

Challenges and Problems Faced by School College and University Teachers During at Covid-19 Pandemic Period in Tamilnadu

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Abstract - This academic research is carried out to access the challenges and problems faced by school, college and university teachers during COVID -19 pandemic periods in Tamilnadu. This study was conducted among different age groups of teachers teaching in various schools, colleges and universities in Tamilnadu to identify their challenges and problems which are faced by them in different contexts. According to latest survey says that, more than 5,58,839 teachers from Primary to Higher secondary level and 203843 teachers from College to University level who are all working in Tamilnadu. The data set is descriptive and an aggregate of 730 teachers from school to university level who have participated in this survey, among them 264(36.2 %) are male teachers and 466 (63.8 %) are female teachers. In this study 730 teachers were involved for this study among them 338 teachers(46.3%) who have been receiving their monthly salary in full amount who all are working with positive spirit and 392 teachers (53.7%) who have been receiving their monthly salary in half or less than half of amount since introduction of pandemic period in Tamil Nadu. Indeed, the private institution teachers are facing lot of financial crisis and job stress as because of non-payment of salaries to teachers and staff by the private management. This research indicates that, negative impact among the private institution teachers on their attitude towards their job satisfaction, job involvement. Moreover, they are facing mental illness, job stress and financial problems in their family and also they felt that, threatening of life security which mainly focuses on their physical, biological and environmental factors. In this survey, among the sample (N=730), Almost 85 % of teachers have agreed that they have a skill to operate social media for their online teaching. 22 % of schoolteachers are having only Laptops for their online teaching. Nearly 78% schoolteachers were using their Mobile phone for their online teaching) More than 80 % of college and university teachers were having Laptops. Nearly 20 % of college and university teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching. Surprisingly, the researcher found that, many of school

language teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching whereas many of science and mathematics subjects teachers were teaching their concepts through online with the help of Laptops. Nearly 69 % of mathematics teachers have reported that, teaching mathematics concepts through online is little risk for understanding the concepts by the students community especially at primary and secondary level. A statistical run was made with the aid of SPSS version 25 software to evaluate the significance level (P-Value<0.05) of each question among the sex, Pandemic period salary. Many interesting facts were revealed from this survey.

Index Terms - Challenge; problems, stress; pandemic; COVID-19; private management. Online teaching.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has led teachers to an unpredictable scenario where the lockdown situation has accelerated the shift from traditional to online educational methods, and relationships have been altered by the avoidance of direct contact with the others, with implications for their mental health. The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has spread worldwide, affecting almost all countries and territories. The outbreak was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The countries around the world cautioned the public to take responsive care. The public care strategies have included handwashing, wearing face masks, physical distancing, and avoiding mass gathering and assemblies. Lockdown and staying home strategies have been put in place as the needed action to flatten the curve and control the transmission of the disease. Our country has declared closing of schools and institutions and reduction of business hours during the second week of March 2020. The complete nationwide lockdown was implemented from 1 August 2020. The

impact is far reaching and has affected learning during this academic year or even more in the coming days. Several schools, colleges and universities have discontinued face-to-face teaching. There is a pressing need to innovate and implement alternative educational and assessment strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided us with an opportunity to pave the way for introducing digital learning. Research highlights certain dearth such as the weakness of online teaching infrastructure, the limited exposure of teachers to online teaching, the information gap, non-conducive environment for learning at home, equity and academic excellence in terms of higher education. This article evaluates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning process across the state. The challenges and opportunities of online and continuing education during the COVID-19 pandemic are summarized and way forward suggested. This investigation was conducted among different age groups of teachers teaching in various schools, colleges or Universities in Tamilnadu to identify their problems which are faced by them in different contexts. According to latest survey says that, more than 5,58,839 teachers from Primary to Higher secondary level and 203843 teachers from College to University level who are all working in Tamilnadu.

