

Original Article

Impacts of Teacher Educators' Gender on their Perceptions Regarding Their Teaching Online Classes in Teacher Education Institutions in Sindh

Rafiq ul Islam^{1*} & Arshad Mehmood²

¹Public Sector Higher Secondary School Karachi - Pakistan
²Department of Teacher Education, University of Karachi - Pakistan



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Abstract

This research intends to investigate the impact of Impacts of Teacher Educators' Gender on their Perceptions Regarding Their Online Teaching to the distant Classes of prospective teachers enrolled in T E I in Sindh province. to meet the intent of the study the researcher first formulated the objectives and then formulated two hypothesis based on the goals to compare the opinions of the male teacher educators with the opinions of the female teacher educators in following the variables carefully chosen to estimate their attitudes towards the online courses for teaching the teachers. The focus of the study was causal comparison, where researcher looked at the effect of an existing variable of teacher educators' gender on teacher educators' attitude as a dependent variable. The research design for the research was survey. Quantitative approach was the chosen for conducting the study. Research instrument for the study was a perception questionnaire based on five points Likert Scale for collecting the facts. Teacher Educators who were teaching in TEIs in Karachi was the population of the study. One of the probability techniques was adopted that is simple random sampling technique of respondents was 597 comprises over 358 male and 229 female teacher educators. One-way ANOVA was used to examine the numerical data using statistical test through SPSS 22 for exploring the hidden facts. Null hypothesis was accepted instead of Alternative hypothesis and explained that the gender of Teacher educators does not substantially impact their perceptions regarding their online teaching to the classes.

Keywords: Teaching styles, Learning styles, Learners' Compatibility

1. INTRODUCTION

Online Teaching-Learning Process

In order to have an alternative to the physical classroom teachings process due to such horrible situation of Covid-19, universities all over the world have shifted from traditional to online education. Online instructional strategies have increased the interest of all grade students in getting quality education in developing countries also. Developing countries like Pakistan, face a lack of proper infrastructure, limited internet connectivity, lack of reliable electricity, inadequate technological resources, and low digital literacy levels, which cause barriers to widespread adoption and equitable access to online education (Hatakka et al., 2019; World Bank, 2016). According to Rumbley, L. E. 2019, by overcoming barriers such as geographic distance and limited educational resources, developing countries will be able to provide opportunities to students of each level to get quality education.

After knowing well about most of the advantages of this new online teaching-learning process, all types of educational institutions in the world started to implement this new online teaching-learning strategy with more advancement. The advancements bring the online education as more attractive, convenient and fruitful that motivates to shift on applying this approach immediately in Pakistan also higher educational institutes have adopted the online education system and have started online classes

***Corresponding Author:** Rafiq ul Islam, Public Sector Higher Secondary School Karachi - Pakistan

 rafiqulislamhyd@yahoo.com

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and a number of online courses.

In an online course, with fast and easy access to vast resources of data and information, learners don't only depend on the knowledge shared by the teachers but they also learn with their own collaboration, context, and activities. The online teaching-learning process needs complete improvement with respect to all main factors like curriculum, teachers' instructional strategies, and assessment procedures. This needs changes in instructional design according to modern online teaching. In Pakistan, online teaching is a new phenomenon where male and female teacher-educators perform their duties using ICT and relevant applications. Given below topics are included to understand the phenomenon with respect to gender differences.

Online educating offers energizing openings to extend the learning environment for distinctive understudy populaces. Various thinks about have detailed that due to the acceptance of online learning, the number of understudies has expanded in numerous online courses conjointly in all classes. online teaching-learning forms have moved forward the discourse quality, and embraced online intuitive for understudies, due to these benefits an extraordinary number of understudies are taking their courses online, which encouraged instructors to plan online courses to progress their instructing viably (Hatakka et al., 2019). Online educating could be a diverse involvement from that of instructing in a face-to-face setting (Juan et al. 2011). Studies found that due to having less experience in the usage of computer accessories, female teachers do have not as much competency as male teachers.

