

Challenges Faced by PH.D. Scholars and Supervisors During COVID-19 in Turkey and Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on explicit written feedback from online supervisors to PhD supervisees regarding their performance delivered during the first wave of COVID-19. The impact of this exceptional circumstance on pupils' academic lives is wide-ranging. This situation has affected how students and teachers communicate. Given that online feedback and communication are new experiences for most students, the current study aimed to reveal the supervisee's and supervisors' perceptions of the communication and feedback process. The results show that professors and supervisors provide feedback on students' work and that teacher-student interaction is crucial for students' ability to improvise during performances. The outcome revealed several social, academic, and unexpectedly psychological challenges both supervisees and supervisors encountered when communicating online during COVID-19.

Keywords: Performance, Supervision feedback, ESL, and Communication.

INTRODUCTION

Physically corrected written comments on all relevant teaching and learning topics undoubtedly caught the attention of many academics [S1]. The investigation aimed to assess how well PhD advisers and students communicated during these online academic interactions. This study would conceptually differ from earlier studies due to the synthesis between feedback and online learning/supervision (during any form of long-pandemic). It motivates the current researchers to continue their work in supervisory, feedback, and online learning, particularly at the doctoral level, from the perspective of digital forms of online Communication, particularly supervisory feedback during COVID-19. The other goal of this study was to look at how communicating with supervisors and receiving supervisory feedback online affected students' perceptions of their learning outcomes. The study would respond to these queries;

1 What kinds of communication issues do supervisees and supervisors have when it comes to online supervisory feedback COVID-19?

2 What impact has this lack of Communication in online supervisory feedback had on supervisees' academic performance?

Review of Literature: The usage of well-researched online education has increased. It supports these claims by demonstrating that students can learn utilizing digital tools available online and through peer-to-peer instruction. Or, to put it another way, students successfully changed a teacher-directed, technology-based, non-individualized movement into something that displayed creativity and teamwork, as well as their preferences and worldviews [S2]. The use of technology to improve language development is still given top emphasis in English language instruction today. Teachers and students that use technology in the language learning process run into technical issues because of ignorance or lack of familiarity

with it. The current study will look at the benefits and drawbacks of technology to better prepare teachers interested in using it to teach language [S3]. The current arguments suggest that PhD advisors use a variety of strategies to aid their students' online feedback processes. For the most part, supervisors engage in synchronous training with their supervisees using cutting-edge online communication platforms like Zoom, Google, audio-visual aids, or Google meet to create a realistic learning environment. Due to the lengthy pandemic (which has lasted for one and a half (years), they were obliged to hold online meetings and give protracted online written corrective criticism. In contrast, earlier research on the effectiveness of writing, feedback, and peer feedback specifically pertinent to master's supervisory feedback—was carried out in a natural environment. Both national and international students receive various types of supervisory feedback [S3] claim that a supervisor's encouragement affects students' inventions and encourages good civic behavior. Additionally, it fosters innovation and originality in international PhD students [S4]. A Master's study maintains restrictive and limited scope and serves as a monologue, claims PhD research fosters a diversity of viewpoints while benefiting the larger intellectual community [S5].

Analyses of Directed Qualitative Content (QCA): The present study used qualitative content analysis (QCA) to evaluate the interview data [S6]. It examined information primarily from the viewpoint of Communication, which may be regarded as a subset of information [S7]. [S8] revealed that enhancing testing Qualitative Content Analysis [S9] further created categories and patterns for data analysis. [S10] concluded that using directed QCA on the text of interviews and analysis of the specific elements of argumentation, the current case investigated the feedback and communication processes between supervisors and supervisees.

Sample Design: The researchers fulfilled the first phase, which suggested developing fundamental research abilities. In phase 2, the researchers devised a sampling plan that supposedly included "important informants." Modifying the purposive sampling method guided the data gathering process from participants (who participated voluntarily) for interviews. The researchers determined that they could concentrate on the transcribed data taken from interviews in step 3.

