



## Influence of Virtual Professional Development on Teachers' Online Classroom Management Practices: An Interview Study

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**Abstract:** *This study aimed to explore the influence of virtual professional training on teachers' online classroom management practices. Five teachers teaching at an early years branch of a reputed private school in Lahore were selected through purposive sampling employing the criterion sampling technique. The study is qualitative, incorporating a hermeneutic phenomenology research design. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data. Thematic analysis was done to extract findings. The study concluded that prompt, professional training of the teachers provides confidence, updates their knowledge and pedagogies, introduces them to the latest techniques and strategies, and improves their management skills. Teachers, therefore, are needed to be trained well before time, keeping in mind the changing dynamics of the education sector.*

**Key Words:** Online Classroom Management, Professional Training, Synchronous Learning, Asynchronous Learning, Classroom Management Practices

### Introduction

The global turmoil of COVID-19 has altered the way people used to live, work, and connect and has brought massive changes to the socio-economic patterns of the societies (Alzueta et al., 2021). To meticulously attenuate the spread of this lethal virus, governments across the globe had to enforce rather strict measures such as lockdown, complete closures of public places including workplaces and educational institutions, and remain stringent about zero-contact policy (Buonsenso et al., 2021). The education sector was not affected any lesser than the others. The forced termination of physical classrooms left around 1.2 billion

children in 126 countries (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010; UNESCO, UNICEF, & Weltbank, 2020) uncertain of their future and hence urged organizations to provide an equally workable and effective alternate plan within a matter of days. This whole traditional system thus underwent an overhauling not previously known to a majority of people. The rapid transformation had, however, not been easy and was subjected to several challenges and obstacles that were needed to overcome in the earliest while utilizing available technology and resources (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020). Students without stable internet connections or required technical gadgets suffered miserably during online classes and were not able to

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participate. Thus creating a digital divide prevailing across the globe and between income brackets within the countries ([Azubuike, Adegboye, & Quadri, 2021](#)).

The global crisis with all its concomitants has been a great learning lesson not just for the governments and educational systems but also for parents and students. Teachers across the globe have played a rather significant role in reimagining the human interactions and connections and in redefining the class components ([Peters et al., 2020](#)).

In a nutshell, the pandemic has brought shifts in two critical components of classroom management. First, the pedagogical adaptations: The onset of COVID-19 followed by the closure of educational institutions outdated the traditional in-person lecture method as it had no relevance in remote learning. With households becoming classrooms, teachers were expected to facilitate learning in environments that were not supportive of the teaching-learning process at all. Teachers, nonetheless, had to be creative and adaptive in their practices. Second, remote learning calls for redefining the division of time teachers use to conduct different activities in class, particularly focused on students' engagement ([Lathifah, Helmanto, & Maryani, 2020](#)).

Dealing with uncertainty is often characterized by stress and anxiety. COVID-19 and the transition it brought were not an exception either ([Ellis, Dumas, & Forbes, 2020](#)). A majority of teachers, if not all, knew nothing about remote learning, and suffered while keeping abreast with the changing trends ([Reid, 2022](#)). Therefore, it was high time to prepare teachers to face the challenges of a virtual classroom. Several schools conducted training sessions, workshops, and webinars to help equip their teachers with contemporary knowledge to ease them in pedagogical adaptations and recalibrate the classroom management strategies ([Whalen, 2020](#)). Therefore, the current study has its nexus around the influence these virtual training had on the classroom management strategies of teachers.

