

## **“Challenges Mothers Facing when using Technology to educate their Children during COVID-19 in Jeddah Saudi Arabia”**

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## Abstract:

This study aimed to the challenges facing the mothers during educating their children using the governmental obligations considering the COVID-19 pandemic. A descriptive survey approach was used to suits the research objectives. The current research community included groups from all ages. Children, and students in general education levels (Primary, Intermediate, and High School) were selected. The research sample included (117) mothers. They were chosen randomly. Data were collected using questionnaire designed to serve the research topic, achieves its objectives, and answers its questions.

The study results were prominent, of which is that mothers, despite their keenness to continue education their children, their children did not make the most of the possible benefit from the study through online education. Among the challenges they faced was the application of e-learning considering the pandemic COVID-19 came surprisingly, without being prepared to employ all possible means of online education. Some of mothers suffer from deficiencies in the skills of using modern technologies which are constantly renewed in the educational programs. The working mothers were unable to control the education of their children, specifically those who have more than one student at different levels of the general education.

The study suggested many recommendations that help reducing the downward sliding risk, such as exploitation of government resources in providing online education requirements, regarding working women in Saudi society and trying to develop policies that support their social conditions.

**Key words:** Public education, COVID 19, Corona pandemic, mothers, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, children education.

## 1- Introduction:

The spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) has dramatically affected public health around the world. And everyone has been forced to make several public health efforts to contain the virus after the emergence of COVID-19, which may have an unintended, long-term negative impact on society.

This study explored mothers' view on learning online experiences of school students, and their perceptions of the difficulties and needed support. A survey of mothers has been conducted to suspend in Saudi. The aim of education is to bring up children to achieve comprehensive development and lays the foundation for their future learning. School students are expected to master a wide range of academic skills. Mothers were targeted because young children are more dependent on helping adults with distance learning. Understanding their experience in a timely manner will assist in developing appropriate measures to meet their needs.

There was a similar study for Hong Kong schools, which has almost similar results compared to the Saudi society. [Lau, EYH.2020]. Majority of the respondents preferred online classes to cope up with the curriculum due to lockdown in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, whereas 30% of the respondents suggested suspending the classes or providing reading materials till the lockdown is lifted. To probe into this matter, analysis of perception of the respondents regarding online classes was required. [T. Muthuprasad]

## 2- Statement of the problem:

Coronavirus 2019-20 or the Covid-19 pandemic continuously treated in the name of the Coronavirus pandemic is an ongoing global pandemic. The outbreak of the disease started the first time in Ohan, China in 2019. The World Health Organization officially declared on January 30 that the outbreak of the virus was a public emergency as sent to the international community, starting with an outbreak exported from an air base on March 11th. As of February 21, 2021, more than 111 million cases of COVID-19 were reported in more than 188 countries, more than 2,460,000 deaths, in addition to the recovery of more than 62.5 million infected people. The United States is the most favorable country on the list, with more than a quarter of all confirmed infections recorded. [4]

Most governments of the world had temporarily closed educational institutions, seeking to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Countries wide, the shutdown affected nearly 60% of the world's students. Other countries have closed schools in some areas, affecting the education of millions of additional learners.

The Ministry of Education confirmed the continuation of online educational process in the academic year 2020-2021 AD, to ensure the safety of students, as not to exposure to an infection with COVID-19 disease. And the online education will be participation combined by families and schools together with the process. The families are aware of the importance of communicating with the school<sup>[1]</sup>. Also indicated that the educational process is a joint process between the family and the school. The family has an important role in seeking to know the tasks entrusted to it and the means to achieve them. There are many mothers who do not have sufficient experience in using modern and renewable technologies on a continuous basis. Also, there are working mothers who do not have sufficient time to supervise their children. That will put the mother in a position that pushes her to sacrifice her humanity rights. This may negatively affect her psychological state which might reflect its effect on the children.

There are some working mothers who have more than one child study in different general levels, and who realize that the parent's communication with the school administration is a necessity that helps the children to have psychological balance<sup>[3]</sup>. Therefore, this research was based on identifying the challenges faced by mothers and the solutions that could be used to support their children in the online education period and who to solve them.

