



## Interplay of COVID-19 induced Stress and Psychological Effects on Students' Language Learning: A Mixed Approach

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### Abstract

The present research explores the interplay between COVID induced stress and its probable effects on students' language learning. It hopes to demonstrate to what extent students experienced stress owing to quarantine. How that stress affected their language learning and what probable strategies they devised in order to tackle that stress. Furthermore, it also tries to see whether female students experienced greater stress as compared to male students. The theoretical insights for this have been drawn from the 'Transactional Model of Stress' developed by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984. The method chosen for this paper was a mixed approach, including close-ended questionnaires using 'Google forms' and open-ended call interviews through WhatsApp. The results t found shows that above 90% of learners see COVID as a stimulus of stress and fear, disturbing them psychologically. Almost 66% of learners are of the view that females become more stressed than males. And round about 84% agreed to the fact that COVID is a cause of stress which can be coped and managed by adopting some effective strategies. In this study, it was found that the stress and language learning are dependent variables and COVID is an independent variable which has caused stress, leading to negatively affected language learning. The findings of this study can offer a larger scope in understanding the interplay of human stress and anxiety with the environmental stress other than COVID-19 as well.

**Key Words:** COVID-19, Quarantine, Psychological Stress, Anxiety, Digital Literacy, Language Learning, Environmental Stress, Online Teaching in Pakistan

### Introduction

COVID and stress are inextricably linked to language learning (LL). The year 2020 has proven to be a stressful year due to COVID-19 in term of health issues generally and delayed/disturbed learning of students specifically. The inevitable lockdown in the context of COVID-19 caused students to deviate from their traditional mode of learning, making them rely on online learning instead. This caused students to suffer from stress and anxiety, as being stuck at home created a feeling of alienation, isolation and disconnection. Furthermore, lack of resources, internet access and lack of familiarity with online learning enhanced the anxiety and stress in students. Consequently, the students not only suffered mentally, emotionally and psychologically, but most importantly, their learning in general and language learning in specific suffered hugely.

In the context of the above discussion, the present research aims to examine the interplay between COVID-19 induced stress and its effects on students' delayed learning. The psychological effects of quarantine on students' learning and the possible coping strategies adopted by the students. In addition to this, the elements of gender will also be taken in account to see whether the male student experienced a similar level of stress as female students and also how male and female students coped with the stress in order to reduce its effects on learning. The theoretical insights for this have been drawn from the 'Transactional Model of Stress' developed by [Lazarus](#)

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[and Folkman \(1984\)](#). The method chosen for this paper is a mixed approach, including close-ended questionnaires using 'Google forms' and open-ended call interviews through WhatsApp.

This research carries profound significance as it allows the students as well the teachers to see the detrimental effects of stress on language learning, and the consequent coping strategies adopted by both male and female students in order to tackle this stress. It also paves the way for future researches, which have become inevitable, in order to prepare the students to manage and resist stress which may result from any unpredictable stress-causing situation.

### Defining the Term 'Stress'

As defined by Bernstein, stress is a negative emotion which is originated by stressors, and on the other hand, stressors can be defined as those situations and circumstances that terrorize the daily functioning of individuals and force them to make possible adjustments according to the conditions. [Auerbach and Grambling \(1998\)](#) define stress as, something vexatious, which individuals' sense as threatening and alarming to their welfare. [Bernstein et al. \(2008\)](#) define stress as a 'tension'. He says that if the individual's existing equilibrium is disturbed by the tension caused by external stressors, and when an individual is not able to maintain a balance, he feels stress. As evident, stress is recognized in different ways, and its definition varies from one to the other. It is perceived as conditions or situations that cause individuals to feel pressure, tension, negative emotions including anxiety, depression and anger.

Stress can interestingly play the role of a positive motivational force at times, pushing the individuals to make efforts to deal or avoid threatening conditions. This means that a certain level of stress works as an external stimulus to motivate or force the students to learn. Having said this, the negative effects of stress are greatly overwhelming, causing more harm than benefits. The present study, therefore, focuses on the negative effects of COVID-19 induced stress on language learning keeping in line with the above-presented definitions of stress.

