



OPPORTUNITIES GAINED BY PARENTS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS FROM VIRTUAL LEARNING.

Home Science

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ABSTRACT

In most countries, schools, training facilities, and higher education institutions have been forced to close as a result of lockdown and social isolation measures brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic. Teachers are now delivering high-quality instruction through a variety of online channels, which represents a paradigm change. Despite the difficulties faced by both teachers and students, online learning, distance learning, and continuing education have emerged as the cures for this unparalleled worldwide pandemic. With few or no other options available, learners and educators may find the switch from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning to be a totally new experience. A total Sample of 150 (75 teacher and 75 parents of early childhood years) were studied to find out the opportunities of virtual learning. Result reveals that various opportunities were gained such as less movement in between class, learn innovation ways, more comfortable environment, try new tools, greater ability to concentrate, improve technical skills, flexibility of attending class, not required for proper physical attention. However, a significant proportion of highly educated parents and educators reported of gained more opportunities in virtual learning.

KEYWORDS

Early Childhood, Early Childhood Education, Online Learning, Virtual Education, Opportunities of Virtual Learning

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE), usually referred to as nursery education, is a subfield of educational philosophy that deals with the official and informal training of children from birth to the age of six. This typically covers material up to the third grade level. ECE is referred to as a critical stage in a child's development. Preschoolers require special attention in a variety of areas, including learning, playing, health, emotions, cuisine, nutrition, and psychoanalysis. The fundamental goal of early childhood education is to promote the pupils' effective growth and development. It lays the groundwork for learning among children, enabling them to effectively develop their talents and abilities from a young age. Early childhood care and education make information and knowledge available to them to support the families and communities of the students and to aid in their efficient growth and development. At the preschool level, kids are taught drawing and colorings techniques, which help them grow an interest in art. Learning starts with play when students start to enjoy play activities. Academic principles, including alphabets, numerals, and other subjects, are taught to students at the next level (Kapur, 2018).

Student instructors can gain real-world, practical experience in the classroom through a teaching practicum. Practicums in early childhood education give student teachers the chance to put their understanding of both the curriculum's materials and children's development to use (Kim, 2020).

Although it takes a lot of work and presents difficulties for teachers and parents, wealthier nations are better prepared to transition to online learning practices. The situation is highly mixed in middle-income and poorer nations, and if we do not respond effectively, the enormous opportunity gap that already exists—which is terrible and intolerable to begin with—will be accentuated. Many kids lack a desk, books, access to the internet, a laptop at home, and loving parents. Others have. What we need to prevent, or at least as little as possible, is for those gaps in opportunity to widen and for the crisis to worsen, impairing the learning of underprivileged children even more (Saavedra, 2020).

The COVID-19 has inspired educational institutions all throughout the world to develop original ideas quickly. Most of the school has switched to an online style during this time, employing Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Blackboard, and other online platforms (Muthuprasad et al. 2021).

Early childhood education is provided in a structured manner, and all

of the pre-school staff members who are part of it are expected to operate in a methodical and organised manner. It demands effectiveness in both its presentation and implication. The word "care" has a lot of meaning within this context. Teachers must consider the elements of care and thoughtfulness when imparting any kind of knowledge, comprehension, or information to the students. The field of education is vast. It covers information, abilities, attitudes, routines, communication, mental faculties, discernment, righteousness, and honesty. These elements are crucial for helping pupils establish a growth mindset, which in turn helps them advance. To enter the formal school system, students must be adequately prepared (Kapur, 2018).

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) proclaimed the COVID-19 coronavirus a public health emergency of worldwide significance. On March 11, 2020, WHO declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic, less than two months later (Dayal and Tiko, 2020). For a limited time, all schools, colleges, and institutions will be closed, most governments of all countries have determined, in an effort to slow the spread of COVID 19. Social distance cannot be maintained in educational institutions. Therefore, it was necessary to temporarily close all educational institutions, including schools, in order to maintain social distance. When compared to adults, children distribute COVID 19 at a higher rate (Pareek and Soni, 2020).

