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## Parents' attitude towards online education

Preety Antil

Assistant Professor, Sadbhavana College of Education for Women, Ludhiana, Panjab, India

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### Abstract

During COVID 19 lockdown, there had been a tremendous shift toward online education. Parents, teachers and students no one was prepared enough to cope up with the trend of online education. Being a mediator and facilitator, parents play a significant role in education of students especially at school level. Teachers are not able to observe the students directly so they depend upon parents to assess students learning. The present study is aimed to study attitude of parents toward online education. An online survey was administered on 289 parents to assess their attitude towards online education. A majority of parents found dissatisfied with the online classes taking place and believe that it is not working for them. It is observed that there is no significant difference between the attitude of urban and rural parents regarding online education. These findings help in strengthening the process of online education. The current study addresses the role and views of parents about online education that can assist policy maker to update the curriculum, assessment techniques and policies regarding online education.

**Keywords:** online education, off-line, e-learning, attitude, virtual learning

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### Introduction

Corona virus is affecting the normal life in every possible manner. An unprecedented worldwide lockdown has not only made our life miserable, but also imposed us to live inside our homes. Indian government declared need of adjustment in this environment, by maintaining social distance (MOHA, 2020) <sup>[11]</sup>. The lockdown affects almost all sectors that made large impact on economy in most of the countries (Stefana *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[15]</sup>. The country's economy is affected badly by the following sectors such as transportation, shopping malls, hotels, restaurants, tourist, sports leagues and public events, airbus, service sectors, education and so on (Fernandes, 2020) <sup>[7]</sup>. Many of the aforementioned sectors opened after undergoing lockdown period of 50-70 days. However, the educational institutions remain closed as they find it difficult to maintain social distance in place. In India, education system at present is at a transition stage. COVID-19 enforced the educational institution across globe to cancel the traditional chalk and talk methodology and change to the online (Bao, 2020; Dilucca *et al.*, 2020; Wang *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[2, 6, 16]</sup>. The change originates the challenge of sensitivity of learning and new opportunities that the technology offers. As the COVID-19 emergency arises, many educational institutions in India temporarily close the onsite classes. Further, some of the institutes have decided to start the online classes to the students in a trial basis in the urban areas. This sudden transition of teaching methods to online classes made students and faculties in a confused mode. The ongoing online classes turned towards the question of quality teaching (Crawford *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[5]</sup>. Institutions have tried many methodologies during the start of lockdown to continue the curricula through recorded classes, uploading in the social media or in the websites. Students who have proper access of internet may study, for others it is a difficult task (Ary & Brune, 2011) <sup>[1]</sup>. Reaching students through live classes institutions must have uninterrupted high-speed internet, infrastructure and software tool to reach the students. Online education is not just oral presentation of the faculty on the computer/laptop/mobile phone or it is not just listening at the other end by a student. Online teaching methodology poses many challenges due to inexperience in conducting and attending live classes by faculty and students and lack of early preparation or support from educational technological teams (Wang *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[16]</sup>. Inability to have a face-to-face connect with students and facilitate free conversations, discussions, and mentoring, lack of online teaching experience consumes more time and practice, technological difficulties with high speed internet access and getting used to learning and being evaluated online are identified as major limitations (Claywell *et al.*, 2016) <sup>[4]</sup>. The present study is aimed to investigate the attitude of parents toward utilization and quality of online classes at school level during lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic situation in India. The role of parents is not less than a teacher's role during online classes. For parents, it is an added responsibility considering their personal work, work from home, household chores. The present study provides a comparative view of parent in relation to their locale through Questionnaire based survey. Apart from this, Suggestions and recommendations have been highlighted to provide better teaching and learning experience to school students for online mode of learning.

## Objectives

The study has carried out keeping following objectives in view:

1. To find out attitude of parents towards online education.
2. To compare the attitude of parents towards online education in relation to locale.
3. To compare the attitude of parents towards online education in relation to gender.

## Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub> 1 Parents have neutral attitude towards online education.

H<sub>0</sub> 2 There is no significant difference in the attitude of parents in relation to locale.

H<sub>0</sub> 3 There is no significant difference in the attitude of parents in relation to gender.

