



A STUDY ON PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR CHILDREN'S LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted all sectors of society, including education. Globally, students and their parents experienced challenges such as home confinement, school closures, and the shift to digital learning. This study aims to understand parents' perceptions of their children's learning during this period. The research was conducted with parents of secondary and senior secondary students from Modinagar, Ghaziabad.

A three-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to assess variables such as child performance, teacher support, learning appetite, time management, concentration, academic burden, and digital learning. Data analysis was performed using MS Excel 2019, applying descriptive statistics and a one-sample t-test. The findings indicate a reduction in students' interest and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, students faced difficulties in maintaining concentration, resulting in decreased engagement with their studies.

Keywords: Digital learning, Online classes, Covid 19, Parents' perception of learning of children

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, has shaken the world, bringing it to an almost unprecedented halt. The novel coronavirus first emerged in China in December 2019 and subsequently spread to Thailand, Japan, South Korea, the United States, Vietnam, Singapore, and by late January 2020, reached Australia, Nepal, Europe, Malaysia, Canada, the Middle East, and other countries in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia, followed by Russia, Africa, and Latin America. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

By July 31, 2020, COVID-19 had spread to 217 countries and territories, with nearly 17.1 million confirmed cases and 668,073 deaths worldwide. The Americas reported 9.15 million cases, Europe 3.31 million, Southeast Asia 2 million, the Eastern Mediterranean 1.53 million, Africa 0.75 million, and the Western Pacific 0.31 million cases. The pandemic's disastrous consequences included severe recessions in many developed regions. For example, in the United States, GDP fell by an estimated 32.9% year-on-year in the second quarter

of 2020. Similarly, GDP in the Eurozone decreased by 12.1%, and in the European Union by 11.9% compared to the previous quarter.

From a health perspective, SARS-CoV-2 affected all age groups, with the most severe symptoms and highest mortality rates observed among the elderly and individuals with co-morbidities. Beyond exposing numerous existing health challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread societal and economic disruption, similar to previous pandemics in history. Over the past century, pandemics such as the bubonic plague, Spanish flu, SARS, Ebola, and influenza A (H1N1) have driven significant changes in geopolitics and human demographics by altering patterns of migration, tourism, urbanization, trade, and technology usage.

The challenges posed by COVID-19 have impacted everyone in some way. This paper seeks to understand parents' perceptions regarding their children's learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study focuses on the perspectives of parents of secondary and senior secondary students in Modinagar, a town in the Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh.

2. Literature Review

Many studies measure satisfaction using instruments designed for general purposes, but the psychometric properties of these tools have not been rigorously validated for assessing the satisfaction of school users specifically. Consequently, inconsistent measurement of parents' satisfaction with schools poses a significant challenge when comparing findings across different studies. Previous research has shown that parents of children with special educational needs tend to be less satisfied with schools compared to parents of children without such needs. Families with children requiring special educational support often need greater assistance from schools. Therefore, the characteristics and structure of schools play a crucial role for this group. In fact, the proportion of students with special educational needs in a school is negatively correlated with overall parent satisfaction.

Moreover, parents of children with special educational needs reported more negative experiences with homeschooling during the pandemic. However, the differences in experiences between families with and without children with special educational needs appear relatively small, suggesting that, overall, parents have generally faced negative experiences.

In summary, empirical studies indicate that a key factor in parent satisfaction with schools is the quality of cooperation between families and schools, which includes strong communication with teachers and positive attitudes toward the school. However, these effects vary depending on individual characteristics—not only of the parents but also of their children, teachers, and schools. Thus, the attributes of these stakeholders are assumed to influence parents' satisfaction with schooling during homeschooling imposed by lockdowns

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to understand parents' perceptions of their children's learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

H0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant impact of COVID-19 on the learning of children.

3. Materials & Methods

Participants: The sample comprised 102 participants, all parents of students studying in secondary and senior secondary levels. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. The overall average age of participants was 39.99 years, with a standard deviation of 5.72 years. Among them, 66 were female parents with an average age of 39.06 years (SD = 1.73), and 36 were male parents with an average age of 41.69 years (SD = 9.18), reflecting a balanced contribution from both genders. The study focused on parents of students studying in secondary and senior secondary schools in Modinagar, a town in the Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh.