## Literature Review

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Among various duties a teacher performs, classroom management is held closely consequential to the success of a teacher ([Marzano & Marzano, 2003](#)). An orderly, well-managed classroom is the hallmark of an effective teacher. An effective teacher can aptly deal with disruptive behaviors that hinder individual students' learning or groups of students. Classroom management, therefore, can be defined as strategies and techniques that keep the students organized, orderly, focused, and directed on task while enhancing their academic productivity in class. A teacher lacking these strategies is miles apart from achieving the academic objectives. Moreover, compliance with rules by the students as described by the teacher to keep the students disciplined is too typical of bygone days. The contemporary definition is rather broader and encircles everything a teacher does in the classroom to facilitate the teaching-learning process ([Landau, 2009](#)). It ranges from harnessing positive behaviors, establishing a welcoming environment, setting out clear expectations, arranging supporting learning material, and planning activities coherent to learning objectives and student engagement at the same time ([Evertson & Weinstein, 2006](#)).

The primary goal of a teacher is to help students learn and acquire knowledge and certain skills. Chaotic and disruptive environments that lack welcoming warmth and intellectually stimulating material that is not organized to support learning activities harbor disruptive behaviors consequential to poor academic performance ([Evertson & Weinstein, 2006](#); [Gage, Scott, Hirn, & MacSuga-Gage, 2018](#)). It is important to understand that a majority of teachers-if not all, are either abortive in their behavior management practices or lack thereof ([Siddiqui, Arif, & Muhammad, 2020](#)). [Barbetta, Norona, and Bicard \(2005\)](#) elaborate on twelve common mistakes a teacher does while managing behavior and emphasized that teachers usually fail at behavior management since they usually describe disruptive behavior by how it looks (calling, hitting, etc) and not by the function

(the root cause of the problem) ([Sahin, Tantekin-Erden, & Akar, 2011](#)).

## **Classroom Management in Virtual Environment**

The onset of COVID-19 caught the world off guard and has been an overwhelmingly unprecedented time for every one. The field of education is no exception to its plight. Teachers were thrust into an online teaching setup overnight without assessing their readiness to use different pedagogies with specific competencies and hence the effectiveness of the whole process was undermined. Teaching online is challenging in its very nature and being carried by teachers with absolutely no support and training is the worst-case scenario ([Dhawan, 2020](#); [Hassan, Mirza, & Hussain, 2020](#); [Klapproth, Federkeil, Heinschke, & Jungmann, 2020](#); [Putri, Sari, & Learning, 2021](#)).

Among innumerable challenges that teachers faced during remote learning, students' engagement kept teachers on their toes. [Tamah, Triwidayati, and Utami \(2020\)](#) elaborated that teachers struggled to deal with the lack of students' participation in class owing to the lack of students' access to required technical facilities. The efficient use of synchronous and asynchronous learning approaches has, however, helped in minimizing the gravity of the issue ([Yousuf & Ahmad, 2020](#)). Given the teachers remain considerate enough of the limitations of the students in terms of technical deficit; establishing reiterate routines for studying, submitting work, and providing feedback have been fundamental for students' engagement and motivation ([Laferrrière, Hamel, & Searson, 2013](#)).

Lack of physical interaction made it impossible for the teachers to monitor learning engagement and urged students to learn independently ([Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020](#)). The independent use of technology took its toll on students' motivation and focus specifically on the children of working parents. Easy and unmonitored use of technology created distractions similar to physical classrooms but greater in amplitude. Students

often presented technical glitches as an excuse for frequent absentism and kept busy with video games and other engaging activities while pretending as if they had been taking classes in front of their parents ([Dontre, 2021](#)). In-apt handling of technical gadgets both by the students and teachers also created a disruption, lack of required bandwidth further aggravated the problem. ([Rafique, Mahmood, Warraich, & Rehman, 2021](#)). Moreover, having independent access to the internet amplified cheating and academic dishonesty among students regardless of their age, gender, and grade level ([Amzalag, Shapira, & Dolev, 2021](#)). Also, the increased dependence of teachers on parents' support required schools to foster a collaborative parent-teacher relationship. Nonetheless, proactive teachers curb the adversities by establishing proper communication etiquette that significantly improves the relationship not just between students and teachers but with families on a whole ([Ferri, Grifoni, & Guzzo, 2020](#)).