Online education is actually a learner-centered instruction mode of learning, in which teachers play the role of facilitating and sharing information while guiding students toward solutions through communication, which in turn improves their confidence and interaction among the learners, as a result, they become able to remove their hesitation and start to discuss content difficulties with their teachers and online course friends. As a result, the quality, quantity, and patterns of teacher-student interaction improve and learners become able to get more knowledge with these improved communication opportunities.

Gender Difference and Online Teaching

Gender is a complex and multidimensional paradigm that can influence individuals' perceptions, behaviors, and experiences in various contexts, including the teaching-learning process. It is a fact that gender biases are found in many societies which result in unequal access to professional development opportunities. There may be examples where women are overlooked or excluded from certain training programs or workshops, limiting their access to resources that enhance their online teaching skills. This can perpetuate existing gender disparities in the field. Gender biases also affect the types of professional development opportunities offered to educators. For example, women may be more likely to be offered training in areas such as classroom management or nurturing student relationships, while males may be encouraged towards technical skills or leadership development. This can reinforce gender stereotypes and limit the range of skills and knowledge that educators can acquire. It is assumed that female teachers are more sympathetic and caring while male teachers adopt a more authoritative approach. Research studies have shown that gender can shape how teachers approach their work, including their instructional strategies, classroom management, and relationships with students (Lloyd, 2018).

Several studies observed Gender differences in using of computer accessories, which showed that female teachers have low levels of inclination towards usage because of limited technology access, low skill, and insufficient interest. It is clear that the dominance of male voices or the tendency to overlook the contributions of female teachers is found in our society. Such behaviors can sideline the female role, impede their ability to form meaningful connections, and limit their access to valuable resources and support. it is observed that male teacher educators use ICT proficiently teaching their classes than female teacher educators.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review examined the effects of teachers' gender on their perceptions regarding teaching online classes. With the rapid transition to online education, understanding how teachers' gender influences their experiences, attitudes, and beliefs in the online teaching environment is crucial for effective professional development and the promotion of inclusive teaching practices. This review synthesizes relevant studies that explore the connection amongst teachers educators' gender and their belief of using online approach for teaching in the class.

In this regard, it is necessary to have a glance at research studies that how gender impact how the gender of teachers' gender potentially affects classroom activities and interactions in online classes. Gender is an essential aspect that can influence teachers' experiences and perceptions in online teaching. Online teaching has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. As more educators are forced to adapt to this new and modern teaching strategy, it is important to understand how various factors, including gender, may impact their perceptions and approaches to teaching online classes.

Research studies have focused on exploring the factors that influence the success of this online teaching-learning shift. One of these factors is the gender of the teacher, and how it may impact their perceptions of teaching online classes. Researches has explored the effects of teachers' gender on their technological competence and adaptation to online teaching. Female teachers may encounter challenges in adopting and using online teaching technologies due to perceived gender norms related to technology (Demiray & Goktas, 2020). The dynamics of student interaction in online classes can be influenced by teachers' gender. Female teachers have experienced different patterns of communication and interaction with students compared to their male counterparts (Durham & Niekerk, 2021). This affects their perceptions of online teaching effectiveness and engagement with students.

Gender norms and societal expectations impact male and female teachers communicate with students in the online environment. Often female teachers provide additional emotional help in online teaching, such as providing emotional support and nurturing, which could impact their perceptions of teaching effectiveness (Hochschild, 2003). These perceptions can influence students' expectations and interactions with their teachers, potentially shaping the overall classroom dynamics. Gendered behavior and communication patterns can manifest in the online classroom. These differences can influence the classroom atmosphere and students' perceptions of their teachers.

Gender disparities are found in opportunities for professional development and institutional support in developing countries. For instance, female teachers have to face challenges in accessing leadership roles or receiving recognition for their online teaching efforts, which could impact their overall job satisfaction and experiences. Teachers' gender also influences their professional identity and how they perceive their roles in online teaching. Female teachers have to face challenges in balancing traditional gender roles and professional identities in online teaching (Davis & Tunks, 2020). Similarly, gender bias and stereotyping also affect teachers' experiences in online classrooms. Female teachers, in particular, face encounter gender-based challenges in being perceived as competent and authoritative in online education. Studies have shown that female teachers often face gender-based biases that affect their confidence and self-perceptions as online instructors (Smith et al., 2015). On the other hand, male teachers also face expectations related to technological expertise that could shape their perceptions of teaching online (Bourke et al., 2020).