Challenges in Teaching and Learning

With the availability of a sea of platforms and online educational tools, the users—both educators and learners face frequent hiccups while using it or referring to these tools. Some of the challenges identified and highlighted by many researchers are found herewith. Broadly identified challenges with e-learning are accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, life-long learning and educational policy. Many countries have substantial issues with a reliable Internet connection and access to digital devices. While, in many developing countries, the economically backward children are unable to afford online learning devices, the online education poses a risk of exposure to increased screen time for the learner. Therefore, it has become essential for teachers and students to engage in offline activities and self-exploratory learning. Lack of parental guidance, especially for young learners, is another challenge, as both parents are working. There are practical issues around physical workspaces conducive to different ways of teaching and learning process. The innately

motivated learners are relatively unaffected in their learning as they need minimum supervision and guidance, while the vulnerable group consisting of students who are weak in learning face difficulties. Some academically competent learners from economically disadvantaged background are unable to access and afford online learning. The level of academic performance of the students is likely to drop for the classes held for both year-end examination and internal examination due to reduced contact hour for learners and lack of consultation with teachers when facing difficulties in learning/understanding. Student assessments are carried out online, with a lot of trial and error, uncertainty and confusion among the teachers, students and parents. The approach adopted to conduct online examination varies as per the convenience and expertise among the educators and the compatibility of the learners. Appropriate measures to check plagiarism is yet to be put in place in many schools and institutions mainly due to the large number of student population. The lockdown of schools and colleges has not only affected internal assessments and examinations for the main public qualifications. Depending on the duration of the lockdown, postponement or cancellation of the entire examination assessment might be a grim possibility. Various state-level board exams, recruitment exams, university-level exams and entrance exams have been postponed across India due to the COVID-19 outbreak and national lockdown. Various entrance examinations (such as BITSAT 2020, NATA 2020, CLAT 2020, MAT 2020, ATMA 2020) have also been postponed/rescheduled. The education system in schools, colleges and universities across the country has been severely impacted due to the ongoing situation. There are economic, social and psychological repercussions on the life of teachers as well as students while they are away from the normal schedule of schools and colleges. Many of these teachers have now taken online classes, spending additional time on virtual platforms, which have left children vulnerable to online exploitation. In the case of online learning in Thanjavur district in Tamilnadu, majority of the learners are from rural villages where parents are mostly illiterate farmers. Students are engaged in assisting parents in farm activities such as agriculture, tending to cattle and household chores. Some students even requested to postpone exam time towards the afternoon since they had to work on the

fields during morning hours. Some students expressed that they had to attend to their ailing parents/grandparents/family members and take them to hospitals. By evening, when they are back home, it becomes difficult for them to keep abreast with the lessons. Parents whose children are in lower grades feel that it would be better to let the children repeat the next academic year. Majority of students do not have access to smartphones or TV at home in addition to poor Internet connectivity. There is no or less income for huge population due to closure of business and offices. The data package (costs) is comparatively high against average income earned, and continuous access to Internet is a costly business for the farming community. Online face-to-face classes (video) are encouraged by most; however, some students (economically disadvantaged) have expressed that the face-to-face online class consumes more data packages. The teachers are in dilemma as to whom to listen to and which tools to adopt. Some think pre-recorded videos could help; however, this would restrict interactions. It is difficult to design a proper system to fit the learning needs and convenience of all students.

Opportunities for Teaching and Learning

Although there have been overwhelming challenges for educators, schools, institutes and the government regarding online education from a different angle, there are several opportunities created by the COVID-19 pandemic for the unprepared and the distant plans of implementing e- learning system. It has forged a strong connection between teachers and parents than ever before. The home schooling requires parents to support the students' learning academically and economically. Children with disabilities need additional and special support during this on-going emergency. The use of online platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom, virtual learning environment and social media and various group forums like Telegram, Messenger, WhatsApp and WeChat are explored and tried for teaching and learning for the first time ever to continue education. This can be explored further even after face-to-face teaching resumes, and these platforms can provide additional resources and coaching to the learners. Teachers are obliged to develop creative initiatives that assist to overcome the limitations of virtual teaching. Teachers are actively collaborating with one

another at a local level to improve online teaching methods. There are incomparable opportunities for cooperation, creative solutions and willingness to learn from others and try new tools as educators, parents and students share similar experiences .Online learning has provided the opportunity to teach and learn in innovative ways unlike the teaching and learning experiences in the normal classroom setting. Lockdown and social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to closures of schools, training institutes and higher education facilities in most countries. There is a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education—through various online platforms. The online learning, distance and continuing education have become a panacea for this unprecedented global pandemic, despite the challenges posed to both educators and the learners. Transitioning from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning can be an entirely different experience for the learners and the educators, which they must adapt to with little or no other alternatives available. The education system and the educators have adopted “Education in Emergency” through various online platforms and are compelled to adopt a system that they are not prepared for. And e-learning tools have played a crucial role during this pandemic, helping schools and universities facilitate student learning during the closure of universities and schools While adapting to the new changes, staff and student readiness needs to be gauged and supported accordingly. The learners with a fixed mind set find it difficult to adapt and adjust, whereas the learners with a growth mind set quickly adapt to a new learning environment. There is no one-size-fits-all pedagogy for online learning. Many teachers at home/living space have undergone psychological and emotional distress and have been unable to engage productively. Some of the online platforms used so far include unified communication and collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Canvas and Blackboard, which allow the teachers to create educational courses, training and skill development programmes. They include options of workplace chat, video meeting and file storage that keep classes organized and easy to work. They usually support the sharing of a variety of content like Word, PDF, Excel file, audio, videos and many more. These also allow the tracking of student learning and assessment by using quizzes and the rubric-based assessment of

