



‘Maslow before bloom’-parents’ views on the impact of e-learning on post-pandemic early childhood education pedagogy

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Abstract

The study aims to explore and understand the impact of emergency e-learning on parents and its potential impact on their views regarding early childhood care and education pedagogy in a post-pandemic scenario. A mixed-method approach was used for the study keeping in mind the objectives of the study; To evaluate the experiences of parents in relation to E-learning, To identify the major difficulties faced by parents during E-learning, To understand the impact of job loss, pay cut, work from home etc. on E-learning and To understand the views and expectations of parents on early childhood education pedagogy in a post-pandemic scenario. A total of 80 parents were selected using the snowball sampling method. Results reveal that the parents had a difficult time managing their child’s learning during the pandemic and they believe that the early childhood care and education pedagogy may be changed for which the schools are ready.

Keywords: early childhood care and education, e-learning, children, parents

Introduction

Maslow before Bloom is a popular phrase, usually used to express how people need their basic needs met before it is possible to fully accept academic learning. During this COVID-19 outbreak, with students now experiencing school-at-home, we may all gain some insight from this Maslow before Bloom expression. With families and students experiencing school-at-home now, it is not only teachers who see how critical Maslow is for students before Bloom is expected. Bloom's cognitive and affective production is primarily responsible for any person's academic performance. However, when Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is applied broadly, this continuum of academic achievement becomes blurred. Families with lower-tier needs should concentrate on schools before this school-at-home situation in order to allow their children to fix Maslow before Bloom. This is no longer the case, and families must now deal with the effects of stress on students' academic performance (Mullen 2020) [8].

The majority of the arguments for online learning have come from the viewpoints of academics and educators; however, the perspectives of parents, who are one of the most significant stakeholders of early childhood education, have been largely ignored. Parents affect their children's learning and growth by providing new technology and media environments to young children from the start as a central part of the child's immediate environment. (Dong and Qiu, 2019) [6]

E-learning

UNESCO 2020 [3] defines distance education as “any educational process in which all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from

the learner, with the effect that all or most of the communication between teachers and learners is through an artificial medium either electronic or print.”

Director-General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay said that “The aim is to recognize and share the best innovations for keeping children learning during the pandemic, as well as to help lay the groundwork for more inclusive and equitable educational methods after the crisis has passed.”

Limitations of e-learning

Online learning may not be suitable for young students, especially those who have little to no adult supervision at home. They can be distracted/worried, lose track of their schedules if they are not carefully observed, or be adversely affected by minimal social contacts or delayed input from teachers. Teachers are required to consider and determine what degree of parental or guardian intervention is appropriate so that students can show mastery of learning independently. (Doucet, Netolicky, Timmers and Tuscano, 2020) [2]

Early childhood education is aimed at offering real-life sensory experiences, hands-on activities, and meaningful face-to-face interactions, which are difficult to accomplish digitally. It is possible that the transition to online learning will adversely affect young children attending ECEC contexts. Indeed, for young children, online learning may be inadequate and frustrating. (Spiteri, 2021) [12]

Advantages of e-learning

ICT-based learning has a significant impact on a child's cognitive, social, linguistic, and literacy skills. It has also been discovered that children who use the E-learning model are more creative, fast learners, and have improved their

math skills. Children are regularly involved in computer-based activities, such as schoolwork, sports, chatting with peers, social networking, and Internet surfing. Academic success, student engagement, and class participation all improved significantly when E-learning was used (Ganie *et al.*, 2014) [5].

In the last decade, online learning has hit the mainstream, reaching millions of young people at an unparalleled rate. To offer flexibility to young children with disabilities and/or living in remote or vulnerable situations, an increasing number of online services have been created and delivered. Furthermore, online technologies have evolved into social, cultural, and personal objects in the ‘multimodal lifeworld’ of today’s children. As a result, it should be encouraged as a means of creating a multimodal learning ecology for today’s adolescents, parents, and teachers. (Dong, Chao and Li 2020) [6]

Parental beliefs and attitudes

Since the last decade, parents' views and behaviours toward early digital and online learning have been found to be contradictory. On the one hand, parents have begun to recognize the importance of digital technologies and have become more comfortable with their use at home by their children. They also advocated for the proper use of digital technologies in early childhood environments. (Isikoglu Erdogan, 2019) [6].