Additionally, teachers kept pegging away at classroom management during the COVID-19 outbreak and had a hard time realizing that managing a virtual classroom requires them to become more creative and intentional towards class management ([Basilaja & Kvakvadze, 2020](#)). Teachers, therefore, faced innumerable challenges in this regard. Since the idea of classroom management is nested in creating a balance between setting up classroom structure while becoming a flexible facilitator ([Dolighan & Owen, 2021](#)), it was, therefore, critically expected from the teachers that they will not only define boundaries and schedules during online learning but will set expectations that are adjustable as per the socio-emotional needs of the students ([Dolighan & Owen, 2021](#)). With ample virtual teaching-learning options available, teachers remain in a quandary of choosing the platform that will suffice the purpose within their specific context ([Ferri et al., 2020](#)). Setting clear goals despite their choice of platform kept students thriving as predictability is too typical of a traditional student ([Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl, & Shore, 2010](#)).

Teaching by and large, is a colossal job often consequential to stress and anxiety from the very beginning of the profession ([Kyriacou, 2001](#); [Ryan, 2017](#)). Stress and anxiety are whereby known to have adversely affected the personal lives of teachers. These factors have been equally determinantal for their operational capacities ([Pullis, 1992](#)). This stress is often characterized by the lack of knowledge and practice in their classrooms. Moreover, the advancements the teaching practice has witnessed during the last few decades require teachers to be apt at integrating knowledge while incorporating modern practices ([Braod & Evans, 2006](#)). Generally, teacher's education programs are held responsible for the provision of knowledge and skills applicable in the field; digital competencies nonetheless, have never been adequately addressed in teachers' education programs ([Borthwick & Hansen, 2017](#)). Remote teaching is a technical task to undertake and is often characterized by the pedagogical and technical prowess of teachers ([Asamoah, 2019](#)). Short courses and training collaterally aligned with contemporary trends tend to have been promoting abilities in teachers that are significant while operating in such unprecedented times as COVID-19 ([Whalen, 2020](#)). However, the sudden transition of the entire education setup underpins the grey areas of teachers' education programs regarding the development of their digital competencies across the globe ([Henriques, Correia, & Dias-Trindade, 2021](#)).

The agility of government bodies in providing support to teachers has significantly shaped their deft response to the digital transition. [UNESCO et al. \(2020\)](#) surveyed as a part of coordinated global education response to the COVID-19 pandemic sought the understanding of deployed governmental, academic policies, practices, intentions, and their effectiveness, reported that almost 90% of the countries that participated in the study had supported their teachers by providing the guidelines stressing on providing constant feedback to the students, maintaining a communication continuum with parents and families and reporting to their respective

educational authorities to keep track of teaching-learning methods. Some governments have responded meticulously rather than providing just the guideline to their teachers ([UNESCO et al., 2020](#)). The state of Edo in Nigeria, for example, took the leverage of their existing in-service teachers' training program, "EDO-BEST," to train their 11 thousand primary school teachers ([Munoz Najar Luque & Oviawe, 2020](#)). Many countries have reportedly used webinar-based training to supplement educators' competencies and in enhancing their virtual pedagogies to cope with the absence of face-to-face learning ([Toquero & Talidong, 2020](#)). All these efforts have progressively contributed to the pedagogical prowess of teachers during the digital transition ([Henriques et al., 2021](#)).

This study is, therefore, aimed at contributing to the existing knowledge body by exploring the influence virtual training programs had on the classroom management practices of teachers in Pakistan.

## Methods and Materials

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This is a qualitative study using a hermeneutic phenomenology research design. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to access the participants' interpretations of their lived experiences.

## Research Sites and participants

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The study was conducted in a reputed private school in Lahore. Purposeful sampling ([Campbell et al., 2020](#); [Denieffe, 2020](#)), utilizing the criterion sampling technique ([Patton, 2015](#)), yielded five teachers as the participants of the study.

The following criteria were used to decide the inclusion of participants in this study:

1. The participant was on duty during the Covid-19.
2. The participant was taking online classes.
3. The participant completed the self-paced course offered by the school.