### COVID-Stress and Language Learning

2020's outbreak of coronavirus halted all the social as well as educational activities pushing everyone to confine themselves in their isolated places with the minimum person to person contact. This resulted in a colossal disturbance of students' learning. Their usual learning routine was completely abandoned as they found themselves locked at home with each passing day pushing them deeper into despair and uncertainty. This social distancing, coupled with the looming fear and threat of death due to COVID-19, halted their learning further causing the students to suffer emotionally, mentally and psychologically.

Consequently, Government and educational institutes opted for 'Online education system' as an alternative mode of teaching/learning using different applications like Zoom, Skype, Go meeting, LMS, WhatsApp and many more. However, students in Pakistan, being mostly unfamiliar with this method of learning, struggled initially, which added to their stress. The lack of resources, internet facility, poor internet connection and load shedding added to their problems creating yet more stress. In addition to this, male students tend to have a greater social standing and are assumed to be well connected as compared to female students owing to the patriarchal nature of society. Therefore, COVID-stress though affected both genders, but female students tended to show a greater ratio of stress. Many previous researches show that women are more vulnerable to stress, anxiety and depression. Previous studies have also noted that female learners become more worried and anxious about their studies and thus feel more stressed. [Misra and Castillo \(2004\)](#), through their analysis, reached the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the attitudes of males and females, towards stress. [Mazumdar, et al. \(2012\)](#), 'reported that the various symptoms which lead to stress mostly seen in more numbers in females as compared to males.' [Misra and Mckean \(2000\)](#), in their studies, pointed out that females' learners, due to more societal pressure and responsibilities being a woman, feel more anxiety and stress.

In the context of the above discussion, this research hopes to investigate whether COVID-19 induced stress affects female students more as compared to male students.

## Theoretical Framework Underlying the Study

The present study is based on the theoretical grounds of 'The Transactional Model of Stress'. Developed by [Lazarus and Folkman \(1984\)](#). This is a model of psychological processes involved in stress that sees stress as a transaction between individual and environment. The key concepts of this model include cause-reason, perception, appraisal stages, dependent and independent variables.

By perception, it means that the stress is seen as a subjective reality rather than an objective reality because one person (P1) might not perceive the stressful event as deadly or very much alarming than the other person (P2) who views that similar situation more terrifying and, panics. The primary appraisal is the '*the individuals' constant assessment of the situation and the resources available in order to deal with it* ([Lazarus and Folkman, 1984](#)). Primary appraisal means when a receiver of the stressor has encountered the situation, he judges and guesses the level of potential danger and the resources available to deal with that danger. He evaluates the situation as damaging and challenging or sometimes manageable and controllable, and after this comes the secondary appraisal that is the evaluation or assessment of the available resources. The receiver, with all his cognitive and behavioural efforts, tries to cope with the situation and finds a solution. To sum up, the primary appraisal is the assessment of danger while the secondary appraisal is the assessment of available resources to get to the solution as theory says that the stress can be managed by accepting responsibility, relaxation, managing time, positive re-appraisal, social support and many more. Lastly, this theory speaks of independent and dependent variables. According to the theorists of this model, the external stimulus of stress will mostly be the independent variable making other factors dependent on itself. Also, they maintain that there can be many causes and reasons that aggravate the stimulus of stress, thus making the receiver stressful.

## Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are to explore that, how independent stimulus of stress such as COVID-19 leads to individual's stress which in succession comes in the way of language learning. Secondly, which gender is more affected by stress and anxiety? Thirdly, what are the reasons behind stress and fourthly to uncover the ways and strategies that can be possibly used to master the stress felt by individual (learners)?

## Significance of the Study

This research has huge significance as it is linking the previous researches done on stress with the current COVID scenario. It is teaching us to understand, tackle and overcome stress in order to maximize the learning process. This research will allow us to understand and develop new and important strategies, of handling stress and overcoming its repercussions on the learning process under any future stressful situation, especially in the post-COVID world. The participants, by sharing their anxieties and worries, will be allowed to feel included and linked to a global and larger group. This will give them confidence and motivate them to tackle stress by making them realize that they are not alone in facing this stressful situation of COVID 19.