Parents have expressed their uncertainty about whether mobile devices can be helpful or detrimental to their children, as well as how to implement these mobile screen technologies, as a result of the rapid growth of screen technologies (e.g., iPads, smartphones). (Radesky *et al.*, 2016) [11].

Methodology

The research was a mixed-methods study, analysing the views of parents of children aged 3-8 years old from the state of Delhi on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on post-pandemic Early Childhood Pedagogy. The research utilized a tool adapted from Family Distance Learning Survey (2020) and Distance Learning Survey (2020).

Participants were selected through the snowball sampling method. A total of 80 parents (40 mothers and fathers each) were approached and the research described the purpose and scope of the study. Parents were then encouraged to fill out the google form through the link sent to them on Whats app. Out of all the google form entries received 5 mothers and 5 fathers were randomly selected for the interview.

The data was analyzed quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

Google Forms were analyzed quantitatively by looking at the frequencies of responses for each question and on the basis of it, data was presented through graphs and pie charts. The qualitative responses gained from the telephonic interview were analyzed looking at the structure of responses from which themes were grouped into categories to support the study.

Results and Discussion

These results should be taken into account when considering how E-learning affected the post-pandemic early childhood education pedagogy, as parents are the main stakeholders of children’s learning. Their experiences will help build a better and effective early childhood education pedagogy. While previous research has focused on the child’s perspective and their experiences of E-learning, these results demonstrate parents' views and experiences—building a holistic perception of post-pandemic E-learning.

The data has been collected using a mixed-methods approach and the findings have been divided into the following subcategories:

Student distance learning access and environment

Figure 1 depicts the problems faced by children during E-learning. Parents faced multiple problems during E-learning but, supervising them during their classes and helping them in their studies was the most difficult task for them. 56.8% of the responses were for technology-related problems. 50.6% of the responses were for parents related issues and 72.9% of the responses were children and their learning environment-related.

