

Focus Group Discussion on Students Perspective View on COVID-19 and Distance Education

SAMIA SARWAR¹, IRAM QAMAR², TEHREEM MEHMOOD³, SHAHID NAZEER⁴, JUNAID IQBAL⁵, KOSAR AZIZ⁶, RIZWAN SAEED⁷

¹Professor, Department of Physiology, Rawalpindi Medical University, Rawalpindi

²Associate Professor, Department of Physiology, Rahbar Medical and Dental College Lahore

³Medical Officer, Paediatrics Department, Indus Hospital, Lahore

⁴Associate Professor, Department of Ophthalmology, Pak Red Crescent Medical College Dena Nath Kasur

⁵Assistant Professor Department of Physiology, Azra Naheed Medical College, Superior University Lahore

⁶Vice Principal, The Quaid Institute of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences Swabi, KPK

⁷Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Azra Naheed Medical College, Superior University Lahore

Correspondence to: Samia Sarwar, Email: drsamsarwar@yahoo.com, Cell: 0300-5118603

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The COVID-19 could be a dangerous widespread that has influenced each angle of life including education. The educational institutes have been closed to avoid the spread of the infection, and they have changed over their system into distance education. Completing the semester there's a have to be address the risky issues within the modern framework to create it for future usage

Objectives:

- 1-To explore the effects of Covid-19 on life style
- 2- To know the perceptions and suggestions regarding online education in pandemic

Material and Methods

Study design: Qualitative

Settings: Rawalpindi Medical University

Duration: Six months i.e. 1st January 2021 to 30th June 2021

Data Collection procedure: It was focus group discussion conducted via Zoom link. There were 15 medical students were selected from all five classes of MBBS randomly after taking informed consent. A variety of issues that were obtained from the discussion were identified.

Results: The findings have uncovered that most of the members were influenced by the widespread period contrarily Anxiety, hope less, and fatigue. It is clear from the findings that education process has had its shortcomings instead of its advantages such as need of interaction, and communication which lead the students to segregation, issues about exams, conventional instructive habits, the load of assignments, and time administration. On the other side the advantages regarding flexibility of place and time to learn and comfort in assessment

Conclusion: It is evident that the COVID-19 widespread process has influenced the students' lives adversely. These negative sentiments have not been overcome by the instruction they uncovered all through the period. While, in conventional campus life they would be at the side their companions and teachers and they would overcome the issues together through socializing. Distance education system tried to facilitating teaching. The COVID-19 widespread period ought to be regarded as an opportunity for teachers to consider how to push the distance education framework forward. Within the light of the findings, it would be awesome to create the current distance education practices which we may well are beyond any doubt that long-term executions get a solid premise.

Keywords: Covid-19, Pandemic, Focus group, Distance education, Higher education

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 could be a dangerous widespread that has influenced each angle of life including education. The educational institutes have been closed to avoid the spread of the infection, and they have changed over their system into distance education. Completing the semester there's a have to be addressing the risky issues within the modern framework to create it for future usage. The COVID-19 Widespread has paralyzed about each way of life all over the world, and its impacts are still hazy. Most nations have been inquired to remain at domestic to spare their lives. This dangerous widespread has too influenced instruction frameworks extremely¹. Daniel (2020) shown that instruction which has developed up significantly at all levels for 50 years has its most prominent challenge so far. In this manner, the schools have been closed in numerous nations to combat the spread of the infection, and 90% of students seem not go to their schools within the world. The reason for the closure of schools is to supply security of students making social distance and anticipating social interactions among individuals suggested by the World Health Organization. Online web based instruction could be a relatively modern frame of teaching which needs modern innovations. It could be a favorite format in instructive settings due to its adaptability and versatility to students' needs. It conveys teaching and learning using modern tools over distant separations. One of the essential points of conventional in-person instruction is to provide learners with essential information and skills, which is additionally valid for distance education. Distance instruction has been the as it were

solution for higher education to upgrade access to instruction for students who have² no chance to go to conventional classes within the widespread period. Much appreciated to the progresses in innovation, online instruction has become the primal framework among other distance instruction designs such as media transmission courses, and correspondence study.