submitted assignments. The flipped classroom is a simple strategy for providing learning resources such as articles, pre-recorded videos and YouTube links before the class. The online classroom time is then used to deepen understanding through discussion with faculty and .This is a very effective way of encouraging skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and self-directed learning. The virtual classroom platforms like videoconferencing (Google Hangouts Meet, Zoom, Slack, Cisco, WebEx) and customizable cloud-based learning management platforms such as Elias, Moodle, Big Blue Button and Skype are increasingly being used.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present research paper focused on the following objectives:

1. To identify the level of problems faced by school, college and university teachers.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of Online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between those who have getting govt. salary and private salary teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of Online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The present research paper focused on the following hypotheses:

1. The level of problems faced by school, college and university teachers are high.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period.
3. There is no significant difference between those who have getting govt. salary and private salary teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period.

STUDY PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

From the literature survey , a questionnaire with 25 important questions was prepared by the investigator and using the “Google Form “ to evaluate the problems and challenges are faced by school, college and university teachers during this COVID-19 pandemic situation in delta region in Tamil Nadu. The questionnaire was shared among the school, college and university teachers with the help of their friends and through social networks. The design of the questionnaire was made simple such that, teachers can respond by utilizing their small gadgets or a personal computer from their residing places.

DATA COLLECTION

This survey was started in the Second week of July 2021 and data were collected until First week of August 2021. A total of 730 teachers have participated in this survey. Among them 168 (23%) are primary school teachers, 139(19 %) are high school teachers,235 (32.2%) are higher secondary school teachers,156 (21.4%) are college teachers and 32 (4.4%) are university teachers. Similarly among them 264 (36.2 %) are male teachers and 466 (63.8 %) are female teachers. This survey is further classified based on their locality and type of institutions based on their salary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The problems and challenges are faced by school, college and university teachers during this COVID-19 are accessed by the questionnaire which contains 25 questions. The questionnaire is made simple to answer such that, “Strongly Agree (5)”, “ Agree (4)”,“Undecided(3) “, “ Disagree (2)” and “ Strongly Disagree (1)” which were framed based on Likert type of five point rating scale. In this survey, among the sample (N=730), Almost 85 % of teachers have agreed that, they have a skill to operate social media for their online teaching. 22 % of school teachers are having only Laptops for their online teaching. (Nearly 78% school teachers were using their Mobile phone for their online teaching) More than 80 % of college and university teachers were having Laptops.(Nearly 20 % of college and university teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching. Surprisingly, the researcher found that, many of school

language teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching whereas many of science and mathematics subjects teachers were teaching their concepts through online with the help of Laptops. Nearly 69 % of mathematics teachers have reported that, teaching mathematics concepts through online is little risk and they didn't satisfy with new technology. Most of the school Mathematics teachers were indirectly preferred traditional way of black board teaching only. During this pandemic period Govt and Govt aided school, college and university staff members have received full salary whereas private institution teachers who have received very less than half of their monthly salary or they have been forcefully faced salary cut stage by the few private management which is unethical and against the humanistic approach for their employees at this critical and crucial stage of Corona period. In this study 730 teachers were involved for this study among them 338 teachers (46.3%) who have been receiving their monthly salary in full amount are working with spirit and 392 teachers (53.7%) who have been receiving their monthly salary in half and less than half of amount since introduction of pandemic period in Tamil Nadu. Indeed, the private institution teachers are facing lot of financial crisis and stress as because of non-payment of salaries to teachers and staff by the private management. While the education sector, which was largely recession proof, are now facing a peculiar situation. Since institutions are closed, many private schools, colleges and universities are withholding salary or forcing a cut. Moreover, this research indicates that, negative impact among the private institution teachers on their attitude towards their job satisfaction, job involvement. Moreover, they are facing mental illness, job stress and financial problems in their family and also they felt that, threatening of life security which mainly focuses on their physical, biological and environmental factors.

Table -1 Shows that mean value of entire sample.

