge of literature regarding this study developed a mind map independently and the final thematic map was constructed after extensive discussion and contemplation.

In the prefinal stage, the results were discussed with peers and they were briefed about the study's purpose. After debriefing with peers the final draft was written in the final stage. It involved logical rationalities and direct quotes from the participants. This was done to ensure the credibility of the findings of the study. These steps based on the six-step model of thematic analysis ensure the credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability of the research (Nowell et al. 2017).

Ethical Considerations:

Following are the ethical considerations of the study:

- i. Written informed consent of the participants was taken
- ii. Participants were informed about the purpose and major objectives of the study
- iii. Participants were ensured that their data i.e., name, department, etc. will be kept confidential
- iv. Verbal consent was taken before recording
- v. Interviews were conducted and recorded via Whatsapp calls and Zoom meetings.

Results

After the process of data analysis, several themes emerged related to the behavior of the students and the issues that they faced during online classes. Among these major themes were lack of motivation and interest, the informal attitude of students, health issues faced by students, family issues, domestic responsibilities, and the level of interaction between students and teachers and among students themselves. These themes are interrelated with each other as one theme originates from other. These are explained below.

1. Lack of motivation and interest

Students' behavior and self-motivation are necessary for effective teaching-learning processes. Students cannot be taught with force rather they need to be self-motivated to learn. Our respondents indicated that their behavior impeded them from effective learning as in physical classes they had to be responsible in the presence of some external authority i.e., a teacher, however in online classes that external authority is missing so their behavior gets irresponsible and they don't show any interest in learning. Positive and negative reinforcements in physical classes allowed them to learn but in the online system, the sense of fear or rewards gets vague. Students don't attend classes, make jokes during classes, don't

submit assignments, don't listen to the long audio and video lectures, and don't read notes that indicate a lack of interest in the study because there is no one to keep an eye on them.

R1 stated,

"Teachers, don't take proper lectures rather they share notes and audios and videos for concept clearance. Students are not responsible enough to listen to videos and read pdf or ppt notes."

The presence of some external authority that could hold students accountable is an important factor that determines the students' behavior regarding their studies.

As explained by R3,

"In university, we attend classes regularly and study with full focus as we always have someone watching over us but at home, our parents or teachers don't hold us accountable so students don't respond well to teachers."

Respondent 2 explained,

"I have no interest in taking an online class. I join the class, put my mobile on the side, and go to sleep. I know my teacher will not even call my name to know whether the student is present or not"

Respondent 6 said,

"Sometimes we think that we will listen to the long recordings later but we don't do that even later. We procrastinate it for the next day and don't listen again so many of our concepts remain unclear."

Thus, online classes led to a downfall in student motivation and interest in their studies. Moreover, the absence of accountability for students provided them the freedom to lose interest in their studies.

2. Informal attitude

Students' misbehavior with teachers and their fellows was also prominent during online classes. Students turned their microphones on by asking, teased other students, played songs during presentations, and started their conversations while keeping the microphone on. In study groups, i.e., WhatsApp, Telegram, or Google classrooms, students sent irrelevant texts, emojis, stickers, songs, videos, and voice notes to tease the teachers and it created a bad impression of the class in teacher's mind. Moreover, the important information conveyed by teachers in the study groups was missed because of students' misbehavior.

R4 said that,

"Because of large class strength, teachers were unable to properly handle the class. When they asked students to ask about their queries, students started to shout jokingly, made noise, and played songs. This negatively affected the positive learning environment of the class."

Our respondents explained that the non-serious and informal attitude of their fellows created problems in their effective learning. It was difficult to contact the teachers as everyone in the class is not allowed to have direct contact with teachers. The disturbance created during online sessions and in WhatsApp groups deterred the effectiveness of the lessons and the learning material provided to us.

As R3 explained,

"Sometimes students start sending messages of "thank you Sir" "ok sir" etc. Due to these extra messages, we miss important messages from teachers. Sometimes students start sending jokes and other informal messages in the group so that when we open WhatsApp there are 100+ messages in the group and most of them are informal and we miss the actual message by the teacher. If teachers make the group private to allow only admins to send messages, then hardworking students have to

contact CR first to ask a question from the teacher as students are not allowed to text teachers privately.”