### 3- Research questions:

- 2.1. What is the reality of public education practices considering COVID-19 from the mother's point of view?
- 2.2. What are the challenges that mothers face during their online education considering COVID-19?
- 2.3. What are the solutions to reduce the challenges mothers face in online educating their children considering COVID-19?

### 3- Objectives:

Knowing the viewpoint of mothers in Saudi society about educating their children online in the general school levels (Primary, Intermediate, and High school) during COVID-19, and what can we suggest getting rid of these challenges?

### 4- Data and methods:

Data were collected using questionnaire designed to serve the research topic, achieves its objectives, and answers its questions. Also, searching the web for English papers published from 2019 to 2021 was conducted. Different search engines were used including Google scholar, PubMed, online review, and Cochrane library database. The following keywords were used, public education, COVID 19, Corona pandemic, mothers, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, children education.

### 5- Results:

68% of mothers confirmed the difficulty of their first online education experience had passed after less than a month since the start of school, and 32% of them indicated that they had suffered a nervous and psychological breakdown.

In order not to talk about online education from one critical side, we must refer to the great success achieved by the Ministry of Education, and education departments in the whole Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this field, in the high-quality achievements and outputs in the time of the pandemic. As this experience will be the base for building a future educational and technical development. As global reports indicate that the entire future of education can be "online", whether in the context of pandemics or in the natural way of life.

Considering these trends, it is not reasonable for the mother to turn into a home teacher, to monitor the commitment of her children to school lessons, interaction with teachers and colleagues, and the subsequent fellows the school tests and activities.

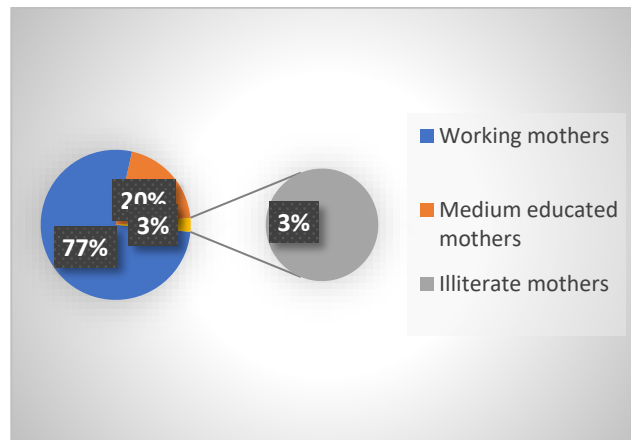


Figure- 1: The reality of public education practices considering COVID-19 from the viewpoint of mothers.

