



## Original Article

## Analysing The Positive Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Educators In Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan: An Exploratory Research

Farhana Tabassum<sup>1</sup>, Bahisht Rizwan<sup>2</sup>, Syeda Rida Shah Mehak Sherazi<sup>1</sup>, Sabrina Rashid<sup>1</sup>, Fareeha Bashir<sup>1</sup>, Kainat Waheed<sup>1</sup>, Syeda Warda Shah Mehak Sherazi<sup>3</sup> and Rabia Latif<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>University Institute of Medical Lab Technology, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan<sup>2</sup>University Institute of Diet and Nutritional Sciences, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, The University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan<sup>3</sup>Institute of Biochemistry and Biotechnology University of Veterinary and animals Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan

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## \*Corresponding Author:

Farhana Tabassum  
University Institute of Medical Lab Technology,  
Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, The  
University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan  
[farhana.tabassum@mlt.uol.edu.pk](mailto:farhana.tabassum@mlt.uol.edu.pk)

## ABSTRACT

Lockdowns have been implemented worldwide to halt the development of the COVID-19 pandemic, owing to the virus's potential threat and infectious nature. The coronavirus outbreak has wreaked havoc on the world and poses a serious hazard due to the virus's infectious nature and supposed hazards. **Objective:** To examine the positive impact of COVID-19 on educators (250) teaching at various public and private higher educational institutions in Pakistan during the lockdown. **Methods:** A Google form was used to conduct an online cross-sectional survey. The questionnaire included questions about the following topics: demographic information, demographic details, physical exercise, health consciousness, relationship with family members, social relationship, Information and technology (IT) skills, digital courses, research activities, work from home, time spent on social media, expenditures, and lockdown activities. The sample was collected from 1st January 2021 to 12th May 2021 and 250 responses were recorded from the educators working from home through the snowball sampling technique. The data were analyzed through SPSS 2021. **Results:** The findings revealed an overall reduction in expenditures, preference for healthy and homemade food, adequate intake of supplements, enhancement of professional grooming (E-courses and IT skills), quality time with family, improvement in social relationships with family and friends. **Conclusions:** The study recommends that educators engage themselves in yoga, meditation, physical exercise, and eat a healthy diet. Furthermore, they should continue up-skilling the professional development through E-courses and technology-based skills.

## INTRODUCTION

The invasion of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has brought extensive changes in our routine life. It has jolted the global economy with a pervasive impact on almost all sectors. There is no doubt that the local economic and social spheres, as well as global spheres, have been challenged, and that some sectors have been severely demolished. COVID-19 has disrupted the routine of all the educational institutions including schools, colleges, and universities, and other activities such as on-campus training sections, seminars, presentations, conferences to improve skills and personal development were also disturbed.

Marpa, E P., 2021 conducted a study to ascertain teachers' mindset toward the use of technology in mathematics teaching methodologies, as modern technologies and computer-based software are critical in every sector in the twenty-first century. The researcher used a descriptive

methodology to examine randomly selected participants' attitudes toward technology. The results indicate that mathematicians have a favorable attitude toward technology. They also indicate that, when males and females are compared, males have a more favorable attitude and interest in technology. Thus, they proposed that teachers' attitudes toward innovative technology and soft products be improved in light of the new mode of learning [13].

The impact of COVID-19 on Medical Education was addressed by Meganne and John (2020). The primary substitution of online classes for on-campus classes has a clear effect on routine and other non-academic activities. The solution to these problems is to use innovative technologies that enable medical students to continue their studies and other skills uniquely, just as they did previously, but in a more advanced and distinct manner [10]. Some

critical aspects of on-campus life, such as diversity exposure, friendships, self-care skills, and personal identity development, will be much more difficult to achieve in an entirely online system environment, but we must establish ways to incorporate components of face-to-face education [23].

Sethi et al. (2020) conducted a study to determine the personal and professional impact of COVID-19 on health workers. The study discovered that clinicians faced an enormous workload at overburdened health facilities as a result of the COVID-19 predicament. Throughout COVID-19, health professionals were overworked, resulting in financial difficulties and worry while they cared for people and their families [20]. During COVID-19, Bhamani et al., (2020) researched to learn more about parents' experiences with home learning and management. It was revealed that academics from all around the world, as well as the whole nation, have stepped up to promote studying at home by giving a wide range of free online resources to aid parents in enabling home learning. Parents, too, have swiftly acclimated to the new environment [8].