Data gathering process: In step 4, the researchers created an interview guide with open-ended questions based on the objectives of the current study. This guide was created following earlier research and followed the primary research questions pertinent to the main categories [S11]. Step five involved conducting the interviews and transcribing the data after each session. Interviews were conducted with 10 PhD students/supervisors and five supervisors from Social science departments at Cyprus International University in North Cyprus and University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Punjab Pakistan. However, five supervisees and ten supervisors were ultimately questioned following inclusion/exclusion. Their responses were written down. They were requested to share their experience with as much frankness and sincerity as possible. They received assurances that their identities would remain a secret. Interviewees for the study.

Design of the Interview and General Questions

A Design of the Interview and General questions for Student participants

- 1 How did you communicate with your supervisor throughout COVID-19?
- 2 What are your thoughts on the online supervisory comments provided during COVID-19?
- 3 What issues did you encounter while receiving supervisory feedback via the internet?
- 4 How did your performance change due to online supervisory feedback?
- 5 Do you believe that online supervisory input has a beneficial or terrible impact on your academic grades?

B Questions for Teacher participants

- 1 During COVID-19, what methods did you employ to communicate with your students?
- 2 What issues did you encounter while providing supervisory feedback online?
- 3 Do you believe that online supervisory input has a beneficial or harmful impact on your academic performance?

RQ1: What communication issues do supervisees and supervisors have when it comes to online supervisory feedback COVID-19?

technical difficulties	concerns about behavior	Environmental
Internet problems	students stop participating	No group projects
Insufficient expertise to use gadgets	talks with less interest	no conversations in class
Problematic software.	No friendships with classmates	no conversations in class code of conduct

RQ2. What impact has this lack of communication in online supervisory feedback had on supervisees?

Supervisors	Participants
Internet shakiness	Time zone differences,
insufficient technological expertise to operate equipment	Unstable internet,
operating system problems	and problematic software
More room for deceptive examination methods	Invigilation of exams is difficult.
Time diversions.	

Most interviewees mentioned using popular apps like WeChat, Google meet, Zoom, or Skype for online communications. Students used these programmes for communication, assignment submission, and nearly all academic work for some exams. The same communication channels with their pupils, like WeChat, Zoom, and Google meet, received similar responses from TPs. They were commonly utilized for online communication. One said, "I typically contact my supervisor through WeChat and Google meet. The time difference between my hometown and that of my supervisor is typically the biggest issue I have.

Because of the time difference between the regions of students and teachers, teachers mostly cited one problem that made communication almost frustrating. The student mentioned how the time difference of 3 hours between his nation and that of his supervisor forced him to attend several classes and meetings at midnight or even later.

Participants in the Cyprus International University Supervisee program identified a common problem with technology and the internet as the most severe cause of misunderstandings between students and supervisors, eventually leading to an inadequate feedback process. Successful supervisory feedback and output depend on stable internet connections and effective online communication. Particularly when it comes to Wi-Fi and internet connections, students typically experience this problem in developing nations, impoverished regions, and rural communities. Supervisors' scheduled lessons and meetings suffer if students become disconnected owing to a bad network connection, which most of the time irritates the supervisors.

Initially, I did not have a particular template and thought I would adjust to the circumstances based on the already prepared course outline. Later, I concluded that the Moodle and all the links needed for complementing the sources indicated in the syllabus needed to be updated in form and content. The scholarly information relative to the ongoing developments in current affairs within the International Relations discipline was re-thought.

Answering this question is challenging since it became unable to verify that the students were actively participating in the session in addition to pressing the button. Whether it was real or not, the circumstance probably affected my drive and enthusiasm for engaging with the audience.

I made every effort to ensure that the student's work was evaluated outside the quizzes and the online, emailed research paper. In the end, I developed a mechanism to ensure that I was not judging papers that were either

successfully plagiarized or authored by ghost students or third parties.

