



Towards Sustainable Learning during Suspension of Universities: Investigating Students' Manners of Studying during Covid-19 in Pakistan

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Abstract: *The global wave of Covid 19 has affected the entire world economically, socially and administratively. The entire educational institutions got suspended and shifted towards online learning during the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus. The previous researchers have examined the technological barriers faced by the students while attending online classes. This research focuses on investigating student manners' of studying while the suspension of universities during the wake of Covid 19 in Pakistan. Through analyzing the original data obtained from private and public university students of Islamabad during Covid 19, this study establishes the learning behaviour of students which has been significantly affected due to their learning environment, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, availability of learning resources, availability of learning aids and their socioeconomic status obstructing their access to online education due to lack of financial support. It has been examined that the learning hours spent by the students during Covid 19 have been significantly reduced. It strongly depicts a lack of motivation on the part of parents and teachers and an inability to interact with classmates to boost their learning.*

Key Words: Sustainable Learning, Students, Covid-19, Pakistan

Introduction

Education is a process which helps in developing the individual personality of a student and refers to a change in behaviour, attitude and culture that an individual has undergone during his period of education. This particular development of an individual's personality is determined by the level of academic performance of a student and his mastery over the educational objectives (Ebele & Olofu, 2017). Sustainable learning is defined as learning that is conserved or that may be conveyed to an individual and which involves practice of "learning to learn" (Tractenberg, Fitzgerald, & Collmann, 2017). Sustainable learning is about continuous, purposeful and

active learning on the basis of which a learner is able to build his knowledge and skill. Sustainable learning, therefore, focuses on conscious and intentional learning by an individual between the current circumstances and emerging possibilities (Hays, 2016). Sustainable learning is a philosophy of gaining and imparting knowledge which is based on the principles of sustainability (Filho, et al., 2018). Sustainable learning is not the process of learning about sustainability. It is a process which is understood as learning that is retained after its initial exposure and therefore includes the process of "learning to learn" (Tractenberg, Fitzgerald, & Collmann, 2017).

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Online teaching was challenging in Pakistan due to the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus. According to M. [Adnan & Kainat Anwar \(2020\)](#), it was unexpected to transit from conventional to virtual teaching with the minimal amount of training and notice to the teachers and the students. There was a high amount of uncertainty whether the teachers and the students would adapt themselves to the sudden change and produce learning outcomes or not. It was argued that the time and space of online learning, self motivation, participation of students and the strategy of teachers, along with setting up life goals for taking a particular course, are necessary for student satisfaction and performance [\(Fonseca, Martí, Redondo, Navarro, & Sanchez, 2014\)](#).

The current pandemic of the novel coronavirus in Pakistan has modified the academic life of students to a great extent. The current stage of a sudden shift from conventional teaching to a virtual mode of teaching has changed students' life to a great extent. This rapid transformation was accompanied by a number of challenges and obstacles because everyone was not used to the new transition towards virtual learning [\(Crawford et al. 2020\)](#). Universities therefore had to consider the online mode of teaching as the only way to reach the students and provide them with quality education. The present study is different in nature because in this study, the scholar has focused on sustainable learning during the suspension of universities in Pakistan: investigating students' manners of studying during Covid-19 in Pakistan.

The academic performance of a student is a measure of a student's ability and capability to contribute towards the development process of the country. The academic performance of the student is constantly observed at every level and is therefore affected by the surrounding environment and situational bounds. Socioeconomic status, learning habits, motivational skills, learning environment and learning resources during the suspension of universities during Covid 19 has an impact on the overall student manners. Socioeconomic status, learning behaviour and academic

performance are used as an independent variable in the present study and learning hours are used as the dependent variable. The conceptual framework is used to investigate the students' manners of studying during Covid 19.

Three important aspects related to the variables have been selected for the present study i.e. socioeconomic status, academic performance and learning habits. These three aspects are interlinked with each other because socioeconomic status is positively associated with the study habits of students [\(Cheng, Lee, Goldberg, & Boots, 2020\)](#). This further results in poor academic performance because, according to students learning habits and academic achievement are positively associated with each other [\(Ebele & Olofu, 2017\)](#). The socioeconomic status of students highlights the financial constraints that are faced by the students in the current digital transformation of learning. Hence, it determines the impact on student manners of studying during the sudden closure of universities in the wake of Covid 19.