Variable	N	Mini mum	Maxi mum	Me an	Std.De viation
Challenges and Problems faced by Teachers	730	65	125	105.16	15.74

From the table-1, it may be seen that the mean score of CPT (Challenges and Problems faced by Teachers) of entire sample is 105.16 which is higher than the

mid-point 62.5. This means that , the challenges and problems faced by teachers are high . Therefore the hypothesis (1) that “The level of problems faced by school, college and university teachers are high”, was retained. Hence , it is concluded that , school, college and university teachers are facing high level of challenges and problems in their online teaching process at COVID-19 pandemic period due to various reasons like technological problems, economical problems, job security problems , physical, social, psychological and emotional problems and also lack of attendance problems made by the students etc.,

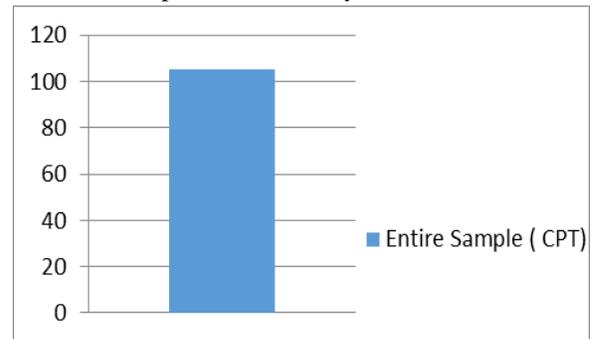


Fig-1 Shows mean value of entire sample of teachers in respected to their CPT.

Table -2 Table shows that Mean and SD value of male and female teachers and the result of t test.

Variable	Male (264)		Female (466)		t` val ue	Level of Signifi cant at 0.05
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Challenges and Problems faced by Teachers (CPT)	103.37	15.60	106.18	15.75	2.33	Signifi cant

From the table-2, it may be seen that the mean score of CPT (Challenges and Problems faced by Teachers) of male teacher is 103.37 and for female teachers is 106.18. From the mean score value, we can easily conclude that, female teachers mean scores is higher than the mid-point of 62.5. This means that , the challenges and problems faced by female teachers are higher than their counterpart of male teachers. Moreover, t` test was employed to see whether the

difference between the two means is significant. The critical ratio (2.33) was significant at 0.05 level of probability. This indicates that, male and female teachers had different level of CPT. Therefore the hypothesis (2) that “There is no significant difference between male and female teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period ” was rejected.

Fig-2 Shows mean value of male and female teachers in respected to their CPT.

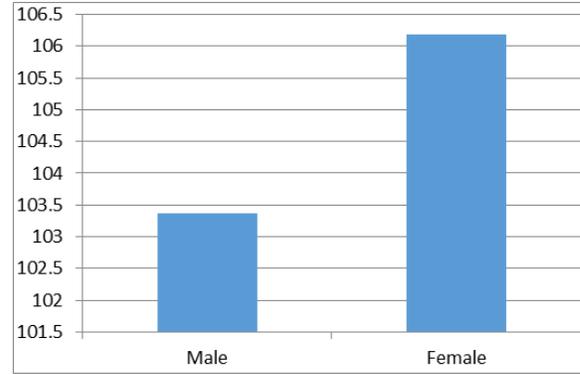


Table-3 Table shows that Mean and SD value of CPT teachers in respect to their salary during COVID-19 pandemic period .

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Full Salary	338	89.5146	11.88393	.90879	87.7207	91.3086	65.00	123.00
Half Salary	107	94.1842	11.25376	1.05401	92.0960	96.2724	74.00	123.00
Less than Half Salary	114	98.4953	10.60293	1.02502	96.4631	100.5275	78.00	123.00
Salary Cut	171	118.8876	4.38900	.23873	118.4180	119.3572	84.00	125.00
Total	730	105.1603	15.74689	.58282	104.0161	106.3045	65.00	125.00

Table-3.1 Table shows that ANOVA of `F` value of CPT teachers in respect to their salary during COVID-19 pandemic period.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	124037.927	3	41345.976	529.139	.000
Within Groups	56728.321	726	78.138		
Total	180766.248	729			

Table-3.2 Table shows that Duncan`s Multiple Range of Post Hoc Test (Duncan^{ab}) of CPT teachers in respect to their salary during COVID-19 pandemic period .

Pandemic_period_Salary	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
Salary Cut	171	118.8876			
Less than Half Salary	114		98.4953		
Half Salary	107			94.1842	
Full Salary	338				89.5146
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 148.565.