3. Health issues

Overuse of online technology deteriorates the health of students and produces many complications such as headaches, depression, anxiety, and weak eyesight. Students had to use mobile phones and laptops for the whole day as there was no fixed time for online classes. They watched lengthy videos of lectures and read notes in soft form instead of hard form because all the printing shops were closed during the pandemic. This led to the overuse of online sources that negatively affected their health.

R3 said,

“Video lectures are too long and we have to watch them again and again to grasp the basic concepts. Watching videos for so long causes headache, anxiety, eye soreness.”

Similarly, R5 said,

“My eyesight was already weak and now it is getting even weaker and I’m facing headache issues as well because of watching the screen all day.”

Moreover, improper class timings also affected the mental health of students. Teachers did not provide a proper timetable and conducted online classes at their ease. They would ask students to attend class at any time during the day.

As stated by R1,

“Teachers call us any time to attend the class and then insult us for not being present. So, we have to check our mobile after every 10 to 20 minutes. We spend the whole day with mobiles in our hands and even our family members scold us for overusing mobile phones.”

In the online teaching-learning system, students were forced to read their notes in soft form because of lockdown due to pandemics. They would spend whole days and nights during their exams reading slides, books, and articles from mobiles and laptops. This led to the development of depression and eyesight problems in students.

4. Family issues

Families which should be a supporter of the students were not familiar with the new mode of teaching and learning so they scolded their kids for using mobile phones and laptops all day. They thought that their kids were wasting their time and damaging their health by using mobile phones all day. Some students were even asked to hand over their mobiles to their parents.

R3 stated,

“Teachers don’t take classes timely That’s why we have to stay online every time. Parents scold us for overusing mobile phones but how can we make them understand that we use mobile phones for study purposes since most of the students come from families where parents are not educated and are not familiar with innovation and technology.”

R4 said,

“Our parents don’t understand that classes can also be conducted online so they don’t believe anything we say and keep repeating that ‘this mobile will destroy your health’.

In rural areas of Pakistan, the joint family system prevails so it is difficult for students to find a peaceful space to attend their online classes. Kids are shouting at the back, mothers calling them to bring something, and family members arguing with each other all the time.

R2 stated,

“When we take lectures at home someone is always there to interrupt. Sometimes the environment at home is noisy that’s why it’s difficult to listen to the teachers attentively.”

Amid all these interruptions students cannot attend classes or give their presentations effectively. Unnecessary noise, the continuous scolding of parents, improper class timings, and watching lengthy video lectures affected the health of students. Several students reported weaker eyesight, headache, depression, and anxiety at the end of an online semester.

5. Domestic responsibilities:

Universities provide a proper learning environment where students can learn consistently without external disturbances. They can listen to the lectures in a peaceful environment, and perform their tasks and assignments without worrying about other responsibilities. However, during online classes parents expected their children to perform responsibilities other than studying such as domestic chores for girls and jobs and agricultural work for boys. This interrupted their learning and forced them to miss classes and delay their assignments since it was not possible to manage both responsibilities at the same time.

R3 stated,

"We're free at scheduled lecture timings but due to some internet issues from the teachers' side the lecture gets delayed, and by the time our lecture begins we get busy with other things at home and miss our lectures."

R1 said,

"Being a girl, we have to perform our domestic duties as well. When our class isn't conducted at the scheduled time, it gets difficult for us to choose between domestic work and class. Moreover, we are unable to stay up to date with university timetables."

R5 explained that

"Time management is a major issue while studying at home. We have to give preference to domestic chores over our study otherwise our parents scold us for not performing our duties."

Other female participants stated that they cannot find a calm and peaceful environment at home for effective learning. The environment is haphazardous and they must deal with cooking, cleaning, babysitting the crying babies and many more responsibilities are there. However, during physical classes, they don't have to perform such tasks and they can focus on their studies with proper attention and motivation.

R4 stated,

"We can either cook and clean or attend our lectures."

Similar problems persist for boys as well. They have other responsibilities at home such as jobs, agricultural duties, helping the family in business, bringing miscellaneous items from the market, and taking care of old parents. These responsibilities often clash with their scheduled class timings limiting their performance.

R6 said,

"Mostly teachers delivered their lectures on time but due to other pieces of work in the village, I was unable to listen to their lectures and take proper classes. Furthermore, my father is sick so I have to take care of him too."