## **Data Collection Methods**

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In the current study, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data. The questions were open-ended and tended not to be too specific, allowing for a range of possible responses—the reason for choosing this method is to probe the participants to acquire wholesome and information-rich data about the phenomenon ([Raworth, Sweetman, Narayan, Rowlands, & Hopkins, 2012](#)).

## **Interview Guide**

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An interview guide was drafted based on the areas identified in the literature ([Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, 2018](#)). The questions were developed on the concepts emerging in the literature regarding classroom management in a virtual environment and the influence of professional development on the management practices of the teachers. The interview guide was only finalized after discussions with apt qualitative researchers and piloting with a critical friend. Suggested changes were incorporated ([Berg & Lune, 2017](#)).

## **Interview Process**

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The researcher sought the prior consent and willingness of the participants to participate in the study and ensured thorough anonymity. Owing to the ongoing pandemic, all of the interviews were conducted using the Google Meet. Interviews were recorded with the consent of the participant using the built-in function of recording the interviews. Additionally, the researcher took the notes whenever felt necessary.

## **Data Analysis Methods**

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All the interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into the English Language. Post transcription, Reflective thematic analysis was done to analyze the data ([Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019](#)). After initial coding, emergent themes were identified and reviewed.

## **Findings**

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Sustaining an orderly learning environment conducive to learners' academic skills and competencies while nurturing prosocial behaviors and ensuring their emotional development is often linked to an orderly managed classroom ([Marzano & Marzano, 2003](#)). Because a chaotic classroom environment is one of the major reasons for creating stress and burnout among teachers, teachers need to have a sound knowledge of classroom management strategies and their application ([Garrett, 2014](#)). The transition from physical classrooms to online classrooms requires to have teachers who are highly skilled in classroom management ([Luke, 2021](#)). A participant described classroom management as:

Classroom management is the effective management of students and their behaviors while ensuring that SLOs are achieved and skills are learned through the ongoing teaching-learning activities in class without any disruption and in due time. (Participant 1)

## **Challenges Identified while Managing Online Classes**

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Since a majority of the schools in Pakistan used traditional methods of teaching and learning hence were based on physical classrooms. Nonetheless, the COVID-19 outbreak left them with no choice but to adapt to the changing scenario ([Kebritchi, Lipschuetz, & Santiago, 2017](#)). The process, however, was not seamless. Teachers had faced multiple challenges while conducting online classes across the globe ([Tamah et al., 2020](#)).

The majority of the teachers reported facing innumerable challenges since the very inception of online classes amidst COVID-19. The sudden change in the teaching and learning approach caught both the teachers and students off guard ([Rafique et al., 2021](#)). Typical teachers generally have little acquaintance with the technological tools and were, therefore, expected not only to become conversant with the technology but to help

their students navigate through this new mode of learning.

While a majority of the teachers floundered, not knowing quite which application and mode of teaching to be used, they explored and taught concurrently. Teachers needed time to understand the tool, and critically analyze if its interface is age-appropriate and is compatible with the specific subject while ensuring its purposefulness would ignite students' interest in the class.

Dealing with online classes at the beginning was super challenging. These online platforms were new to us and so for the students. While we knew nothing about the practicality of these tools or the magnitude of the online teaching-learning process, it was very difficult to choose the option that is age and lesson appropriate and has a user-friendly interface. We were highly skeptical if it was worth the effort and time. Only gradually do we become familiar with the tools, and then could help our students to get familiar with this all of a suddenly changed methodology. (Participant 3)

Unavailability of gadgets, low bandwidth, and poor frequencies further stymied online learning of students (Yusuf & Ahmad, 2020). With the onset of the noxious pandemic, every household, from parents to the youngest of the children, required a device to log on and go about their work, however, not all the families could afford multiple devices. Additionally, most of the available devices were not compatible with heavy applications such as Google Meet, Google Classroom, Google Drive, etc. Furthermore, a majority of teachers faced countless technical issues in the delivery of instruction on low bandwidth and in creating e-content owing to the lack of computer skills (Ferri et al., 2020).