Learning seeks to create people with broad perspectives, mould attitudes and personalities, and develop skills. The most important thing a person has to live their life will be the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they have acquired via the learning process. During the knowledge transformation process, there is contact between students and professors, including social, emotional, and psychological exchanges (Lubis and Dasopang, 2021).

Distance learning is now largely hassle-free for both teachers and students thanks to the rapid development and advancement of technology. Different terminology for distance learning, including web-based, online, blended learning, and computer-mediated learning, have been identified in the literature. The capacity to use computers connected to a network to enable learning from essentially anywhere is the commonality (Noor et al 2020).

Objective 3: To ascertain the opportunities gain by teachers and parents of early childhood from virtual learning

Hypotheses

H₀1: There exist no significant differences in opportunities gained by

Early Childhood educators as per their age in virtual teaching.

H₂: There exist no significant gender differences in opportunities gained by teachers during virtual teaching.

H₃: There exist no significant differences in opportunities gained by parents as per their qualification during virtual teaching

METHODOLOGY

Selection of sample

The respondents for the study were selected from Lucknow city, Uttar Pradesh, India. The sample consists of one hundred fifty respondents (75 Parents of Early Childhood school going children and 75 Early childhood educators).

Tools and Techniques

A Self-structured checklist on different opportunities was administered to find out the opportunities gained by parents and early childhood educators during virtual teaching and learning process.

Statistical Analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of the IBM SPSS 20.0.

RESULTS

Table-1.1 Age differences in opportunities gained by teacher in virtual learning (n=75)

Statement	Age of teacher				F	sig.
	Mean ±SD	20-30yr	31-40yr	41-50yr	51-60yr	
Flexible Schedule and convenience	1.0000±.00000	.9643±.18898	.9444±.3570	.8750±.5355	.818	.488
Learn in innovation ways	.6667±.8305	.9286±.26227	.7778±.2779	.8750±.5355	1.974	.126
Less movement in between class	.6190±.9761	.9286±.26227	.6111±.0163	.6250±.1755	3.112	.032*
More Comfortable environment	.3810±.9761	.4643±.50787	.4444±.1131	.5000±.3452	.153	.927
Try New Tools	.8571±.5857	.8571±.35635	1.0000±.00000	1.0000±.00000	1.367	.260
Improve Technical skills	1.0000±.00000	.9643±.18898	.9444±.3570	.8750±.5355	.818	.488

Age differences in opportunities gained by teachers during virtual teaching is presented in Table 1.1. It can be seen from the data that majority 20-30 years old teachers reported that they find the schedule flexible and convenient and also improve technical skills through virtual teaching. The differences were also found to be statistically significant in opportunities less movement in between classes.

Further probing the data in age wise, it reveals that younger teachers (20-40 and 30-40 years) reported flexible schedule and convenient and improving technical skills were the major opportunities gained by them whereas among (41-50 and 51-60 years) old teachers they cited trying new tools as their major opportunities.

However, the difference was found to be statistically significant across age in less movement between classes. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which shows that there is difference in opportunities gained teachers during virtual teaching.

Lubis and Dasopang, (2021) The opportunities for elementary school teachers and students are (1) Technology ability, (2) more accessible learning, (3) expanding learning references.

H₂: There exist no significant differences in opportunities gained by Early Childhood educators as per their age in virtual teaching.

