

## Effect of Covid 19 lockdown and online education on health related quality of life in private university students

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**Objective:** To determine the effect of COVID-19 lockdown on the health-related Quality of life in undergraduate students taking online classes from different private institutions.

**Methodology:** It was a cross-sectional study involving 211 participants. Sample size was calculated by "EpiTool" with 95% confidence level. They were selected through convenient sampling technique. RAND health-related quality of life (QoL) SF-36 form was used to collect data. The questionnaires included demographics details and SF-36 questions divided into eight domains.

**Results:** Average age group was 21-23 years. The mean values of eight SF36 domains were calculated separately and the range for male was 36.23-74.21 points while for females were 29.19-

65.62. The paired sample t-test showed  $p > 0.005$  in all domains of SF-36 except pain, Energy/Fatigue, and General health QoL. A total of 175 respondents out of 211 mentioned that they had better health now as compared to a year ago.

**Conclusion:** There was a marked decrease in the quality of life of the undergraduate students taking online classes in private Universities of Lahore. Other than Social functioning domain of SF36 both gender were equally affected by the COVID-19 lockdown in term of QoL which showed no significant gender dependent difference. (Rawal Med J 202;46:3-6).

**Keywords:** Covid-19, quality of life, online education.

## INTRODUCTION

Studying at a university is an experience of excitement, enjoyment, and satisfaction but most of all it is an experience full of stress and pressure.<sup>1</sup> There are multiple sources for these stressful conditions including academic stress, peer pressure, family pressure, the stress of placement and, relationship stress.<sup>2</sup> These stressors then have negative impacts on the overall quality of life (QoL) of these students.<sup>3</sup> In the early part of the year 2020 novel Corona Virus was given the status of pandemic by WHO, and declared it as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern and on 11 February 2020 titled this disease as COVID 19.<sup>4</sup>

According to WHO the global spread of the disease could be stopped and interrupted by implementing the concept of social distancing.<sup>5</sup> The governments issued notices to close the educational institutes in many parts of the world. With this step risen a problem of continuing the academic session for the

students at home. This then lead to the establishment of online classes to overcome academic loss.<sup>6</sup> The Online classes are a new branch of distance learning. The first instance of distance learning come from the university of Chicago back in 1800s when students and teachers used to connect with each other through written letters.<sup>7</sup> The online distance learning programs were started by many colleges and universities with online education programs.<sup>8,9</sup>

Online education system has a huge number of issues not only for the faculty but mainly for the students.<sup>10</sup> These may include lack of training, lack of awareness, hesitation in adopting the change, poor internet connections, portal examination and keeping the students involved in the lecture while looking at their computer screens.<sup>11</sup> Some universities already provided online classes but these classes were only limited.<sup>12</sup> The rationale of this study was to assess the Health related QoL in students using online

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