Studies done in Pakistan are “Online learning amid COVID-19 pandemic: students' perspectives” [\(Adnan & Anwar, 2020\)](#), “Impact of Virtual Teaching on ESL Learners' Attitudes and the Covid-19 Circumstances at Post Graduate Level in Pakistan” [\(Shahzad, Hussain, Sadaf, Sarwat, Ghani, & Saleem, 2020\)](#), “Covid 19: A reason behind Digital Education in Pakistan” (Akram, Anjum, & Batool, 2020) and “The role of digital learning to create students' satisfaction and University brand image at educational institutes of Pakistan: a post-effect of Covid-19” [\(Nisar, Hussain, Basheer, Hameed, Chaudhry, & Shehzadi, 2020\)](#). The previous studies only discuss the technical issues related to connectivity barriers during online classes. A minimum amount of effort is made to elaborate on the challenges faced by the students during the suspension of universities in Covid 19. Students' manners of studying and the factors influencing their study habits such as learning hours, academic performance, learning environment and socioeconomic status have been minimally discussed in the previous studies. The present study tries to fill the gap in

sustainable learning by investigating student manners during the Covid 19 suspension of universities in Pakistan.

Methodology

The study universe for the present research were the students from public and private universities of Pakistan to investigate student manners of studying while suspension of universities during covid-19 in Pakistan, four universities were selected purposively two from the public sector i.e COMSATS University and NUML University and two from private sector IQRA University and SZABIST Islamabad, the reason behind the selection of these universities is the diversity of the students coming from different cultures and backgrounds. Through the roasoft calculator total number of respondents was 300 from all four universities, 75 from each. The snowball technique was used to select these respondents

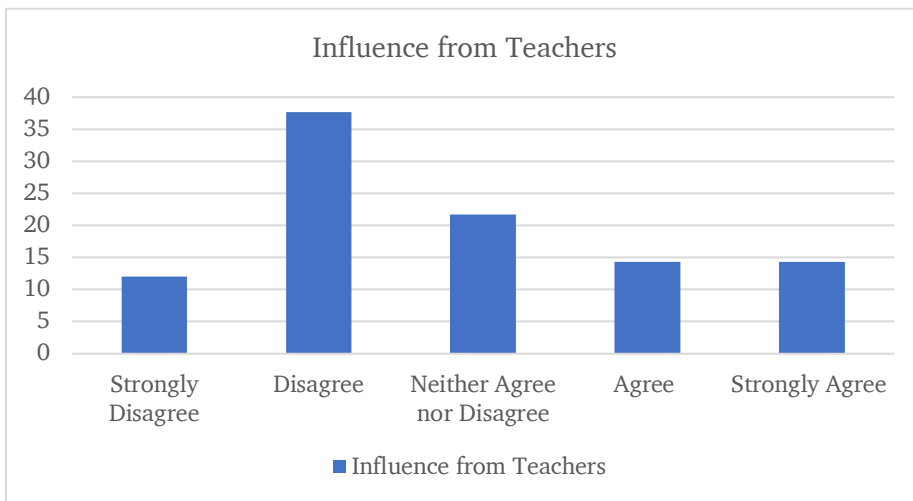
due to suspensions of the universities. The adopted instrument has used to collect data from the respondents. Multiple linear regression, Anova and simple descriptive tools were used to analyze collected data for the study. The models used for the study were

$$Y_i = b_0 + b_1X_{1i} + b_2X_{2i} \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

$$Y = b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + \dots + b_nx_n + c \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

Results

Figure 1 shows the influence of teachers in providing intrinsic motivation towards the learning of students during Covid 19. According to the results, 12% of students Strongly Disagree, 37.7% Disagree, 21.7% Neither Agree nor Disagree, 14.3% Agree and 14.3% Strongly Agree with motivation provided by teachers during online learning.



Graph 1. Influence from Teachers

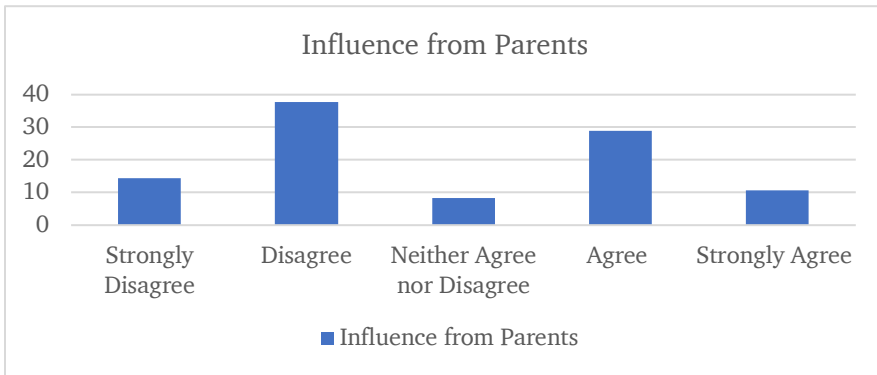
Source: Study Survey 2021

It shows that majority of the students have not been able to interact with their teachers which is why there has been very little motivation provided by the instructors.