## Delimitations

The present study was delimited in the following aspects:

- The present study was delimited the parents of upper primary class students only.
- The study was delimited to the students of Chandigarh and tri-city region only.
- The study was delimited to the questionnaire prepared by the investigator.

## Sample

The sample consists of 289 parents selected through snowball sampling technique of sampling. Only those parents were incorporated in the survey whose children were studied in upper primary classes. The sample consist of 114 male and 175 female from Chandigarh and tri-city region. The survey incorporated the age group and educational qualification of parents. It is evident that only 4.49 % respondents were below the age of 25 years. 42.5 % respondent fall between the age group of 25-35 years and 50.1 % from 35- 45 years and the rest were above 45 years old. The detail of sample is given in Table no. 1.

**Table 1:** Profile of the respondents (N=289)

S. No.	Age	Gender	Locale	Educational qualification
1	Below 25 (13)	Male (141)	Urban(144)	Below 12 <sup>th</sup> (34)
2	25-35 (123)	Female (148)	Rural(145)	Graduate ( 124)
3	35-45 (145)			Post graduate (128)
4	Above 45 (8)			Above PG (3)

## Procedure

An online as well as off-line survey has been conducted through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of only nine questions focussed on the experiences of parents about online classes. Each item has five-point scale of response that range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The survey was conducted among the parents of school students with different age groups. A total of 289 responses were recorded. Questionnaire is shared in online platforms (WhatsApp, Social Media Sites, Email) to seek the honest opinion from parents by filling google forms. In addition, parents were interviewed telephonically to record their response. Frequency and percentage were calculated for the questions to summarize the data. Apart from calculating the percentage chi-square value is calculated to compare urban and rural sample.

## Results and Discussion

The study under investigation intends to evaluate the attitude of parents towards online education. To fulfill the purpose of the study, Survey method was used for collecting the quantitative data. The obtained quantitative data were analyzed item wise through percentage and chi-square value. Such data were analyzed with respect to locale differences.

**Table 2:** Frequency and percentage of the responses of parents (N=289)

S. No	Statements	SA % (f)	A % (f)	N % (f)	D % (f)	SD % (f)
1	Online education is effective.	0 (0)	4 (12)	3 (8)	19 (56)	74 (213)
2	All curricular and extracurricular activities can be done through online classes	1 (3)	2 (6)	6 (16)	12 (35)	79 (229)
3	Student feel connected with the teacher during online classes	9 (25)	8 (22)	13 (39)	40 (116)	30 (87)
4	Students were able to solve their doubts in online classes	6 (19)	8 (23)	10 (28)	31 (89)	45 (130)
5	It is easy to understand practical subjects in online classes	1(2)	6 (19)	4 (12)	33 (97)	56 (159)
6	My child likes to attend online classes	26 (75)	31 (89)	8 (24)	21 (62)	14 (39)
7	Online classes are value for money	8 (23)	4 (12)	2 (7)	40 (117)	45 (130)
8	Online teaching provides an opportunity to a teacher to utilize all his teaching skills.	1 (3)	15 (43)	3 (9)	56 (162)	25 (72)
9	Teachers are trained for online classes.	1 (5)	1 (4)	4(12)	31 (89)	63(180)
	Total	5.95 (155)	8.84 (230)	5.92 (154)	31.64(823)	47.63 (1239)

\*SA-strongly disagree, A-agree, N-neutral, D-disagree, SD- strongly

The data given in table no. 2 revealed that almost 70 % parents found that students feel connected to teachers during online classes. The interaction between teacher and student cannot be neglected in online education and it needs to be followed by doubt clearing session during class. The question pertaining to this aspect is intended to know whether the parents are satisfied with the interaction between student and teacher during online classes. As such, the data on this item revealed that 75% parents reported that they are dissatisfied with the statement. The success of any teaching learning module depends upon a well-designed system that compliments learning objectives. In this context, Parents were asked about their perception on requirement of practical subjects for the students for their improvements. Data collected on the practice of practical subjects in the online classes revealed that almost 88.5% agreed with the statement. The success of online classes depends upon the involvement of the students with all the interest and motivation. The response of the parents on this aspect revealed that 56.6% parents found their children enjoying online classes and they shows punctuality in attending online classes regularly whereas 34.8% parents reported disagreement with the statement. As the parents pay huge money for their children, it is essential to record their satisfaction level with the quality of online education. Approximately 85% parents are not satisfied with the quality of online classes and they found the amount that is charged by the schools is excessive. The success of online classes depends upon the involvement of the teachers with all the skills, interest and motivation. The information collected on this aspect revealed that majority (89%) of the parents thinks that online classes are challenging from teachers point of view also. The trend of online education is the result of emergency arises due to COVID-19. This sudden transition of teaching methods to online classes made students and faculties in a confused mode as both of them were not skilled enough for the new format of education. Data were collected on this item revealed that majority (92.9%) of parents are of the opinion that teachers were not skilled enough to run online classes smoothly. As per the total percentage approximately 31 % parents are disagreed and 47% parents are strongly disagreed with the statements of survey tool which leads to the concluding statement that majority of parents have negative attitude towards online education.