## Research Questions

- a) What is the relation between COVID-19 induced stress and language learning?
- b) Is stress, gender-based.? Do the female learners feel and face more stress as compared to male learners?
- c) Which strategies (if any) can be used to tackle the stress caused by COVID-19?

## Literature Review

Many scholars have proved that there is a direct relationship between mental disturbance and academic learning and more specifically, English language learning (ELL). Stress changes the behavioural and cognitive patterns of the language learners (LL), they feel confused, and under the spell of fear, anxiety and depression, they lose motivation to work or to learn properly. According to [Tobias \(1983\)](#), stress causes havoc in the learning process, which is based on the cycle of receiving, processing and then retrieving the information. [Sarason \(1988\)](#) says that learning is an important cognitive performance which is disturbed by irrelevant thoughts of a stressful event. [Rees](#)

[and Redfern \(2000\)](#), say that psychological stressors are the reasons behind the inability to work for students. [Ashcraft and Kirk \(2001\)](#), explains that learners with high mental illness or stress are seen to be slow and inactive in learning and show poor performance. According to [Bandura \(2001\)](#), learners' performance as LL is greatly enhanced and intensified when they are relaxed and not under any pressure. So, it can be said that under stress, the performance is diminished. [Tepas and Price \(2001\)](#), maintains that stress can be a response to any physiological, emotional and psychological elements that become a hurdle in the way of the normal functioning of individual.

[Chapell et al., \(2005\)](#), conducted a survey in the United States, from undergraduate university students and stated that learners' grades were poor and their results were highly affected, and all those reported that they were going through stress. [Vanin \(2008\)](#) propounds that any harmful situation when overemphasized and is overstated it creates uncontrollable worry in learners, affecting their performance. [Humensky et al. \(2010\)](#), contend that the issues of attention and concentration arise in learners who feel stress. This was proved by their case study of undergraduate learners in the USA. [Cowden \(2010\)](#), remarks stressful situations fill the learners' mind with anxiousness subjects which can negatively affect their attention, interpretation, concentration, memory and learning.

[Masoud Hashemi \(2011\)](#), propounds that ELL is prone to failure and bad performance when they are in direct relation to stressful and chaotic situations. Such conditions change behaviour, making a learner feel sick and less attentive; thus, it consequently affects learning. [Moylan, Maes, Wray, & Berk, \(2013\)](#) also hint towards the relation of stress to learning and also assert that ongoing stress can bring more harm and anxiety as long as it is not controlled. [Sara Hashempour and Mehrad \(2014\)](#) in their article, assert that learners when to misinterpret the stress situation, they are more likely to bear negative consequences of it in terms of affected learning.

[Muhammad Saqib and Rehman \(2018\)](#), in their article, explain the negative effect of stress and anxiety on students' academic performance by collecting the data through questionnaires they came to the conclusion that language learning as an academic task becomes interrupted and chaotic for the LL as they face stress and fear. [Michaela C. et al. \(2020\)](#) talk about the impact of stress on academic performance and capacity of learning. They say stress can lead to its other manifestations like severe depression and other mental problems, and this, in turn, affects the learners' capacity and ability to learn and perform.

Besides academic stress, the calamities, disasters and diseases also add to the stress, resultantly influencing the learning process, negatively. [Hackbarth et al. \(2012\)](#), Assert that stress originates due to traumatic situations leading to confused functioning of the human mind and thus it impacts studies as well. This statement by Hackbarth can be summed up in a way that English language learning as a part of studies also gets affected as learners who being part of the society and that traumatic condition also suffers from stress and anxiety-like illness. Ricardo Santos and Mario [Novelli \(2016\)](#) expounds that the outbreak of diseases due to human activities such as Ebola create anxiety and stress because the learning homes (educational institutes) were closed when Ebola started to spread swiftly and thus creating stress in learners affecting and stopping their learning. [Nikunj Makwana \(2019\)](#) explain that all kinds of disasters which include natural disasters, industrial disasters, man-made disasters and diseases are in direct relation to shock and despair which can take forms of stress and anxiety-like issues in individuals. Thus, individuals who are language learners see their learning as affected and slowed down. Simon [Burgess, Hans Henrik Sievertsen \(2020\)](#) raise the point of psychological problems due to Coronavirus, which has led to the nationwide shutdown of the infrastructures like an educational institution. Students are fearful and bothered about the new way of learning process which is full of errors, uncertainty so students they don't feel satisfied by the online mode of education because it makes them even more uneasy when they lose internet connections and rely on mobile phones to attend classes. To conclude, this situation provokes stress in learners, thus affecting their learning.