A questionnaire using a three-point Likert scale was developed to assess variables including child performance, support from teachers, learning appetite, time management, concentration, academic burden, and digital learning. The questionnaire was distributed with the help of the researcher's neighbors and local residents from the region. This assessment focused on parents' perceptions of their children's learning experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Responses were recorded on a three-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (No) to 3 (Yes). To ensure consistency in evaluation, scores for certain dimensions were reversed so that all items aligned in the same direction. The study employed a descriptive research design alongside inferential analysis to address the research objectives and test the hypothesis. Data analysis was conducted using MS Excel 2019 to compute descriptive statistics and perform a one-sample t-test.

4. Analysis and Results

First, the total average scores for each dimension, based on the three-point Likert scale rankings, were calculated and are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Total Average Scores of the Statements

Statements	Total Average
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My child shows reduced motivation towards studies due to extended online learning.	2.81
The attention span of my child has slightly improved during virtual classes.	2.56
My child experiences moderate stress because of continuous digital assignments.	2.74
Teachers are effectively guiding and mentoring students in online mode.	2.93
Academic performance of my child has shown noticeable improvement during the lockdown period.	2.69
My child has enhanced self-discipline and time management skills during home-based learning.	2.88
Total	16.61

Table 2 -- Calculation of One-sample t-test.

<i>One Sample t-test</i>	
Mean	185.66 67
Standard Error	6.2458
Median	188.0000
Standard Deviation	15.3000
Sample Variance	234.0900

Kurtosis	0.4521
Skewness	-0.3564
Range	42
Minimum	160
Maximum	202
Sum	1114
Count	6
Confidence Level (95.0%)	16.0573
Hypothesized Mean Value	150
t-value (two-tailed test)	5.7102
t-crit	2.571
Confidence Level	95 %
p-value	0.0023
Degree of Freedom	5
Count (N)	6

Table 2 shows that the one-sample t-test was conducted with a sample size of 6 to determine whether the sample mean differs significantly from the hypothesized population mean of 150. The sample mean was 185.67, which is considerably higher than the hypothesized value. The standard deviation of 15.30 indicates moderate variability among the observations, and the closeness of the mean (185.67) and median (188.00) suggests that the data is fairly symmetric. The skewness value of -0.3564 shows a slight negative skewness, while the kurtosis value of 0.4521 indicates an approximately normal distribution, satisfying the normality assumption of the t-test. The calculated t-value of 5.7102 is greater than the critical value of 2.571 at the 5% level of significance with 5 degrees of freedom. Additionally, the p-value of 0.0023 is less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the sample mean

and the hypothesized population mean, indicating that the true population mean is significantly different from 150 at the 95% confidence level.

5. Findings & Conclusions

In just a few months, the COVID-19 pandemic caused by a novel coronavirus significantly transformed lives worldwide, including the learning experiences of students. This survey, conducted in a specific region, offers systematic and meaningful insights into the perceptions and satisfaction of parents of secondary and senior secondary students during the pandemic. It highlights their views on various aspects of their children's lives, including opinions about both the immediate and longer-term future.

The research revealed that children's learning appetite decreased due to online classes during the pandemic. Students' concentration also declined in virtual settings. Teaching staff and schools attempted to compensate by providing more knowledge through numerous assignments, surveys, and homework via online platforms, which often led to feelings of being overburdened during the lockdown and digital learning. Despite this, students received substantial support from their teachers, performed academically better during the lockdown, and became more efficient at managing their time.

During the lockdown, students primarily expressed concerns about their future careers and academic progress, and many experienced boredom, anxiety, and frustration. They also adapted some hygienic behaviors, such as regularly wearing masks and washing hands, and changed daily routines, including reducing leaving home and physical contact like handshaking.

These results are based on responses from 102 parents of secondary and senior secondary students in Modinagar, Ghaziabad district, Uttar Pradesh. Future research should expand to include perspectives from parents, students, and teachers. Additionally, longitudinal studies should examine changes in parents' satisfaction with schools before, during, and after lockdown periods.

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