Research has suggested that male and female teachers may have different teaching styles, with women often incorporating more collaborative and interactive approaches, while male teachers mostly use directive or assertive teaching styles in their online teaching. It is common, that females to get higher education mostly than males because they are more persistent and committed than males (Richardson & Woodley, 2018).

Various researches illustrate that teachers' gender impacts their perceptions regarding teaching online classes, highlighting the complex interactions between genders, technology, and teaching practices. The literature review provides valuable insights for understanding and addressing the challenges and opportunities related to gender in online education. One thing should be remembered that, these potential effects of gender on classroom dynamics and interactions are not fixed or universal. They can vary depending on individual teacher characteristics, student demographics, cultural contexts, and the specific online learning environment. Gender disparities in access to leadership roles and professional development opportunities within teachers' training colleges impact the career trajectories of prospective teachers. Providing equitable access to mentorship and growth opportunities contributes to a more diverse and qualified teaching workforce (Milner, 2006).

In another study, Hargittai and Hinnant (2008) found that men tend to be more confident and self-assured in their technological abilities, while women may have less confidence and more anxiety about using technology. Bowman and Mertz (1997) found that male staff detailed more noteworthy information and involvement in computer innovation. This contrast was moreover reflected in their reactions to the components impacting the utilize of instructive innovation. It may be a truth that female instructors regularly confront more prominent levels of uneasiness and issues in utilizing innovation than male

instructors. These ponders recommend that interest between sexes remains unequal and is related with contrasts in discernments of aptitudes, assignment introductions, and assignment results.

In last as a result, it is now clear from the above review of literature that differences are found in perceptions of female and male teacher educators for online teaching, as female teachers have more inclined to express empathy and emotional support in their communications with learners, while male teachers often use more direct, concise language and competent skills.

Statement of the Problem

In most of the higher institutes of Sindh Province, according to a research study, it is observed that male teachers are taking online classes with interest due to the existing situation of Covid-19, and after having the advantages of increased online education. On the other hand, most female teachers take online classes reluctantly because most of the female teachers are not much familiar with the proper use of modern ICT accessories and also they have less practice in the usage of digital technology. Research studies were not conducted on the impact of gender on teachers' perceptions towards the usage of technology in the distant teaching process in higher institutions of Sindh Pakistan. The study is able fulfill this gap in knowledge, as it sets out to study the gender effect on teachers' opinions about the use of ICT in higher institutions like teachers' training colleges in Sindh, Pakistan.

Research Objectives:

- To examine the difference of impacts of teacher educators' gender on their perceptions regarding their teaching online classes.

Research Question:

- Do Teacher educators' gender significantly impact their belief of using online approach to teach the classes?

Research Hypotheses:

- H1: Teacher educators' gender significantly impact their belief of using online approach to teach the classes
- H0: Teacher educators' gender significantly does not impact their belief of using online approach to teach the classes

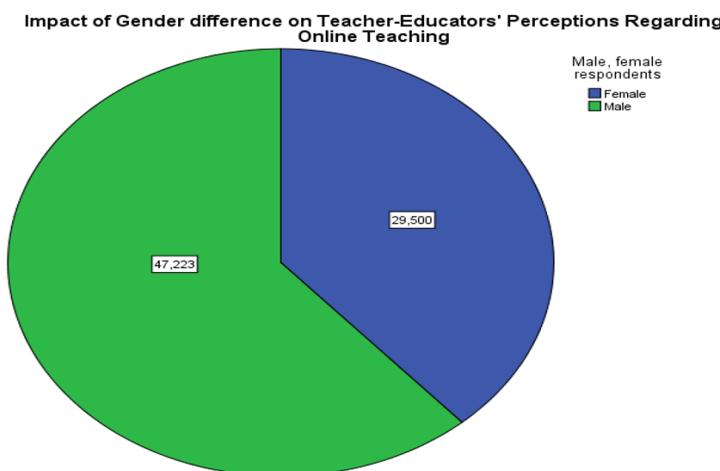
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the undertaken study is to explore the difference in male-female perceptions of online teaching practices. A close-ended questionnaire was distributed among the male-female teacher-educators for collecting their perceptions regarding online teaching. The researcher used the same questionnaire for both male-female participants for collecting the data.