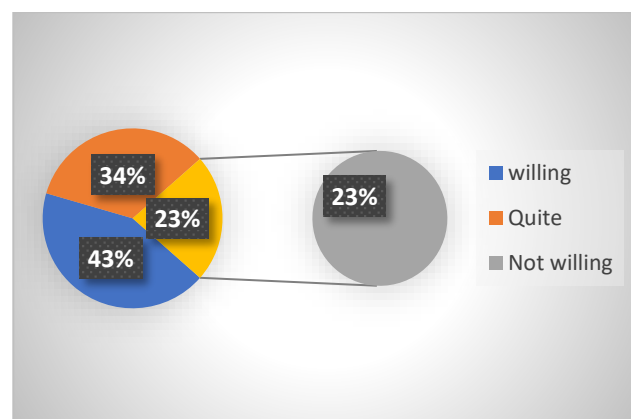


Figure- 2: Mothers who are willing to teach online

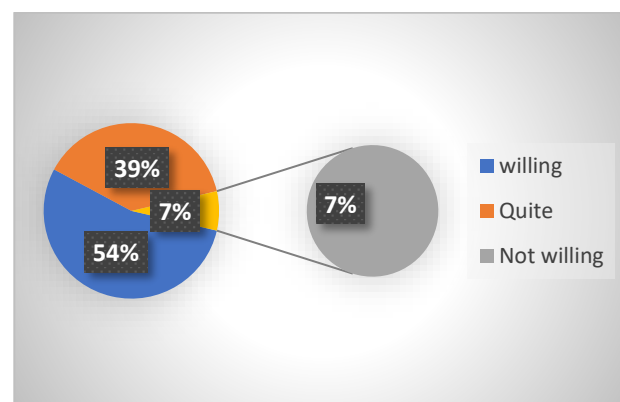
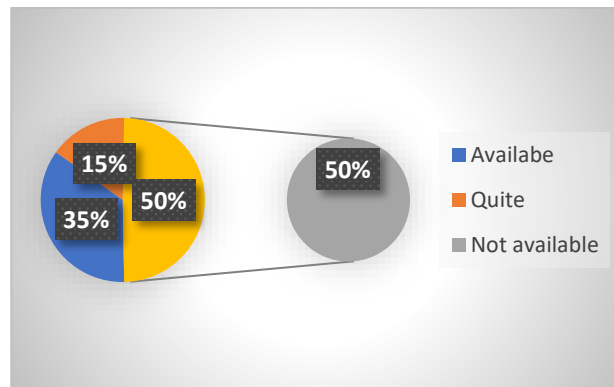


Figure- 3: Mothers who are willing to supervise the education of their children online



**Figure- 4: Technical availability**

The results of the last academic year revealed that children of all educational levels achieved success and excellences in their online examinations, which indicates the great efforts of their parents, even though they suffered challenges represented in continuing the study of children while receiving their virtual lessons, taking care of managing their time, and taking into account their health and psychological state.

The challenges that mothers face during their online-education considering COVID-19 are poor infrastructure in most developing countries, the difficulties of allocating the necessary financial supports to build the infrastructure represented by the supplies of computer hardware and accessories, facilitate communication, and provides permanent maintenance to the Internet.

The recommendations we suggest to reduce the challenges mothers face in online education considering COVID-19, to help reduce the risk of downward spiral slide, are the exploitation of government resources in providing online education requirements, take care of the working women of Saudi society and trying to develop policies that support their social conditions.

## 6- Discussion:

The Saudi Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has counted that more than 1.5 billion students in 165 countries have been forced to drop out of schools and universities due to the emerging coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic forced academic institutions around the world to discover new patterns of learning and education, including e-learning and distance education.

This experience is considered a challenge for students and teachers, who are now forced to deal with the emotional, physical, and economic difficulties imposed by the pandemic, while adhering to their role to limit the spread of the virus.

The future remains unclear to everyone, especially for the millions of students who graduated this year. While a world economically paralyzed by the pandemic is waiting them to develop it.

As a result of the current conditions due to the spread of the Corona virus, the learning mechanism changed from regular school education program to online education, which made the responsibilities differed and challenges emerged. Once the educational system was dependent on the teacher, and under administrative supervision from the school, and the mother's role comes after the end of the school day to supervise the comprehension of academic achievement and follow-up of assignments, the mother found herself under the pressure of full responsibility from the beginning of explaining the lesson until the rest of the stages ... supervision, control and follow-up.

The mother becomes required to carry a role that had not been prepared for which is helping the children to receive e-education at home, which is confusing, created many challenges, and many difficulties that have been added to the mother's shoulder, especially if she is working. Considering maintain her job position amid economic challenges at this difficult time.

Society has become accustomed to traditional educational system, in which the mother partially shares responsibility after school. But in the case of distance education, many challenges have emerged. The family has become obligated to provide a computer for each student, in addition to allocating a separate quiet environment at the home to receive the distance education. Preparing children and the mother to use new programs, and she may not know anything about it before the outbreak of the pandemic, this will constitute confusion and psychological pressure in addition to the financial burdens that posed challenges on the family, as buying computers, raising the efficiency of Internet subscription, and others.

The ways to face these challenges differ according to the mother's culture and ability. There are mothers who can deal with modern technology and facilitate them and adapt to the new situation. There are other mothers who are not receptive to distance education, and some of them are afraid to go into it because they are unacquainted to it. Also, some of them do not have confidence in its quality. Every mother has her faith and her educational and cultural capabilities that determine the extent of their ability to overcome these challenges, but there is no escape from confronting and adapting to it.<sup>[6]</sup>

The burden on the mother increases if she works, because not all mothers are housewives or are available for them to work from home, which creates great psychological pressure on them, as she suffers from the difficulty of her playing the new role in following up, supervising and assisting children, so she remains in constant contact with her children to make sure of they enter classes and try to help them in the event there is a problem with programs or the Internet to solve these problems they face, in addition to their primary role as a housewife, wife, mother, and a private school for her children to help them solve their duties.