In spite of the fact that its being accommodating within the widespread period a few shapes of distance instruction need interaction between students and teaches this has been exceptionally tricky. Distance education case as expressed students have been required to be free learners much more than the conventional framework. Students are grown-ups and, they are anticipated to be autonomous students as characterized by Titmus (1989)³. So distance instruction may be a valuable hone for students who are free learners. In any case, students are not independent enough to utilize separate instruction legitimately indeed within the Ph.D. level. So they require interaction and to be coordinated by their instructors as within the conventional framework. Internet-based distance instruction has two shapes: synchronous and asynchronous which give organized innovative openings to students who think about independently. In synchronous distance learning, all of the attendants take part in computerized classes in genuine time, which required two-way communication. In this framework, instructors lead the learning and members communicate with one another specifically, so it increases student involvement. In synchronous learning students and instructors are absent physically but communicating quickly as

in video conferencing strategy⁴. Within the synchronous frame of distance learning students get quick input , additionally this frame of learning gives 'social presence' more than the asynchronous frame.

In asynchronous distance learning, on the other hand, students and teachers don't have to be take an interest within the learning event at the same time. Instead, students who are given more control over their learning can learn anyplace, and anytime. It is moreover demonstrated that the communication between students and instructors is separated by distance and time as in web-based courses. In this kind of learning instructors don't have to be follow strict time plans instead, they can post their course materials by wikis, blogs, and e-mail. They can arrange online meetings in case of student need. In this way, interaction between students is limited in this kind of learning⁵.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Qualitative research is conducted to provide recommendations to the group of people on how to do superior and how to have superior administrations concerning the comparative experiences, issues, and considerations of others. In this kind of studies, the center is essentially on experiences and reflections of individuals. Qualitative research addresses social issues and influences the practitioners' practice giving nitty gritty portrayals of the case and permitting them to form inferences about their own lives. It was focus group discussion conducted via Zoom link. There were 15 medical students were selected from all five classes of MBBS randomly after taking informed consent. A variety of issues that were obtained from the discussion were identified. Guba (1981), one of the specialist figures within the field, recorded four criteria to be met to supply dependability of a qualitative investigation which are validity, transferability, dependability, and conformability⁶.

Credibility: Credibility is one of the noteworthy specialists to guarantee reliability. The researcher's background and capabilities are imperative issues to demonstrate credibility. The researcher of this study is an academic having several researches strategies. Subsequently, she is mindful of the significance of validity in qualitative research. Random sampling is another figure to influence reliability of the research. Within the current research, the members were chosen arbitrarily and intentionally to demonstrate trustworthiness in members. Shenton (2004) demonstrated that members ought to have given the chance to deny attending the study⁶.

Transferability: Transferability implies that the results of qualitative research can generalize to the other comparative settings. It can be accomplished through a 'thick description' which implies the analyst clarifies all the method to let the peruser to compare the setting to the others⁷.

Dependability: Dependability is 'the solidness of findings over time'. To guarantee this figure, the analyst utilized the code-decode procedure as Chilisa and Preece (2005) proposed. In this procedure, the analyst codes the same information twice. A waiting period ought to be given between two coding and after that the results ought to be compared to see if there's a contrast between them. In this manner, the analyst held up for two weeks between each coding and received the findings in like manner to ensure constancy of the current study⁸.

Conformability: Conformability implies the results of the research can be affirmed by other analysts. So, to guarantee objectivity the analyst asked an academic of Education Staff to examined the translations and affirm the codes. The zoom record is protected to supply conformability as well⁹.

RESULTS

In table 1 demographic presentation in detailed regarding all MBBS classes with male to female ratio and age description in each group. The whole process was modulated by a experienced moderator and whole process was audio recorded.