Students' views: I was surprised to discover that I needed more time and concentration each week to face no longer face-to-face graduate classes and seminars. I also felt frustrated not to sit and gesticulate theatrically in front of the teacher, far from eye contact. The teacher could see me on the screen, but it was often impossible to see them.

At the moment, I believe that learning online everything, not just in academics, online is the most acceptable option. I am afraid I will probably catch the illness if I leave the house. Online learning also upholds government policy, which is a widespread practice in many nations worldwide. I do, however, hope we do not repeat the same error. I am talking about online learning, which is much inferior to classroom learning.

Whether we like it or not, I believe the policy on online learning is enough during the pandemic. Considering that studying from home is much safer during this pandemic, it is the ideal solution. However, because I prefer face-to-face training to online institutions, I am hoping for a quick return to normal.

Online supervisory, in my opinion, is not as enjoyable as in-face-to-face learning. Worse, most of my fellows do not pay attention to the teacher during online sessions, which I believe focuses on the rest of the class. I do not want to do any more online supervisory in the upcoming days.

Teachers are concerned about how pupils are acting during online discussions and supervised feedback sessions. They needed the input and comments of the students and reported the students' casual attitude regarding attendance, particularly in group sessions. However, there are fewer opportunities to be inattentive and passive during one-on-one or face-to-face sessions.

DISCUSSION

There are undeniably significant benefits of using online feedback delivery methods. However, not everything sparks are attractive, so the use of technology and soft wares cannot be viewed as a panacea. Even though most students prefer online-based techniques to get quick feedback, these methods and techniques should only be utilized if they benefit their academic performance. The current study has provided much information regarding the real-world supervisory feedback scenario in the extraordinary COVID-19 settings, where supervisees were dealing with numerous psychological imbalances and emotional states. The circumstances surrounding COVID-19 have caused several unforeseen and unknown occurrences in the system's educational and learning processes. Numerous factors, including technology, have been discovered to impact academic performance in the study to examine the communication situations between supervisees and supervisors for the PhD program. Long-term lockdowns have harmed every aspect of life [S12]. Technological feedback might create ambiguity when conversing and result in communication errors [S13]; [S14]Online feedback and communication, particularly for those who are not comfortable with it or do not have access to computers can negatively impact students' writing Supervisors expect doctorate students to

be excellent writers, so having them closely monitor and advising students might help them perform effectively [S15]. Every supervisor focuses on helping students develop their academic writing abilities because writing a dissertation is a crucial component of a PhD degree. Only strong and efficient communication between them will allow it to happen [S16], the current study aimed to identify issues with online communication that may have adverse effects in the future.

CONCLUSION

In particular, when online learning methods directly affect their research and academic performance, the current study has highlighted various challenges encountered during supervisory feedback and communication between supervisors and supervisees. Following interviews with five supervisees and ten supervisors from various departments, it was discovered that learning and communication systems had undergone a complete transformation due to the critical situation brought on by COVID-19. Powerful software and internet-related problems have been observed, which has caused both supervisees and supervisors to be concerned about technology. Behaviors concerns are the second main area of difficulty. For ages, students have made it a habit to attend traditional schools and physically experience particular surroundings and classroom situations.

Students and teachers encountered specific challenges due to the school system's abrupt change, notably regarding feedback and communication issues. Teachers and students may have more frequent lessons and better contact at the high school and college levels. However, at the PhD level, supervisor and supervisee communication is the most important/crucial component of education. This essay has discussed various challenges that students have encountered while engaging in online communication; most importantly, supervisory feedback has been misunderstood, which undermines the purpose of supervisory feedback. Given these challenges, numerous measures can be taken to prevent supervisory feedback from being misunderstood and misinterpreted.

Creating the most advanced and user-friendly hardware and software for online communication and education is possible. Another factor contributing to the supervisee's aggravation with online feedback is the language barrier. Supervisors might think of some trustworthy solutions to avoid these uncertainties. However, because of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and its repercussions on the more comprehensive educational system, many of the difficulties raised by supervisees can be challenging to address, including in-person learning experiences and face-to-face communication at some point.

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