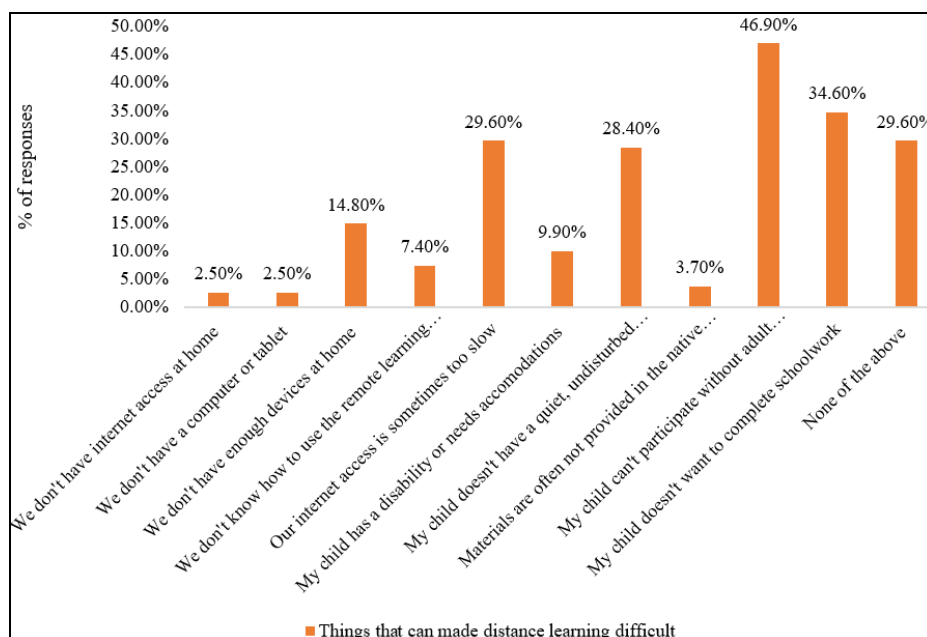


Fig 1: Things that made e-learning difficult according to parents

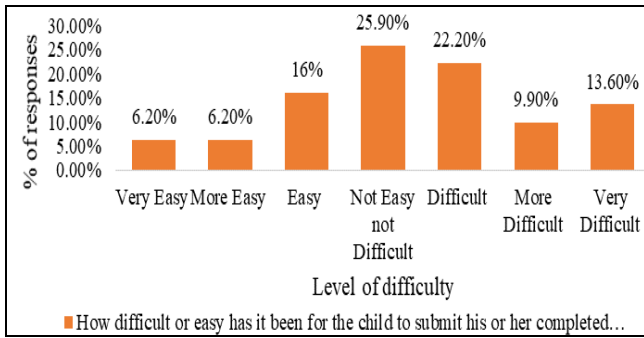


Fig 2: According to parents, level of difficulty faced by their child submitting or completing the assignment

Figure 2 indicates the level of difficulty that children face in submitting their homework electronically according to the parents.

The results in the graph clearly depict the majority of the parents said that their children faced problems submitting the homework electronically.

It indicates that 25.9% of parents said it was neither easy nor difficult for submitting the homework online for their child. Whereas 22.2% of parents said it was difficult, 13.6% of parents said it was very difficult, 9.9% of parents said it was more difficult and the remaining 12.5% of parents said it was very easy.



Fig 3: Parents view on child's experience and feedback

School communication/ Support during school closures

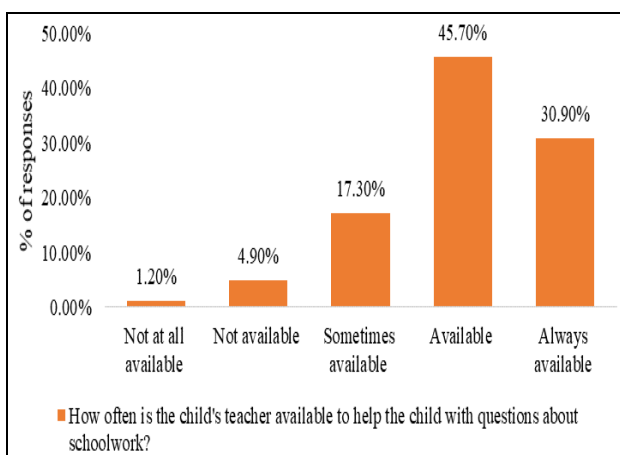


Fig 4: Teacher's availability for the child

Figure 4 depicts the availability of teachers to help their students during E-learning. 45.7% of parents that are the majority believed, the teachers were helpful after, 30.9% of parents said that the teachers were extremely helpful, 17.3% of parents said that the teachers were somewhat helpful and

only 6.25% of parents said that the teachers were not helpful.

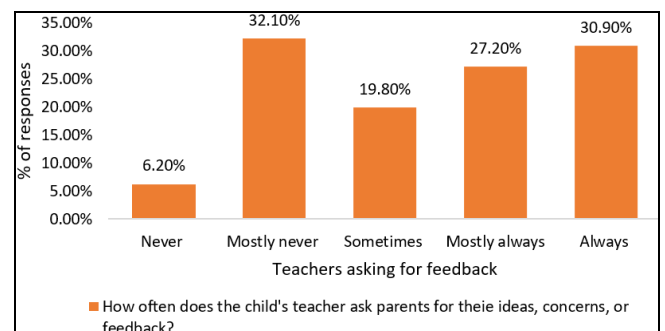


Fig 5: Teachers asking parents for feedback, ideas and concerns

Figure 5 shows that whether the teachers asked the parents for feedback during online classes. 32.1% of parents said that teachers were not available for them, 27.2% of parents said that the teachers were available for them, 19.8% of parents said that the teachers were somewhat available for them, 14.8% of parents said that the teachers were always available for them and 6.2% of parents said that the teachers were never available for them.

Figure 6 represents the amount of information received by parents from the school regarding E-learning. The majority of parents i.e. 66.7% of parents said they somewhat received information. 17.3% of parents said they received no information and 16% of parents said they received enough information.