6. Interaction

The traditional model of learning allows students to interact with their fellow students, teachers, and university administration members. Positive interaction among all these is necessary for creating a positive learning environment and students learning outcomes are positively affected by it. Physical classes help the students in developing their personality and confidence level however in online classes students are unable to physically interact with each other so in the real world, they lose confidence when they are asked to speak or work in front of other people.

R7 explained that

"In physical classes, we work on group projects, and group work on assignments, presentations, and projects boosts our confidence. However, in online classes, no interaction exists between students and teachers that impede effective learning."

Respondents highlighted the issue that in physical classes they would work in groups to solve problems, held group discussions with fellow students and teachers, and had opportunities for balanced communication with people but online classes don't provide such opportunities. They cannot seek help from their fellow students and teachers and many of the problems remain unsolved. Physical interaction and real communication are necessary for better learning and growth of students.

R2 explained that

"In an online class, physical interaction, communication, and question-answer sessions are minimal. We don't develop a full understanding of many concepts. Even though we have WhatsApp groups with friends and fellows for sharing information and study material, still our interaction level is minimum."

Summary of the results

This section described our results in the light of the quotations of our respondents. The major themes discussed were lack of motivation and interest, the informal attitude of students, health issues faced by students, family issues, domestic responsibilities, and the level of interaction between students and teachers and among students themselves. It explained how the online classes made students lose their motivation in their studies and how they were disengaged from the learning activities. The informal attitude and misbehavior of the students and its impact on the teaching-learning process and other students' learning were also described. The students faced several health issues such as headaches, anxiety, depression, and eyesight problems because of continuous mobile phones and laptops. The family environment was found to be a major resistive factor that negatively impacted students learning in online education. Lastly, the issue of domestic responsibilities and the level of interaction among students and teachers were explained.

Discussion

The major aims of this study were to investigate the behavior of the students in online classes, how the online classes impacted their attitude

The results of our study regarding the impact of online education on student attitudes are similar to existing literature. We found out that in online classes students lose motivation and interest in their studies. These results are similar to the studies conducted by Esra and Sevilen (2021) and Alawamleh, Al-Twait, and Al-Saht, (2020) that proved that online learning systems negatively impact students' motivation. According to Esra and Sevilen (2021), students had negative perceptions of online education as they consider it to negatively affect their motivation because of certain factors such as lack of social interaction, the difference between expected and provided content, organizational problems, and unsuitable learning environments. According to Alawamleh et al., (2020) students prefer traditional classes over online classes because of a lack of motivation to learn in online settings.

We also found out that students expressed negative behavior during online classes. Students turned their microphones on by asking, teased other students, played songs during presentations, and started their conversations while keeping the microphone on. On study groups, i.e., WhatsApp, Telegram, or Google classrooms, students sent irrelevant texts, emojis, stickers, songs, videos, and voice notes to tease the teachers and it created a bad impression of the class in teacher's mind. This informal attitude can be explained in terms of

their motivation to learn. This result can be interrelated with our previous themes in the context of Esra andSevilen's(2021) study. They found out that students had negative perceptions towards online classes because of a lack of motivation and this lack of motivation was due to other factors such as low level of social interaction, content taught, and other less engaging activities. Our study revealed that when students are disengaged from the classroom they tend to show deviant behavior and disturb the teacher as well as other fellow studentsNoor et al., (2020).

There are several issues faced by students during online education. The first of these is related to health. The student developed many health problems because of constantly using mobile phones and laptops. Furthermore, the new model of instruction developed anxiety and psychological problems in students. Other health-related issues we found out are eyesight problems, depression, anxiety, headaches, and emotional disturbances. These results are consistent with Noor et al., (2020) study. Noor et al., (2020) reported the challenge of improper study environment, inequality in the availability of gadgets, insufficient online study material, no access or slow internet speed, load shedding, weak eyesight, overweight, sleep deprivation, and behavioral issues among students during online classes. These results also align with Ramij and Sultana' (2020) study as they reported mental pressure among others as a primary hindrance to online education.