Lizana et al. (2021) performed a study to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Quality of Life (QoL) of Chilean teachers. Using a longitudinal method, the study was done on a sample of 63 Chilean instructors during the pre-pandemic and COVID-19 pandemic periods. Teachers' socio-demographic statistics, as well as their perceptions of QoL. The COVID-19 epidemic has affected Chilean teachers' evaluations of their quality of life, according to the data. These findings might be connected to teleworking-induced workplace stress, as well as emotions of uncertainty, loneliness, and worry that the pandemic and its attendant confinements would exacerbate the year 2021 [2]. People's negative emotions, stress levels, and anxiety levels were also elevated as a consequence of their worry of contracting COVID-19 and dying as a result of it. The findings show that the pandemic had an adverse impact on the global economy, and respondents reported that it had a direct or indirect negative impact on their income [11]. In the study on the opportunities and challenges faced by faculty and students during the COVID-19 lockdown, Adedoyin in 2020 revealed that universities' rapid and abrupt digital transformation process places a significant burden on their information and communication technology (ICT) departments to create e-platforms, integrate existing external applications into their systems, and complete migration into external systems [5]. The monster epidemic has created chaos in the nation's work environment, resulting in economic contraction and diminishing career possibilities, all while professionals experience a tangible feeling of anxiety and uncertainty [13].

Acute muscle damage can be caused by high radiotherapy.

Radiotherapy in cervical cancer causes fat atrophy of muscle that results in PS [7]. Percutaneous endoscopic lumbar discectomy with high level of stress in local anesthesia elevate PS after walking rather than the patient with/without lower leg pain [8]. The prevalence of PS was statistically insignificant in males and females. Its prevalence is very high in sedentary population and young people have more chances of getting affected with tightness of piriformis muscle that causes PS and later on low back pain [9]. In Lasegue's sign, pain is localized to piriformis area while doing 90degrees hip and knee flexion and then extending knee while hip flexed [4]. There are some non- pharmacological interventions also applied such as osteopathic manipulative treatment and this can be used separately or with the combination of the pharmacotherapy options for the management of this syndrome [10].

Previous studies have discussed about the prevalence of PS but there is very little data available about females. As there is more prevalence of PS among female 3:1 ratio and there is no evidence of cross-sectional study on PS among females in Pakistan. The purpose of this study was to find out the frequency of PS among Female physical therapy students of Gujranwala. The outcome of this study will be helpful in giving awareness about postural training to minimize occurrence of PS. It was also educational survey to identify influence of prolong sitting among students. The ultimate goal is to rule out the predominance of PS among the female Physical therapy students of Gujranwala.

## M E T H O D S :

The study design of this study is a quantitative descriptive protocol. The descriptive research method is employed to describe the nature of the demographic segment of a population under study. In this type of study, the researcher observes the subjects or the sample taken by the subjects without affecting the environment.

### Participants and Sampling

The participants of the study were 250 educators belonging to various age groups, education, and locations, from different public and private higher education institutions in Pakistan to find out the positive impact of COVID-19 on them during lockdown between the session of Jan 2021 to May 2021. The participants signed the consent form and participated willingly in the research. The Snowball sampling technique was used to collect data from the participants. In snowball sampling, the researcher selects the participants who fit the requirement of the research and "uses those participants to identify additional participants and so on until the researcher has a sufficient number of the participants [6].

### Data Collection Instrument

An online Google Questionnaire was designed having 26 questions from different sections was forwarded to

educators via different E-platforms such as WhatsApp and Emails. The questionnaire was included multiple-choice. The questionnaire was categorized into 6 sections related to the positive impact of COVID-19 on the life of educators. The first section is comprised of 6 questions based on participants' demographics (age, gender, education, marital status, teaching experience). The second section included 4 questions regarding Health consciousness during COVID-19. The third section included 5 questions regarding relationships with family, Relatives, Friends & Colleagues during COVID-19. The fourth section included 4 questions regarding IT Skills & E-Courses during COVID-19. The fifth section included 2 questions regarding Research activities during an outbreak. The sixth section included 5 questions regarding Expenditures during a pandemic. The questionnaire took about 10-15 minutes to complete.