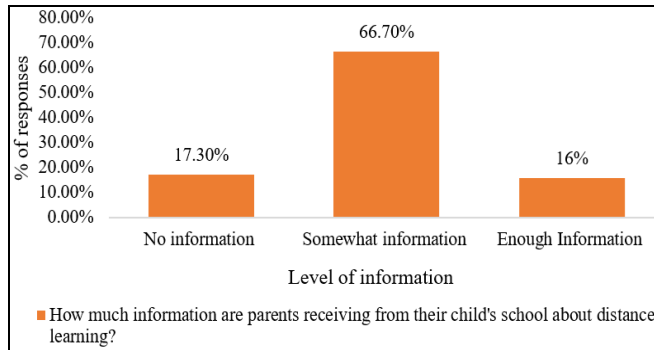


Fig 6: Information was given by the school to the parents regarding E-learning

As Muller (2020) said, due to school at home, parents must deal with the effects of stress on a student's academic performance. The results also showed that the majority of parents struggled to manage their work as it became mandatory for them to supervise screen time and content during online classes.

Current situation during school closures

Figure 7 represents the concerns of parents regarding their child's mental well-being during the pandemic. 72.2% of parents were extremely concerned for their children, 11.4% of parents were concerned, 11.4% of parents were somewhat concerned, 3.8% of parents were not concerned and 1.3% of parents were not at all concerned

and 1.3% of parents were not at all concerned

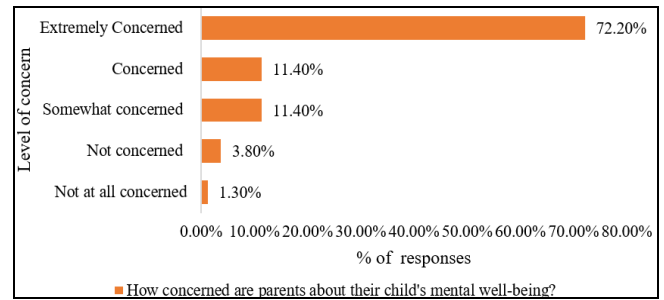


Fig 7: Concern of parents for their child's mental well-being

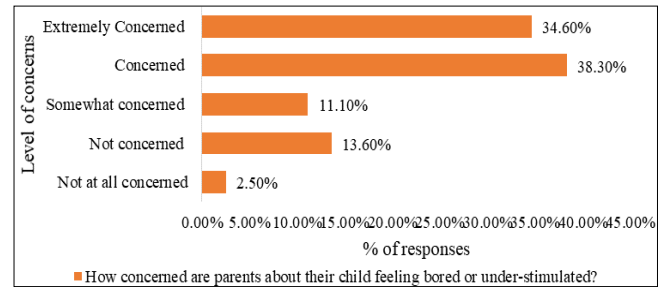


Fig 8: Concern of parent for their child feeling under-stimulated and bored

Figure 8 represents the concerns of parents about their child feeling bored. 38.3% of parents were concerned for their children and 34.6% of parents were extremely concerned, which clearly shows that majority of parents are concerned about their children feeling bored. 13.6% of parents were not concerned for their children, 11.1% of parents were somewhat concerned and 2.5% of parents were not at all concerned.