Explaining to parents the importance of these classes was difficult. Parents were delusional about the prevalence of the situation and hence were reluctant to be responsive to the online classes. Also, the financial conditions of the families hindered the education of their children despite their will. (Participant 4)

The orthodox mindset of parents and students is a bottleneck in online teaching. Because parents and students misconceived online education as a temporary arrangement and remained insouciant about the online classes, they did not care to arrange a noise-free space for their children. Moreover, parents, in general, did not assist their children in operating the gadgets and using the application regardless of their digital literacy. Teachers also reported that the sudden shift of academic responsibilities from teachers to parents made them think that parents themselves are teaching their children and not the teachers. This lack of acknowledgment developed a certain state of apathy, among them consequential to increased absenteeism and decreased productivity of the students (Dhawan, 2020; Hassan et al., 2020). On the contrary children of the concerned and supportive parents were cooperative with their teachers and took responsibility for their learning. Once their interest was developed, they started exploring various features of online applications themselves. That contributed to enhancing the productivity of the class up to a certain level. "We had to have a private counseling session with the parents to talk about the academic loss their children might suffer if they failed to comply. Parents support eventually solved-not all but most of the problems" (Participant 4).

Because pandemic has altered the dimensions the world used to operate on, it is important to understand that these changes were critical for the mental health of several individuals (Siddiqui & Awan, 2020 July), and the increased workload has only doubled the problems of the teachers significantly. Planning lessons compatible with online formate, finding and exploring the right platform to conduct their classes on, researching and self-learning to create purposeful and meaningful e-content for the classes, troubleshooting students, managing technical glitches, and keeping the class on track while dealing with the distractions simultaneously was altogether very overwhelming for the teachers. Moreover, the continuous connectivity with the management, coordination meetings, discussions, planning,

and preparing for the classes raised a work-family conflict ([Anttila, Nätti, & Väisänen, 2005](#); [Erdamar & Demirel, 2014](#)) which is a strong determinant of deteriorated mental health conditions ([Panatik, Badri, Rajab, Rahman, & Shah, 2011](#)).

Working online was not easy. We worked 24/7 to bring about an effective teaching-learning process. We experimented, we tried and we failed our several attempts. We sought and helped our fellow teachers while figuring out the dos and don'ts. This increased workload and stretched work hours adversely affected our family time and hence caused us agitation, anxiety, and stress. (Participant 5)

### **Strategies to Improve Online Teaching**

Initially, all the participants faced some challenges during the transition phase. However, alongside training, each of them adopted different strategies to improve their teaching while addressing their particular context in terms of grade level, age, student competencies, and parents' cooperation ([Hassan et al., 2020](#)). The majority of the participants shared that they were working on an experimental approach-trying and testing what works best for their level of students ([Ferri et al., 2020](#)).

It was not easy in the beginning. Even gaining the attention of the students challenged me a lot which has never been a problem otherwise. Everything we were coming across was new. It took us time to get familiar with the features of certain apps. Practicing positive routines with the students helped me a lot. (Participant 1)

Communication between the parents and teachers remained the key determinant of the success of online education. Since the transition required parents to emulate teachers at home, it demanded teachers remain available beyond their working hours. To mitigate the communication gaps, teachers turned to the more populous mediums such as WhatsApp ([Putri et al., 2021](#)). Moreover, teachers' prodigious efforts to facilitate working parents in assisting their children in learning the use of digital technology enabled

such students to take their classes independent of their parents ([Hassan et al., 2020](#)). It was rather difficult for the parents to provide each of the children with expensive technical gadgets and hence refrained their children from taking online classes. Teachers, therefore, had to direct their efforts towards relieving the plight of such students by designing flexible timetables and turning to asynchronous mode wherever deemed necessary. Recorded video lectures comprising of PPT presentations aided with documentaries and informative short videos alongside clearly written instructions were provided to all the students regardless of their presence in the synchronous mode of education ([Ferri et al., 2020](#)).