As far as the responsibility entrusted to mothers, attention must be given, so they must be prepared to do what they are called upon from a new role in order to be able to help their children to receive electronic education at home, and the burden on the working woman should be reduced so that she can assume the new roles without psychological pressures that may reflect negatively on Sons.

Mothers became the supervisors of the classroom and the school, after the burdens of the entire educational process relied on them, when Corona imposed online education, for most educational levels.<sup>[7]</sup>

Although parents in some families participate in the educational process however, mothers suffer more. They almost collapsed after several weeks of starting online studies in schools.

We also found that there are some teacher mothers who suffer from a combination of being a teacher among classes who receive their education electronically and between their children who are learning online.

One of the preliminary results of "COVID-19" is studying from home, and there is no precedent for the student to study from his home.<sup>[8]</sup> Starting from the last school year, the new testament began its establishment, and there was an opportunity to get the opportunity seriously from the parents, sit and follow what the student learns, listening to the lessons, receive and understand lessons, act to encourage it in order not to be influenced, and know them, and know them, and know them, and know them, and know them, and know them, and know them, a large number of them.

## Conclusion:

The ambition of the Saudi society and its desire to raise the level of education is increasing day after day. This project provides an opportunity for the continuation of innovation renewal to continue. When translating this ambition into ordered scientific ideas, don't ignore the principles of the educational process which are supplying the society with information and knowledge, bear in mind that those goals are established based on the principals that distinguish this society. It will be a great mistake when thinking of improving and developing the academic achievements and various activities in higher education if these improvements separated in any way from social status and cultural developments.

## Authorship contribution statement:

**M. Alshaigh** Conceptualization, Data curation, writing initial draft - final draft.

## Declaration of competing interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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## المستخلص:

هدفت الدراسة لكشف التحديات التي واجهت الأمهات في تعليم أبنائها عن بُعد في ظل جائحة كورونا (كوفيد 19). استخدم المنهج الوصفي المسحي لمناسبته لأهداف البحث، وتضمن مجتمع البحث الحالي جميع الأمهات اللاتي لديهن طلاب وطالبات بمراحل التعليم العام (الابتدائية، المتوسطة، والثانوية)، أما عينة البحث فقد اشتملت على (117) أم، تم اختيارهم بالطريقة العشوائية، واستخدمت الاستبانة أداة لجمع البيانات، وذلك لمناسبتها لموضوع البحث، وتحقيق أهدافه، والإجابة عن تساؤلاته. وتوصلت الدراسة إلى نتائج من أبرزها، أن الأمهات بالرغم من حرصها على استمرار تعليم أبنائها، فإن أبنائهن لم يحققوا أقصى استفادة ممكنة من الدراسة عن طريق "التعليم عن بُعد"، ومن التحديات التي واجهتهم أن تطبيق التعلم الإلكتروني في ظل جائحة (كوفيد 19) جاء بشكل مفاجئ دون الاستعداد لتوظيف جميع السبل الممكنة "للتعليم عن بُعد"، فبعضهن يعانين من قصور في مهارات استخدام التقنيات الحديثة المتجددة باستمرار في برامج التعليم، والبعض الآخر من الأمهات العاملات لم يستطعن السيطرة على تعليم أبنائهن، بالتحديد من لديها أكثر من طالب في مرحلة من مراحل التعليم العام.

وتوصلت الدراسة إلى العديد من الاقتراحات التي تساعد في الحد من الإنزلاق في خطر دوامة التدهور، منها استغلال الموارد الحكومية في توفير متطلبات تعليم الطلاب عن بُعد، والنظر للمرأة العاملة في المجتمع السعودي ومحاولة وضع سياسات تدعم أوضاعهن الاجتماعية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التعليم العام، كوفيد 19، جائحة كورونا، الأمهات، المملكة العربية السعودية، تعليم الأبناء.