Table-1.2 Gender differences (Mean ± SD) in opportunities gained by teachers during virtual teaching (n=75)

Statement	Mean ±SD		F	P(sig.)
	Male	Female		
Flexible Schedule and convenience	.9655±.18406	.9412±.24254	.198	.658
Learn in innovation ways	.9655±.18406	.2941±.46967	79.227	.000**
Less movement in between class	.8621±.34784	.2941±.46967	29.692	.000**

More Comfortable environment	.5345±.50317	.1176±.33211	10.296	.002*
Try New Tools	.8793±.32861	1.0000±.00000	2.271	.136
Improve Technical skills	.9483±.22340	1.0000±.00000	.903	.345

Gender differences in opportunities gained by teachers during virtual teaching is presented in Table 1.2 data reveals that in each and every statement it was more of female teachers who viewed virtual teaching as an opportunity. Flexible schedule and learning in innovative way was cited by an equal majority of female teachers. The differences were also found to highly statistically significant in opportunities like learn in innovative ways, less movement in between classes, and more comfortable environment. Dayal and Tiko (2020) also investigated a study on when are we going to have the real school? A case study of early childhood education and care teachers' experiences surrounding education during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, they used a case-study research approach to explore teachers' feelings about the situation and what actions or strategies the centers have devised to continue to support education of young children. They were reported also report on the challenges and opportunities that teachers have experienced in teaching remotely. The case studies suggest that teacher's feel worried not only about their personal lives, but also about their professional lives as teachers. The findings also reveal how the two early childhood education and care centers innovate in delivering education in a time of severe crisis. Glimpses of success are visible in terms of making teaching and learning possible and meaningful even with very young children. These findings provide useful insights into teaching and learning during a pandemic.

H₃: There exist no significant gender differences in opportunities gained by teachers during virtual teaching.

Table 1.3. Differences (Mean ± SD) in opportunities of virtual learning gained by parents as per their qualification (n=75)

State ment	Maternal education					F	p	Paternal education					F	p
	illit era te	10t h	12t h	UG	PG			illit era te	10t h	12t h	UG	PG		
Greater Ability to Concentrate	1.00±.00	0.00±.00	.50707	.729±.450	.514±.507	1.440	.238	.666±.577	.500±.577	.700±.83	.475±.504	.678±.566	.311	.870
Self discipline and responsibility	1.00±.00	0.00±.00	.50707	.702±.463	.657±.81	.300	.825	.666±.577	1.000±.516	.600±.417	.785±.417	.566±.04	1.354	.259
Try new Tools	.00±.00	0.00±.00	.50707	.756±.434	.828±.382	1.666	.182	.333±.577	1.000±.577	.500±.527	.821±.390	.833±.79	2.610	.043*
Comfortable Environment	.00±.00	0.00±.00	.00000	.621±.491	.742±.443	2.458	.070	.000±.000	.500±.577	.500±.527	.678±.75	.766±.30	2.352	.062
Willingness to learn from others	.00±.00	0.00±.00	.50707	.702±.463	.571±.502	1.050	.376	.333±.577	.000±.000	.600±.516	.678±.475	.700±.466	2.344	.063

Learn in innovative ways	.00 ±0.00	.00 ±0.00	1.0 ±0.00	.56 ±.75	.80 ±.40	2.6 ±.42	.05 ±.06*	.66 ±.57	.00 ±.00	.70 ±.48	.64 ±.24	.80 ±.04	2.9 ±.07	.02 ±.08*
Improve technical skills	1.0 ±0.00	.00 ±0.00	.50 ±.70	.81 ±.39	.82 ±.38	.50 ±.09	.67 ±.08	.66 ±.57	1.0 ±.00	.90 ±.16	.82 ±.33	.76 ±.43	.54 ±.09	.70 ±.11
Not required for proper physical attention	1.0 ±0.00	.00 ±0.00	1.0 ±0.00	.62 ±.49	.45 ±.50	1.4 ±.86	.22 ±.06	1.0 ±.00	1.0 ±.00	.40 ±.51	.60 ±.49	.46 ±.05	2.0 ±.46	.09 ±.07
Flexibility of attending class	1.0 ±0.00	.00 ±0.00	1.0 ±0.00	.62 ±.49	.57 ±.50	.70 ±.02	.55 ±.04	.66 ±.57	1.0 ±.00	.60 ±.51	.42 ±.03	.73 ±.49	2.2 ±.12	.07 ±.06
More interaction with teachers	1.0 ±0.00	.00 ±0.00	.00 ±.00	.37 ±.84	.42 ±.86	.99 ±.04	.40 ±.01	.33 ±.57	.50 ±.05	.50 ±.52	.32 ±.47	.43 ±.05	.35 ±.07	.83 ±.09