Influence from Parents

Graph 2 shows the motivation provided by

parents to the students for learning. The responses show that 14.3% of students strongly disagree, 37.7% disagree, 8.3% neither agree nor disagree, 29% agree and 10.7% strongly agree with the influence of parents in maintaining their academic performance.



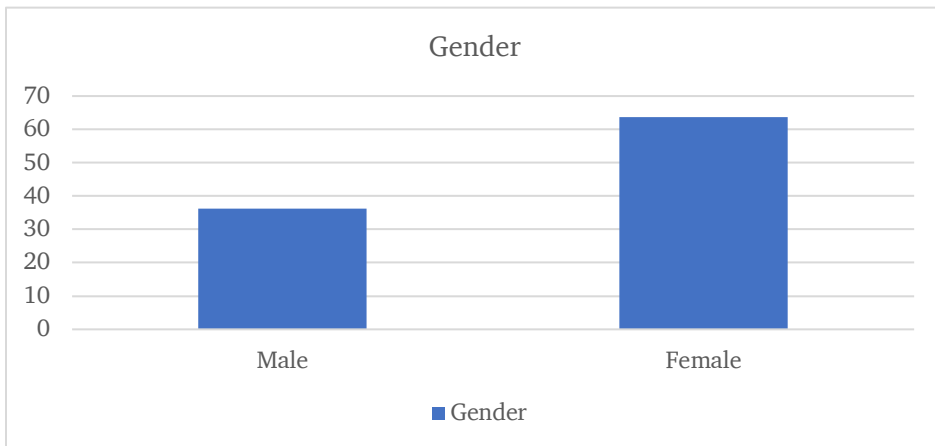
Graph 2. Influence from Parents

Source: Study Survey 2021

Influence from Siblings

Graph 3 shows the motivation provided by siblings to the students for learning. The responses show that 25.3% of students strongly disagree, 12.7% disagree, 12.3% neither agree nor disagree, 35.7% agree and 14% strongly agree with the influence of siblings in maintaining their academic performance.

Sustainable learning is an ongoing process in which the self learning capabilities of a learner play a very important role. This section observes the demographic responses of the students. A total of 300 students responded to the questionnaire. 191 respondents were female and 109 students were male. Figure 3 shows that 63.7% were female and 36.3% of the respondents were male.

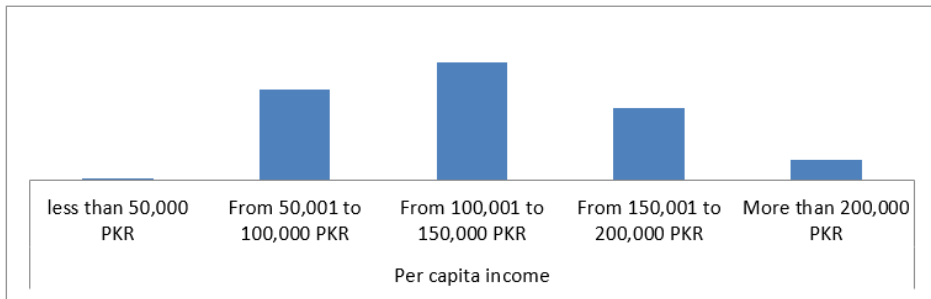


Graph 3. Gender of the Respondents

Source: Study Survey 2021

Regarding the descriptive analysis of the respondents, figure 4 reveals that 32% of the students had over four siblings and 39% of

them had their per capita income from 100,000 PKR to 150,000 PKR which shows the variance in the socioeconomic status of students.