Data Analysis

As the research is quantitative, participants' responses were obtained numeral by using a perception questionnaire on a five-point Likert Scale. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were performed on the data. For quantitative analyses, one-way ANOVA, and descriptive analyses were employed.

Results and Findings



Descriptive statistics shows that sum of scores obtained by male and female respondents are different as male responders obtained 47223 score while female respondents obtained 29500 score. Female participants were 229, and the male participants were 368.

ANOVA					
Sources of Variance (01)	Sum of Squares (02)	df (3)	Mean Square (4)	F (5)	Sig. (6)
Between Groups	34.951	1	34.951	0.092	0.762
Within Groups	226538.178	595	380.736		
Total	226573.129	596			

Table 1 shows the findings of the testing of the hypothesis 1 Teacher educators' gender significantly impact their belief of using online approach to teach the classes. ANOVA is used to examine within-group variances along with the between group variances. In column 1 shows Between Group variance in its first row while the second row of the column shows the Within Group variance, and its last row shows the total of the variance. the value of the sum of squares 34.951 for between groups is shown in first row of the column 2, the value of the sum of squares 226538.178 for with in group is shown in its second row, total of these two sum of the squares is given in the last rows of the column. Column 03 shows df(degree of freedom) . the value of mean square 34.951 for between group variance is in first row of column 4, the value of mean square 380.736for with in group variance is in its second row, total of these two mean squares is given in the last rows of the column. The error term for the F-ratio is value within group mean square (red color shows it). F-ratio is shown in Column 05; its value is 0.092 (pink color shows). The value of F-ratio is not considerably larger enough to determine the assumed attitude. The extremely lower value of F-ratio and considerably larger P-Value 0.762 (blue color shows) does not allow to accept the alternative hypothesis, instead of it leads to accept the null hypothesis. Thus instead of alternative hypothesis, the null hypothesis was accepted that Teacher educators' gender significantly impact their belief of using online approach to teach the classes

4. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

Though, descriptive statistics show some difference existed in the data inferential statistics shows that Male Teacher Educators are not considerably different with female teacher educator. The both groups experience the same situation during their online teaching. In light of the findings and results the study supports the need for improvements in the arrangements required for online teaching. Trained technical support staff should be available during the conduct of online teaching classes. Technological training is required in conducting online classes smoothly for teacher-educators so that they would be able to arrange their online classes properly. Further research in this domain should be conducted to explore the phenomena as well as the dimensions of the online teaching process.

The difference between perceptions of male teacher educators and female teacher educators was found in this study about the usage of computer accessories in conducting online classes in teachers' training institutes. male teacher educators reported more positive perceptions than female teacher educators but the inferential statistics explore that as a whole, the both groups are same in using online approach for teaching the classes

Recommendations based on the findings related to the effects of teachers' gender with regard to online classes. Following recommendations are made to promote gender equity and enhance teachers' experiences in online education: Educational institutions should offer gender-inclusive professional development and training programs that focus on building technological competence and online teaching skills for all teachers, regardless of gender. For an inclusive and supportive learning environment institutions should provide gender sensitivity training to all stakeholders involved in online education, including administrators, faculty, and students. To address gender disparities in leadership positions, institutions should actively promote equal opportunities for career advancement. Also teachers should

encourage inclusive discussions and interactions among students to reduce gendered dynamics in the online classroom. Educational institutions should implement flexible work policies specially to support female teachers in managing their work-life balance who face additional caregiving responsibilities. Educational institutions and organizations should actively promote diversity in leadership positions, encourage mentorship programs that connect female teachers with experienced professionals, and provide platforms for networking and collaboration that are inclusive and equitable.

Competing Interests

The authors did not declare any competing interest.

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