Sometimes, yeah! I had to conduct extended lectures to accommodate students having technical glitches or shifting to asynchronous mode focusing on objectives and just the information students needed to get done with the task. (Participant 3)

Starting with the traditional classroom strategies, teachers soon realized their impertinence in digital classrooms. Teachers, therefore, first focused on making their classes stress-free yet effective and results-oriented by establishing general rules and ethics of a digital classroom and involving students in the process. The strategy, followed by continuous reminders, worked even for the younger students and helped in bringing down the distractions caused by environmental noise to a certain level. Gradually, as the students got habitual of the online classes, their attendance sustained, timely submissions of assignments were made and the overall quality of the teaching-learning process improved. Moreover, teachers improved at using interactive digital platforms such as Nearpod, Padlet Wall, Linoit Wall, Google Docs, online games, and Nearpods and subsequently were able to ignite the interest among the students. In addition to that, teachers sharing their positive routines and experiences on a mass level had a profound impact on improving the quality of such classes. Some teachers did not mind going an extra mile to improve their quality of teaching in online classes, diligently attended online courses,

webinars, conferences, and talks to know about contemporary trends and to learn new pedagogical skills to improve the productivity of the class on the whole (Teng & Wu, 2021).

We spent a great deal of time and poured in ample efforts to overcome the challenges. We prepared our lessons beforehand, explored and tested the digital tools to decide which to use while going about the lessons, attended several workshops and training sessions on how to maximize students learning in digital classrooms and indulged in hours-long discussions with fellow teachers and coordinators to get to the bottom of these problems. With so many things going on backstage, we tried hard to stay connected with parents and our students whenever they needed us. We were on our toes 24/7 amidst the entire episode of online schooling (Participant 5).

### **How did the Courses Inform Teachers of Online Classroom Management?**

Participants reported a significant improvement in their strategies after taking the online courses. The courses not only build robust confidence in their skills but also introduce new ways and techniques such as the use of verbal cues, signaling, and chatbox to minimize distortion and noise during their classes. Additionally, the course promoted development of positive routines in online classes such as discussing students' feelings about such an unprecedented time to help them in coping the stress owing to uncertainty and utilizing homeroom lessons to explain the significance of studying while staying at home (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Students were also encouraged to share their daily routines with their teachers and friends to promote a feeling of connectedness. Moreover, teachers learned to set up a couple of classroom rules with the involvement of the students. A wholesome discussion on the consequences of incompletion and the rewards for troubleshooting each other in the classroom elevated much of the burden on the teachers' shoulders.

There are no second thoughts about students being the center of the entire teaching-learning activity. This course, however taught me to deal with students behind the screens. I improved at my craft of involving students in a digital classroom. I learned to allow students to help establish classroom rules and maintain a friendly environment, learned to hold brainstorming sessions in a way that encourages students to actively participate in class discussions and ways to design interactive online activities also kept the students motivated (Participant 3).

Students gradually were able to signal each other, follow the protocols such as keeping their mics on mute and videos on, raising digital hands in case of queries, and speaking only when permission is granted. Certificates, rewards, and compliments brought in students' active participation. Teachers reported that they were trained to use emojis effectively in their classrooms to appreciate the students. Although it took seconds, it went a long way toward creating a healthy and warm relationship between students and their teachers (Marzano & Marzano, 2003).

The course has brought forth numerous benefits for me. I felt confident while using strategies in the online classroom. Earlier I used to hold discussions in class. The course taught me to convert it into signaling in such a way that students were able not just to give their responses but to encourage each other (Participant 1).

Teachers were also trained to serve as counselors for their students. They took individual sessions with the students to help them overcome their negative thoughts, address their shortcomings relevant to a particular subject, and to dig in a little deeper to get to the bottom of disruptive behaviors and absenteeism for no apparent reason (Yusuf & Ahmad, 2020).