H₂: There exist no significant differences in opportunities gained by parents as per their qualification during virtual teaching Table 1.3 presents the differences in opportunities of virtual learning gained by parents of early childhood school going children as per their qualification. Data as per maternal qualification, the mean ± SD differences reveals that among illiterate mothers 'greater ability to concentrate', 'self-discipline and responsibility', improve technical skills', 'not required for proper physical attention', flexibility of attending class and more interaction with teachers' were cited as their opportunities from virtual learning. Mothers with different educational qualification reported different opportunities of virtual learning. However, the differences were found to be statistically non-significant. Further probing the data as per paternal qualification reveals that father with different educational qualification cited different opportunities gained by them. The differences were also found to statistically significant in opportunities like 'Trying new tools', and 'learn in innovative ways'. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected because the was a difference in opportunities of virtual learning among parents of different educational qualification. Similarly, Lubis and Dasopang, (2021) also found that the opportunities for elementary school teachers and students are (1) Technology ability, (2) more accessible learning, (3) expanding learning references.

Table 1.4 Mean differences in opportunities gained by parents from virtual learning as per their monthly income (n=75)

Statement	Monthly income in Rupees				f	p
	Mean ±SD					
	Up to 25000	25000-50000	50000-75000	Above-75000		
Greater Ability to Concentrate	1.0000±.00000	.8095±.40237	.7222±.46089	.4412±.50399	3.597	.018*
Self discipline and responsibility	1.000±.00000	.7619±.43644	.7222±.46089	.5882±.49955	1.004	.396
Try New Tools	.5000±.70711	.7143±.46291	.7778±.42779	.8235±.38695	.569	.637
Comfortable Environment	.0000±.00000	.5714±.50709	.6667±.48507	.7353±.44781	1.841	.147
Willingness to learn from others	.5000±.70711	.7619±.43644	.5556±.51131	.5882±.49955	.776	.511

Learn in innovation ways	1.0000±.00000	.6190±.49761	.6111±.50163	.7353±.44781	.705	.552
Improve technical skills	.5000±.70711	.7619±.43644	.8333±.38348	.8529±.35949	.668	.575
Not required for proper physical attention	.5000±.70711	.4762±.51177	.6667±.48507	.5588±.50399	.470	.704
Flexibility of attending class	1.0000±.00000	.7619±.43644	.5000±.51450	.5588±.50399	1.552	.209
More interaction with teachers	.5000±.70711	.4762±.51177	.4444±.51131	.3235±.47486	.505	.680

The Mean differences in opportunities gained by parents from virtual learning as per their monthly income is presented in Table 1.4 it can be seen from the data that more number of family with monthly income below Rs.25000 reported of getting more opportunities as compared to other family. The differences were found to statistically significant in statement like 'Greater Ability to Concentrate'.

CONCLUSION

Due the Pandemic COVID 19, Schools all over India were closed for person learning. Since then online education has been continuing for some schools while it has been resumed to offline classes now. Early primary education is a complex and multifaceted nature of learning stage, the shift from offline to virtual learning proved to be quite difficult for teachers, parents and students. Due to which parents and teachers got to learn a lot of new things. New Skills Also Developed During COVID-19, they have seen a lot of changes in themselves, if seen, they have developed more technical skills. But, Various opportunities have also been found, as if seen, this is how it includes new tools, comfortable environment, Greater Ability to Concentrate, Self discipline and responsibility, Learn in innovation ways and Willingness to learn from others etc. The study also presents the opportunities associated with the educational qualification of parents (both father and mother), monthly family income and gender and age early childhood educators.

Statements and Declarations

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