Graph 4: Per Capita Income of the Respondents

Source: Study survey 2021

It has been observed in the first model of regression that the independent variables gender, siblings and class level are significant, with the dependent variable of learning hours as a value of $p < 0.05$. The second model of regression illustrates that university type and monthly income are significant, with the dependent variable as the value of $p < 0.05$. Therefore, we can conclude through the model of regression that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted which

states that the socioeconomic status of students has a positive association with learning behaviours during the suspension of universities due to covid 19. It also states that students' learning behaviour was affected during virtual learning during the pandemic because students were not able to maintain their learning habits, concentration skills, learning environment and academic performance during the suspension of universities.

Table 1.

Variables	B	SE	t	p
(Constant)	.698	.122	5.709	.000
What is your gender?	.345	.069	5.032	.000
What class are you studying?	.952	.047	20.398	.000
How many siblings do you have?	.068	.031	2.227	.027

The R2 value is 0.70 with $F = (3,296) = 238.139$, $p < 0.05$. The findings revealed that gender has been found to be significant with learning hours where ($\beta = .175$, $p < 0.05$). Class level such as undergraduate, graduate

and post graduate is also found to be significant with ($\beta = 0.727$, $p < 0.05$) and number of siblings is also found to be significant with ($\beta = .074$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 2.

Variable	B	SE	t	P
(Constant)	.848	.168	5.046	.000
What is the monthly income of your family?	.440	.052	8.472	.000
Which university are you studying in?	.629	.094	6.704	.000

The R2 value is .398 with $F = (2, 297) = 98.22$ and $p < .05$. The findings revealed that per capita income of the family is found to be significant with learning hours of students

during online classes where ($\beta = .418$, $p < .05$). Another predictor, university type is also significant where ($\beta = .331$, $p < .05$).

Discussion

Sustainable learning is an ongoing process in which the learners' self-efficacy always plays a very important role (Vuong, et al., 2019). Online learning is an advanced form of learning that will benefit us in the future. If the sudden condition of the pandemic was not there, this realization would still have taken a bit longer. Covid 19 is the most recent natural disaster that has encountered the whole world to a state of crisis. All the educational institutions whether schools, colleges or universities are facing lockdown in the most affected areas of the country to contain the spread of the virus. Therefore, many educational institutions are using online learning as the only means to provide knowledge to students. However, such a transition into the digital world of education is not free from learning crises. Universities have adopted different softwares such as Google meet, Skype, Adobe Connect, Microsoft teams and Zoom to impart knowledge.

It has been observed that there are visible differences in the learning habits of university students in Pakistan during the sudden closure of all university campuses due to Covid-19. This research has observed significant differences in learning behaviour of students with respect to their poor socioeconomic status during the Covid 19. Furthermore, there were significant differences observed in students with respect to their learning habits and different learning potential, motivation skills and academic performance.

Regardless of whether the financial status of students affected the learning behavior of students during unexpected conclusion of universities during Covid 19. It has been tracked down that the financial status of the families relies on their per capita payments. The worth of r^2 is huge with web based learning hours during Covid 19 and internet learning hours with guidance during Covid 19. This shows that financial status impacts understudy habits of contemplating during the abrupt conclusion of universities because of Covid 19. Arrangement of learning assets and month to month pay contribute towards better learning of students alongside accessibility of

learning climate and moderateness of various e-learning instruments. Students with high kinds of revenue are more engaged in web based learning and learning with guidance because of their capacity to bear the cost of more e-learning gadgets, innovations and web associations. It has been seen that the academic performance of the students coming out of virtual learning has decreased. The learning climate has not been kept up with during virtual classes. Inherent and outward inspiration has been altogether decreased for the students during virtual learning which is abrupt progress from traditional education to virtual instructing. There is a less motivational impact by guardians, educators, and kin and less focus ability that frustrates the method involved with learning during virtual schooling.

The financial status and learning conduct of students have been taken as the prime elements of understudy habits. The low academic performance and less extraneous and inherent inspiration with respect to the educators and guardians have shown that understudy habits have been essentially affected during the abrupt conclusion of universities because of Covid 19. Self learning hours have been diminished. Besides, the relapse investigation has shown a huge positive connection of month to month payments with internet learning and learning with guidance alongside less family support for college students. Students can't communicate with their companions because of social removal which has likewise caused an interruption in intuitive learning measures. The class level has been decidedly associated with web based learning which shows that students can't focus and keep up with their self learning propensity during the unexpected conclusion of universities.

It has been seen that academic performance has been diminished during the web based learning and abrupt conclusion of universities because of Covid 19 as shown in Figure 4.12. Additionally, it has been seen that students can't keep up with their academic performance during the web classes because of Covid

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