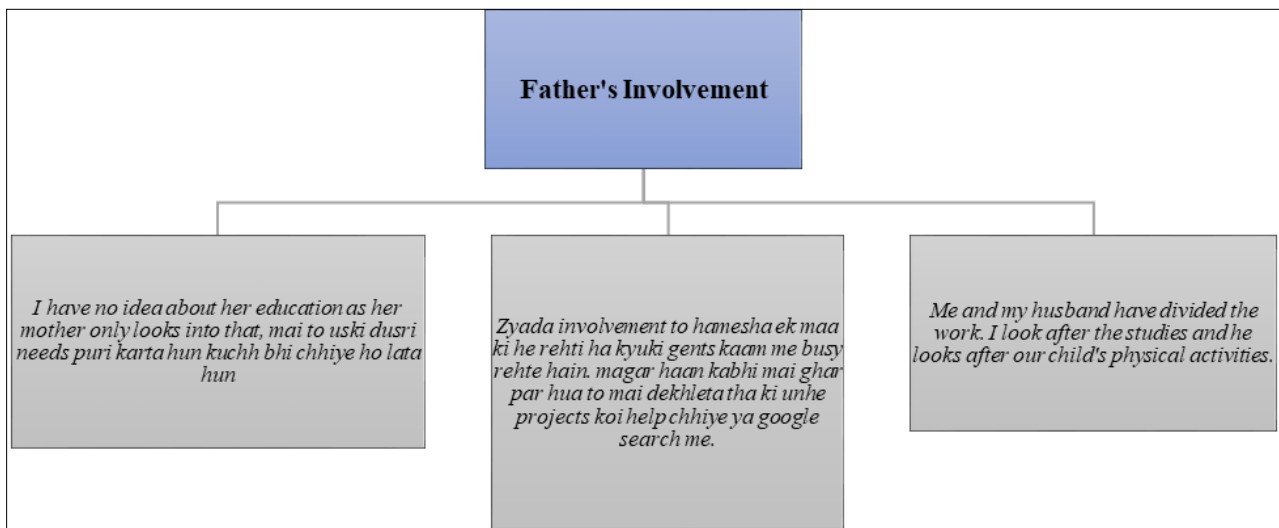


Fig 9: Father's involvement in child's learning

The results also indicate that there was no involvement of the child's father in the child's learning, but the joint family usually comes to the rescue of the overburdened mother. The study provides new insight into the relationship between teachers and parents. The teacher should ask for feedback from the child's parents and the parents should also be willing to provide teachers with their concerns and ideas.

Views and expectations for post-pandemic pedagogy

Figure 10 represents that according to parents whether the pedagogy will return to as it was before the pandemic. The pie chart clearly shows that 51.9% of parents believe that pedagogy may be changed but it cant be surely said. 30.9% of parents can surely say that the pedagogy will change and 17.3% of parents said that it is not changing

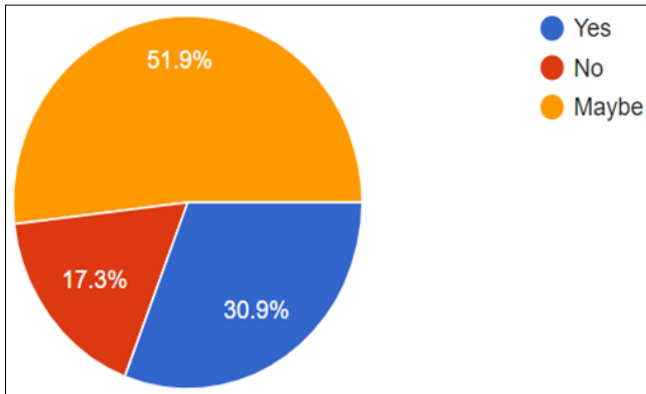


Fig 10: According to parents will the pedagogy return to as it was before the pandemic.

Figure 11 represents the views of parents on school involving them in planning post-pandemic pedagogy. 82.7% of parents want the school to involve them in planning

Whereas only 6.2% of parents don't want the school to involve them. The remaining 11.1% of parents don't know whether they want the school to involve them in planning or not.

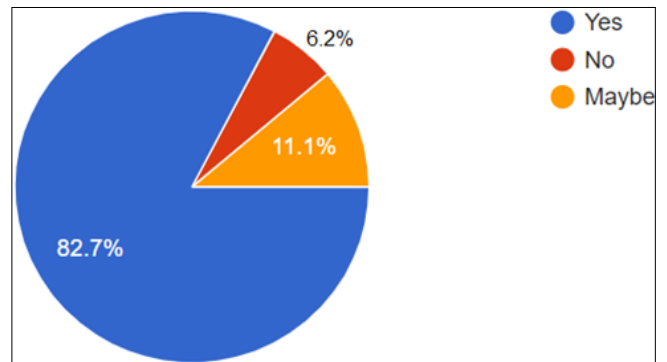


Fig 11: Parents views on school involving them in planning post-pandemic pedagogy.