The family structure of the students also created problems for them in the online education system. The criticism by parents because of the overuse of technology, domestic responsibilities for female students, joint-family system, and lack of a peaceful environment for studying were the major factors that impeded the effective learning of students. Ramij and Sultana (2020) reported that the majority of the students marked lack of technological infrastructure, high cost of internet, low speed of internet, the financial crisis of the family, and mental pressure for the students are the prime hindrances to online education in Bangladesh. These findings are also consistent with Zhang et al., (2020) study as they reported the complex environment of the home as the major issue in online education.

The last theme that emerged was the low level of interaction among students and teachers during an online class. A communication gap existed between teachers and students and students and other students. This low level of interaction resulted in low confidence among students and a low level of socialization. Moreover, they could not ask questions because they were either shy or afraid. These findings are consistent with many studies such asAlawamleh et al., (2020), Esra andSevilen(2021), Ramij and Sultana (2020), and Zhang et al. (2020). Zhang et al. (2020) reported difficulties related to poor online teaching infrastructure, teachers' competencies, the information gap, and the complex environment at home.Alawamleh et al., (2020) reported that students developed a sense of isolation in online classes because of a lack of communication with teachers and other fellow students.

Findings

The findings of this study are as follows:

1. Lack of accountability, teachers' irresponsible behavior, and fellow students' behavior affects the level of motivation and interest in students. Positive and negative reinforcements in physical classes allowed them to learn but in the online system, the sense of fear or rewards gets vague. Students don't attend classes, make jokes during classes, don't submit assignments, don't listen to the long audio and video lectures, and don't read notes that indicate a lack of interest in the study because there is no one to keep an eye on them.

2. Students expressed informal behavior and attitude in online classes. They created a disturbance in several to impede the effective teaching-learning processes. Students turned their microphones on by asking, teased other students, played songs during presentations, and

started their conversations while keeping the microphone on. on study groups, i.e., WhatsApp, Telegram, or Google classrooms, students sent irrelevant texts, emojis, stickers, songs, videos, and voice notes to tease the teachers and it created a bad impression of the class in teacher's mind.

3. Online classes badly affected the physical and mental health of students. They developed eyesight problems, headaches, anxiety, emotional disturbance, and depression.

4. Families of the students belonging to rural areas were not familiar with the new mode of teaching so they always criticized their kids for using mobile phones and laptops. Moreover, the joint family system prevails in Pakistan so the students could not find a peaceful environment for taking classes and presenting their topics as there were some disturbing background noises.

5. Students had to perform a lot of domestic responsibilities during online classes that they don't perform during the traditional mode of education. This was because their families were not aware of the nature of online teaching and they considered them free, so asked them to do different pieces of work here and there. This created issues for them to attend their classes and perform their domestic responsibilities at the same time. This issue was highly stressed by our female participants.

6. Students could not properly interact with their teachers and fellow students. This was because they were not allowed to speak or communicate as they could do in the traditional mode of classes. So they couldn't develop the confidence in communicating with teachers or other students in case they had any queries.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study aimed to explore the behavior of students during online classes, the impact of online education on their attitudes, and the issues faced by them in online classes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students studying in a newly established university. The results obtained from the data showed that students felt less motivated and less interested to learn during online classes. They expressed informal and negative attitudes which disturbed their teacher as well as fellow students. The issues they faced during online classes were family environment, negative impact on health, domestic responsibilities, and low level of interaction with teachers and other students. Overall, it can be concluded that online education comes with many challenges as well as opportunities for the future to train students for utilizing technology effectively.

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations of this study for other researchers as well as the education system and policymakers.

1. The scope of this study was narrow. Students were selected only from one university. The challenges faced by students during online classes might vary depending upon geographical area, institutes, and facilities available. It is recommended to the researchers that they may increase the scope of this study by selecting study participants from different universities in different regions of Pakistan and may compare the results according to different regions.

2. This study only conducted interviews from the students' side. The teachers were not involved in the study. The researchers are recommended to conduct a comparative analysis of the problems faced by both teachers and students. Both sides of the coin must be studied to draw definite conclusions.

3. It is recommended for the Higher Education authorities to provide facilities of professional training and mentoring to teachers for teaching in an online system so that they can effectively engage students in the class for improved learning.

4. Just because of the challenges faced by students in online classes, this system should not be terminated. Rather it is recommended that even when the mode of education is shifted to traditional, the online system should be integrated into it to develop students' level of technology acceptance so that we can globalize our classrooms.

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