**Table 3:** Chi-square value of Urban (144) and Rural (145) sample

	L	SA	A	N	D	SD	Chi-square value	P-value
Total	U	79	117	78	409	613	0.2479	0.992
	R	76	113	76	414	626		

\*L- Locale, SA-strongly disagree, A-agree, N-neutral, D-disagree, SD- strongly

The data given in Table no. 3 revealed. the chi-square value for the urban and rural sample. The chi-square value is 0.2479 with p-value of 0.9929. The result is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. So, the hypothesis 'There is no significant difference in the attitude of parents in relation to locale' is accepted.

**Table 4:** Chi-square value of Male (141) and Female (148) sample

	G	SA	A	N	D	SD	Chi-square value	P-value
Total	M	85	119	79	398	588	0.84	0.933
	F	83	115	81	430	623		

\*G-gender, SA-strongly disagree, A-agree, N-neutral, D-disagree, SD- strongly

The data given in Table no. 4 revealed. the chi-square value for the male and female sample. The chi-square value is 0.84 with p-value of 0.933. The result is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. So, the hypothesis 'There is no significant difference in the attitude of parents in relation to gender' is accepted. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the perception of parents regarding the online classes. Majority of the respondents rejected online classes whereas parents considered it as the only option to connect with academic activities. Parents strongly believe that off-line method of learning is best suited for their children as they were worried about physical and mental health of children. Parents also find lack of connectivity among teachers and students, lack of ideal study space for online classes at home. An entire generation of young parents had to manage and master digital tools to let their children participate in online education. A study of perceptions of primary school teachers of Indonesia also indicates that countries with great geographic spread and vastly different socio-economic backgrounds takes a humungous effort to succeed in online education (Rasmitadila *et al.* 2020) <sup>[13]</sup>. Even digitisation of education has been around for many years, schools, teachers and parents have been inadequately prepared for acting as change agents in this educational revolution (Bordalba *et al.* 2019) <sup>[3]</sup>. Reading and writing assignments are getting done using various learning apps for which parents support is needed to assist the young children. All this has happened with such a fast pace that family had to learn a variety of skills and competencies besides acquiring resources. Parents, teachers and students alike had to learn integrating digital tools into learning in meaningful ways to get benefit from them (Malik & Tyagi, 2020) <sup>[9]</sup>. Technical skills of teachers and students related to usage of computer and internet is a major factor determining the effectiveness of online classes (Tsai and Lin, 2004). A study of Spanish schools (Saghafi, Franz, & Crowther 2014) <sup>[14]</sup> reveals that parents hold a set of beliefs about the online education and parents display more positive attitude for online teaching where the parent-school communication through emails is a regular feature. Without a doubt, It can be concluded that a regular interaction between teachers and parents can make the procedure of online education smooth and productive. The future of education lies in the development of a holistic model that

takes into account digital platforms for teaching and learning (Northey *et al.* 2015) <sup>[12]</sup>. From initial inertia and resistance towards digital education to becoming hands-on with online education, parents have come a long way in changing their attitudes, values and mindsets needed for future (Mariën and Prodnik 2014) <sup>[10]</sup>. Therefore, all these facts should be considered while organizing an online class for upper primary students to make it more effective and productive. It may possible that after COVID-19 pandemic, we may see a permanent existence of online platforms for study aids in combination with regular classes. Hence, this study will prove useful for reimagining and redesigning the education especially for upper primary students with blending of online mode.

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