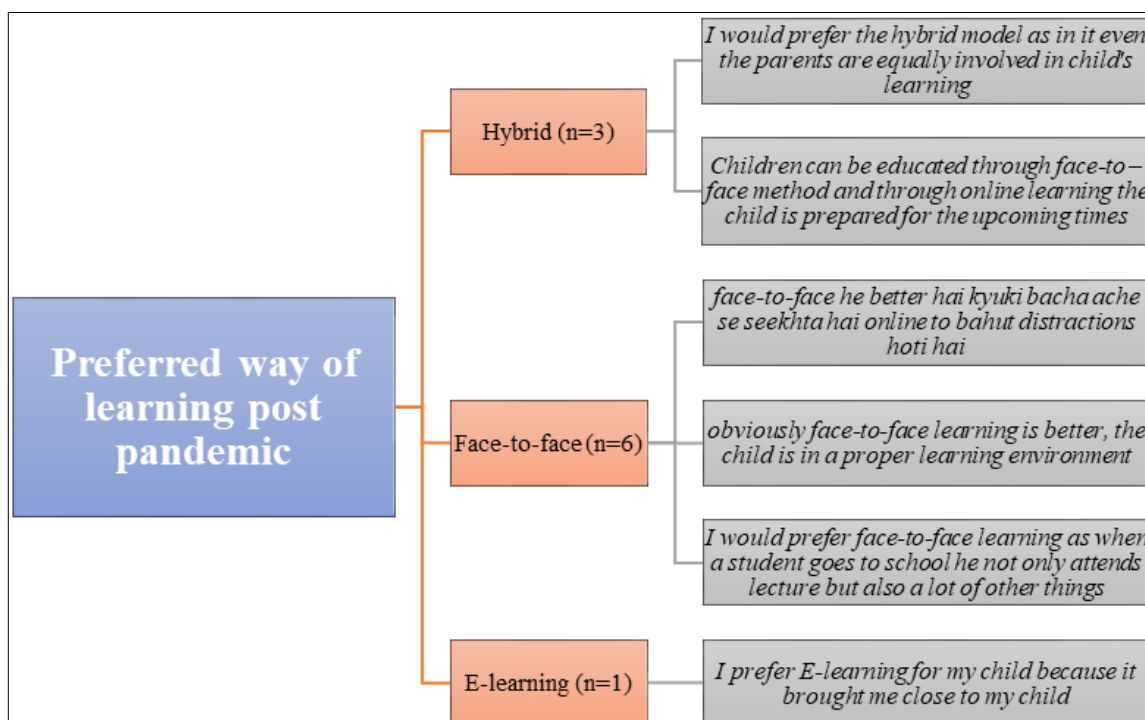


Fig 12: Preferred way of learning post-pandemic by the parents for their child

Referring to the results of this study, The preferred way of learning for parents is face-to-face learning and according to the parents, early childhood pedagogy will witness several post-pandemic changes. I would like to suggest that post-pandemic pedagogy should also include digital mediums of teaching, as suggested in developmentally appropriate practices too. There shall be more focus on learning through play and activities, as it interests children and enables them to focus for a longer period of time. There shall be a proper revision of all that is taught online once offline classes begin, as basic concepts taught during online classes might not be clear and a revision of the same will be helpful for their future education

Conclusion

This study and its findings provide clear evidence of the impact of Covid-19 on post-pandemic Early Childhood Education pedagogy according to the parents of 3-8 years

old children. This evidence is essential as it helps to understand the parental point of view, especially as it is not clear when the pandemic is going to be over and normal schooling will resume. The results of this study have helped to map the perceptions of the parents on whether there will be a change in pedagogy after the pandemic gets over. Emergency E-learning has not only impacted children but also parents. With the work from the home office, parents' personal and professional lives are not separate anymore. Further, they had to bear the additional work of a child's learning. The study highlights all the problems faced during the pandemic. Parents prefer face-to-face learning for their children, but only once the pandemic is over as the child's health is most important for them. But now that they understand the importance of knowing how their child is taught, parents want schools to involve them in the planning process of post-pandemic pedagogy

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