Also, teachers were trained to continuously take students' feedback by using the Assessment for learning approach (AFL). These courses also enabled teachers to engage students by designing interactive and hands-on activities. As they were teaching a spiral

curriculum, they learned to narrow down their objectives to the skills necessary to proceed to the next level. These courses also helped teachers with ways to provide positive gaps during consecutive lessons to minimize screen stress. Overall, teachers had a great learning experience during their training session arranged by their school and had learned to handle a digital classroom well enough to suffice the purpose.

Teaching classes while we were still in training ourselves had taken its toll but it was worth it. The strategies changed totally after taking the course. We were taught several strategies but we have rather acquired a great deal of knowledge while applying strategies to check if it is workable for the age group and types of learning in a specific class (Participant 2).

### **What to be? Synchronous or Asynchronous**

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Participants found both the synchronous and Asynchronous modes equally useful in their online classes. They had rather used a mix and match strategy most of the time. Teachers could only successfully espouse both the strategies after completing their training. Initially, while teachers themselves were unfamiliar with the online mode of education had rather turned to Asynchronous mode with all the necessary resources such as Powerpoint presentation as a must along with the short video clips in relevancy to the topic and subject ([Putri et al., 2021](#)). The asynchronous lesson had recorded lectures explaining PowerPoint presentations based on the content and concepts and reading assignments that could be done by the students on their own and did not need teachers' supervision. (Participant 3)

Nonetheless, the lack of interaction with the students urged teachers to switch either to the synchronous mode or use both. Teachers, therefore, had to switch from an absolute asynchronous mode sooner or later so that students could be provided with an environment close to a physical classroom ([Ferri et al., 2020](#)). It is worthy of discussing that the purpose for which either of the modes

was used differs with the grade level and age of the students. For instance, in the Early Years, teachers used synchronous mode to help students complete their tasks. The synchronous mode was used to teach new concepts, hold discussions, brainstorm sessions, and carry on with the regular class activities in primary classes whereas, asynchronous learning was used for reinforcements mostly or to tackle the connectivity issues ([Putri et al., 2021](#)). Having said that teachers found synchronous learning beneficial in terms of participation and feedback. Queries were answered then and there and prompt feedback was provided to the students. Much hard work and critical analysis were required to choose either of the learning styles for teaching a specific topic. Parents were more satisfied with synchronous learning as classes were conducted on their fixed timings. Assignments and classwork were done within a given timeframe under the supervision of the teachers. Moreover, synchronous learning to some extent made up for peer learning as well.

Synchronous learning was not only appreciated by the students but parents were also positive and showed their confidence in synchronous learning. (Participant 1)

Well, both worked just fine for me. In the synchronous lesson, students can ask questions in real-time and had a greater sense of community and connection to their peers. Also, both students and parents seemed satisfied more with synchronous learning than its counter-strategy. (Participant 3)

### **Conclusion**

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The current research provides authentic and abundant data on the challenges teachers experienced in their virtual classrooms and reports effective strategies teachers used, after being virtually trained to significantly minimize the classroom disruption leading to an effective learning experience for their students. The study concluded that prompt, professional training of the teachers provides confidence, updates their knowledge, and pedagogies introduce them to the latest techniques and strategies and improve their management skills. Teachers, therefore, are needed to be

trained well before time, keeping in mind the changing dynamics of the education sector, and it has become the need of time as revealed by the study findings.

### **Implications of Research**

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Based on the findings of the current research study, the following practice recommendations are made:

1. This study has revealed that in-time training proves to be beneficial in imparting knowledge, skills, and

confidence. Therefore, teachers should be provided with rigorous and more frequently held training on contemporary trends, tools, and technologies.

2. The research findings exhibit various tried and tested strategies that ensure students' engagement and provoke their interest in class, school heads, teachers and parents can take advantage by implementing these in their classrooms.

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