Table 1: Demographic Presentation

No	Mbbs class	Male	Female	Age
1	First year	6	9	19-21
2	Second year	7	8	20-22
3	Third year	9	6	21-23
4	Fourth year	8	7	22-24
5	Final year	7	8	23-25

In table 2 four categories was established and total of eight codes were placed. The response of each statement was recorded and Zoom online link was also saved. Regarding effect on life style include fear of infection and losing loved ones recorded as high accompanied with lack of social activities under the category of fatigue. Future uncertainty, economical issues and life peace also recorded high responses under hopeless category.

Table 2: Effects of Covid-19 on life Style (n=75)

No.	Categories	Code Statement	Response
1	Anxiety	Fear of Infection	14
		Fear of losing loved ones	12
2	Hopeless	Economical issues	10
		Future Uncertainty	8
		Life Peace	7
3	Fatigue	Lack of social activities	12
		Unemployment	10
4	Neutral	No change of life	2

In table 3 advantages and disadvantages discussed in detailed. A total of 7 highlighted codes were in favor of disadvantages in which most of the category got the highest response was isolation and loss of interaction. Advantages include most of the getting response is time and place flexibility. Critical thinker, communication and self-motivation also rated high.

Table 3: Students Perceptions about Pandemic Education

Categories	Code Statement	Response
Disadvantages	Isolation and Interaction	14
	Communication issues with facilitators	4
	Assessment issues	8
	Self discipline	9
	Assignments	3
	Technical issues	5
	More screen time	9
Advantages	Time & Place flexibility	10
	More awareness & responsibilities in learning	7
	Exam Comfort	3
	Self Motivation	7
	Improved Communication & Collaboration	8
	Critical Thinking	9
	New Skills	7

In table 4 students perceptions regarding suggestion to improve distance education include 3 categories. Changing style of lecture includes synchronous and asynchronous lecturing should be utilized in the process. Changing style of facilitator include two codes that communicate openly and properly informed. Changing assessment methodologies include 3 categories in which feedback is very important parameter.

Table 4: Students Suggestions on Improving Distance Education

No.	Categories	Code Statement	Response
1	Changing style of lecture	Using synchronous & Asynchronous lectures	15
		Interaction	11
2	Changing style of facilitator	Communication openly	12
		Properly informed	8
3	Change Assessment methodologies	Latest assessment methodologies	7
		Assignment reduced in number	8
		Feedback	10

The findings have uncovered that most of the members were influenced by the widespread period contrarily Anxiety, hope less, and fatigue. It is clear from the findings that education process has had its shortcomings instead of its advantages such as need of interaction, and communication which lead the students to segregation, issues about exams, conventional instructive habits, the load of assignments, and time administration. On the other side the advantages regarding flexibility of place and time to learn and comfort in assessment.

DISCUSSION

This is often one of the pioneer studies within the institution to explore the students' perception with respect to building a research culture and to recognize the ranges of concern in this respect.

Student's discernments with respect to building a culture of research were exceptionally positive, but it needs a lot of bolster and help from institution, staff and research pioneer. This study set up evidence based information from the students. This study made a difference in establishing a diagram of student's perceptions and difficulties confronted by them in ranges of research so that a research culture can be promoted. Despite uncovering profitable results, our study had a couple of limitations. We seem not include other stake holders like Heads, Faculty and pioneers¹⁰.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the COVID-19 widespread process has influenced the students' lives adversely. These negative sentiments have not been overcome by the instruction they uncovered all through the period. While, in conventional campus life they would be at the side their companions and teachers and they would overcome the issues together through socializing. Distance education system tried to facilitating teaching. The COVID-19 widespread period

ought to be regarded as an opportunity for teachers to consider how to push the distance education framework forward. Within the light of the findings, it would be awesome to create the current distance education practices which we may well be beyond any doubt that long-term executions get a solid premise.

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