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

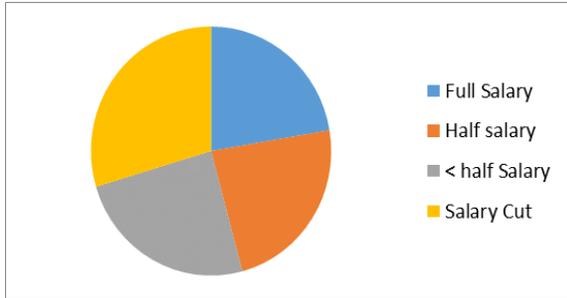


Fig-3 Shows mean value of teachers in respect to their CPT based on their getting monthly salary

From the table-3 ,it may be seen that the mean score of CPT (Challenges and Problems faced by Teachers) of getting full month salary teachers is 89.51 , for getting half month salary teachers is 104.18. For getting less than half month salary teachers is 198.49 and for not at all getting monthly salary teachers during COVID-19 is 118.89.. From the mean score value, we can easily conclude that, those who are not at all getting monthly salary teachers are facing lot of challenges and problems at present. Govt and Govt aided employed teachers are facing less challenges and problems whereas private institution staff members are facing lot of financial problems and mental stress during at pandemic period.

From the table-3.1, it may be seen that the ANOVA of 'F' value of CPT teachers in respect to their salary during COVID-19 pandemic period. The 'F' value (529.14) was significant at 0.05 level of probability. This indicates that, the way of getting salary of teachers had different level of CPT. Therefore the hypothesis (3) that "There is no significant difference between those who have getting govt salary and private salary teachers at school, college and university level in respect to their challenges and problems of online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period." was rejected. Moreover, Duncan Multiple Range of Post hoc test (Table 3.2) was employed to see which group is significant. This subsets indicate that, all group of teachers had different level of CPT based on their getting monthly salary but salary cut category teachers are having more challenges and problems of their online teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic period due to various reasons like technological problems, economical problems, job security problems, physical, social, psychological and emotional problems and also lack of attendance problems made by the students etc., when compared to their other counterparts.

Indeed, the private institution teachers are facing lot of financial crisis and job stress as because of non-payment of salaries to teachers and staff by the private management. Moreover, this research indicates that, negative impact among the private institution teachers on their attitude towards their job satisfaction, job involvement. Moreover, they are facing mental illness, job stress and financial problems in their family and also they felt that, threatening of life security which mainly focuses on their physical, biological and environmental factors. In this survey, among the sample (N=730), Almost 85 % of teachers have agreed that, they have a skill to operate social media for their online teaching. 22 % of school teachers are having only Laptops for their online teaching. (Nearly 78% school teachers were using their Mobile phone for their online teaching) More than 80 % of college and university teachers were having Laptops.(Nearly 20 % of college and university teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching. Surprisingly, the researcher found that, many of school language teachers were using their mobile phone for their online teaching whereas many of science and mathematics subjects teachers were teaching their concepts through online with the help of Laptops. Nearly 69 % of mathematics teachers have reported that, teaching mathematics concepts through online is little risk for understanding the concepts by the students community especially at primary and secondary level.

CONCLUSION

The study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning across the state concludes that although various studies have been carried out, in the case of developing countries like our country, suitable pedagogy and platform for different class levels of higher secondary, middle and primary education need to be explored further. Internet bandwidth is relatively low with lesser access points, and data packages are costly in comparison to the income of the people in many developing countries, thus making accessibility and affordability inadequate. Policy-level intervention is required to improve this situation. Further exploration and investigation on effective pedagogy for online teaching and learning is an area for research.

Need for developing tools for authentic assessments and timely feedback is found to be another area of

study. The affordability and accessibility for all the teachers of varied economic background is identified as a challenge, for which the educational tools developer could focus on customization. The policy level intervention is also vital. Education system across the world including our state needs to invest on the professional development of teachers, especially on ICT and effective pedagogy, considering the present scenario. Making online teaching creative, innovative and interactive through user-friendly tools is the other area of research and development. This would assist and prepare the education system for such uncertainties in the future. Moreover this research found that, only very few private management people have been giving full salary for their teachers even this pandemic period but report says that, most of the private management institutions have reduced or cut their teachers salary in Tamilnadu which was unexpected by the teachers and unethical way of practices made by many of the managements .So the concern educational authorities and private management people should take an appropriate steps to uplift of teachers. Union government and State government should give special financial support and economic welfare schemes to economically suffering private institution teachers as well as private management institutions.

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