**Data Analysis**

A pilot study was undertaken for face validation. The questionnaire was distributed to ten faculty members from a private higher education school. Following comments from pilot research participants, the questionnaire was updated and enhanced. The internal consistency of the questionnaire/instrument was determined using the Alpha Cronbach test, which yielded a value of 0.78. The measured value is sufficient to meet the study's goals

**RESULTS :**

Table 1 elucidates the demographic characteristics of the participants on age, gender, education, marital status, teaching experience. Out of 250 participants, the age means, and ± SD were 31.53 and 7.974, respectively. In the study, (32%) males, and (68%) females participated. Most of the participants were M.Phil./ MS (15.2%) whereas (15.2%) participants had a bachelor's degree of education, and only (13.2%) were Ph.D. While (59.2%) participants were married, (40.8%) were unmarried. The majority of the participants (36.4%) had more than 6 years of teaching experience while, (32.4%) had 3 to 6 years, and (31.2%) had 1 to 3 years of teaching experience.

No.	Demographic	Categories	N (%)
1.1	Age (years)	Mean 31.53 SD .+7.574	
1.2	Gender	Male Female	80(32.0) 170(68.0)
1.3	Education	BSc/BA MS/MPhil PhD	38(15.2) 179(71.6) 33(13.2)
1.4	Marital Status	Married Unmarried	148(59.2) 102(40.8)
1.5	Your teaching experience (year)?	1-3 3-6 More than 6	78(31.2) 81(32.4) 91(36.4)

**Table 1:** Participants' demographic characteristics (N=250)

Table 2 illustrates the data on health consciousness and brought to light the fact that a large proportion of the

respondents became extremely careful regarding their own and families during COVID-19 lockdown (item 2.1). Similarly, a substantive number of respondents started preferring homemade food to junk foods (2.2). Likewise, most of the respondents also started taking less amount of soda (item 2.4). Furthermore, it is also explored that majority of the respondents started taking supplements to increase their immunity during the COVID-19 lockdown (item 2.5).

No.	Health Conscious	Yes, n(%)	No, n(%)
2.1	I became more conscious about the health of my family and my health.	232(92.8)	18(7.2)
2.2	I preferred homemade food to junk food.	236(94.4)	14(5.6)
2.3	I started avoiding junk food completely.	168(67.2)	82(32.8)
2.4	I started taking less amount of soda.	220(88.0)	30(12.0)
2.5	I have started taking supplements to increase my immunity during the COVID-19 lockdown	145(58.0)	105(42.0)

**Table 2:** Health Consciousness during COVID-19 (N=250)

Table 3 manifests the results on relationships with family members and it explores that a greater number of the respondents agreed on interactional period with their family members, relatives, friends, and colleagues increased during Covid-19 (item 3.1&3.4). Likewise, the majority of the respondents also showed agreement that they spent quality time with their families (item 3.2). Correspondingly, a significant proportion of the respondents revealed that they contributed actively to domestic chores during the epidemic (item 3.3).

No.	Items	Yes, n(%)	No, n(%)
3.1	The interactional time with my family increased during Covid-19?	228(91.2)	22(8.8)
3.2	I started to spend more quality time with my family.	232(92.8)	18(7.2)
3.3	I contribute actively in domestic chores during Covid-19?	212(84.8)	38(15.2)
3.4	My communication increased with my friends, relatives, and colleagues during the lockdown.	212(84.8)	38(15.2)
3.5	I spent more time in professional communication during the Covid-19 Pandemic.	145(58.0)	105(42.0)

**Table 3:** Relationship with family, Relatives, Friends & Colleagues during COVID-19 (N=250)

Table 4 demonstrates the results of the respondents on IT skills and E-courses and the findings reveal that a large number of the respondents exhibited an agreement that they improved their IT skills and learned numerous online tools and diverse software that were helpful in digital pedagogy during the outbreak (item 4.1&4.2)). Likewise, the majority of the respondents also expressed that they worked diligently for their professional grooming and for that reason got enrolled in different types of E-courses (item 4.3 & 4.4).

No.	Items	Yes,n(%)	No,n(%)
4.1	I improve my IT skills during COVID-19?	175(70.0)	75(30.0)
4.2	I learned diverse online tools and software that were helpful for me to shift to digital classrooms / offices easily during the COVID-19 lockdown.	194(77.6)	56(22.4)
4.3	I worked hard on and professional grooming.	186(74.4)	64(25.6)
4.4	I got ample time to get enroll in E-courses.	133(53.2)	117(46.8)

**Table 4:** IT Skills & E-Courses during COVID-19 (N=250)

Table 5 illustrates the results of the respondents on research activities during an outbreak. The findings discern that a significant number of the respondents got ample time for carrying out research activities. Moreover, a noticeable number of the respondents also incessantly remained busy in carrying out diverse research activities that as writing research articles/books chapters.

No.	Items	Yes,n(%)	No,n(%)
5.1	I got ample time for initiating research activities.	150(60.0)	100(40.0)
5.2	I remained involved continuously actively in writing research articles/books chapters.	141(56.4)	109(43.6)

**Table 5:** Research Activities during COVID-19 (N=250)

## DISCUSSION :

The findings revealed the positive impact of COVID-19 and disclosed that the majority of the educators became extremely conscious about the health of their family and own health, and they started preferring homemade food to junk foods. They utilized less soda and started taking supplements to increase their immunity during the COVID-19 outbreak. Contrarily, another study indicated that most of the participants did not change their eating behavior, remained overweight and morbidly obese. They were more prone to eat unhealthier junk food during the lockdown. Moreover, meal delivery services are more frequently used during quarantine [17].

The findings also disclosed a very significant aspect that the majority of the educators spent quality time with their family friends, relatives, and colleagues during the lockdown. Furthermore, their digital communication increased with their acquaintances and they became more concerned during the lockdown. As before COVID-19, due to busy routines, they seldom got time to communicate with them. A study was conducted in which parents of children and caregivers were spending more time with their children over lockdown in the UK, as the children were not permitted to attend school so that they have more family time [7]. Healthy family eating and feeding practices have been linked to family engagement. Family meals eaten together have repeatedly been linked to better health [21].

The study also underscores a significant finding that

although it was hard to understand the notion of leaving behind the conventional classroom, most of the educators worked diligently and improved their IT skills and they developed expertise in using numerous online tools and software. They discounted the skepticism surrounding education through the internet. Similarly, the educators also took the benefit of the confinement time, and besides doing official tasks, the majority of them enrolled in a variety of E-courses for professional grooming. Greg Flank went on to say that online learning has provided a clear roadmap for educators to take advantage of and engage major stakeholders in education to create a new market for instructional delivery and that the longer the pandemic lasts, the more likely online learning will become a widely accepted model of teaching and learning [5].

In Marrakesh, researchers, Adarmouch, et al., performed a study on research activity among university medical staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, finding that research activity increased amid an unprecedented period of viral illness. This crisis prompted a study on linked issues, which was carried out in a difficult environment. On the other hand, due to major changes, it interrupted pre-existing research activities [4].

## CONCLUSION :

To sum up, although COVID-19 has impacted negatively every sphere of life of the educators but the present study highlighted the positive impact of the Covid-19 outbreak, for instance, educators got conscious regarding the health of the family members, friends, relatives, colleagues; they started spending quality time with their family members, and switched roles and contributing to household chores actively. Furthermore, they worked hard to improve their information and Technology (IT) skills and enrolled themselves in various online courses for professional development. The educators took the benefit of lockdown and steered their research activities and accomplished numerous collaborated research projects. Covid-19 encourages conversion into online academics and developing nations, such as Pakistan, to establish trustworthy, cost-efficient, and safe online platforms in almost every private and public higher institution. Educators in an unprecedented time, work hard, face challenges, and fulfilled all their personal and professional responsibilities skillfully at home.

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