In Dawn Newspaper July 17, 2020, Google's Former executive Tania Aidrus in the section of 'Educational Lockdown' clearly speaks of the learner's stress due to a shift in the mode of education. She raises the slogan of 'Roti, kapra, makaan — aur internet' pointing towards the need for good internet access which is causing distress in students. She speaks highly of the online education system in Pakistan where load shedding related problems are eminent. Thus, it can be said that language learners who are also going through the same situations feel anxiety and stressful towards learning properly.

Besides the discussion of stress and affected learning, it is also important to review the literature to see which gender is more likely to get stressed. [Mussarat Jabeen Khan et al. \(2018\)](#) in their article talk on the basis of facts and figure that female learners then male learners are more prone to stress and anxiety same the junior students are more than senior ones. [Dr Indira Dhull and Sunita Kumari \(2015\)](#) in their article, through random selection of the participants (male, female learners), the study came to the conclusion that level of stress in female learners' percentage was more than males. Michelle Calvarese (2015) in his article statistically proves that female learners are more vulnerable to depression, stress, anxiety and worry than males. A survey was conducted in which university students participated willingly. Masoumeh and Mohtaram (2014), in their article, tell that the ratio between female and male learner stress is never the same but significantly varying. [Sulaiman, Hassan, Sopian and Abdullah \(2009\)](#) in their study, asserts that females as learners are more emotional and take stressful situations on their nerves. While males manage their anxiety and stress and are less likely to be stressful. [Eun-Jun Bang \(2009\)](#), in his thesis, also investigates the relationship between two genders and stress related to learning. His thesis gives a detailed account of the fact that genders and stress level do vary for both.

## **Methods and Materials**

### **Research Design**

The design adopted for this study was the Mixed Method Approach. Qualitative and Quantitative data collection tools were used. The requirement of this study was to probe the data on the basis of MMR; thus, open-ended and close-ended questionnaires were circulated among students. It also involved WhatsApp call interviews by willing participants.

### **Limitations**

Due to the Corona situation, the lockdown was done worldwide and also in Pakistan so the researcher couldn't go for face-to-face interviews and surveys from the students, thus preferring non-probability sampling.

### **Participants/ Sample**

The participants chosen for the study were from three institutions in Pakistan. It included Women University, Multan, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan and GC University, Faisalabad. The department selected was the English Department, and Degree in which all the participants were enrolled was BS (8<sup>th</sup> semester) or MPhil. Total of 112 responses was collected and analyzed. Both genders were welcomed equally, and sampling was based on non-probability sampling due to Corona constraints.

### **Data Collection Instruments and Procedure**

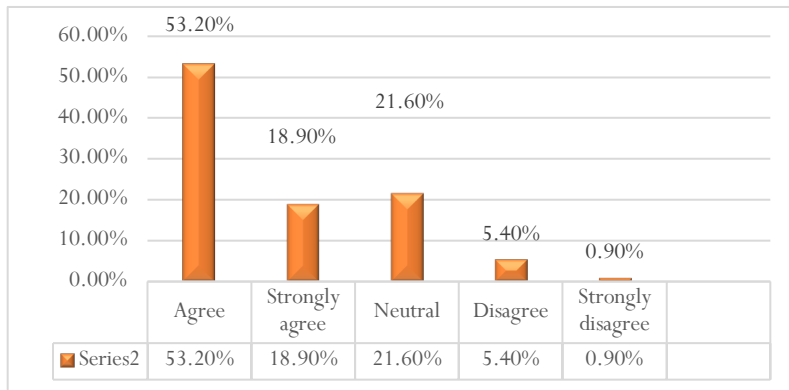
For data collection, 'Google forms' was preferred keeping in mind the scenario of COVID -19 and limitations for face to face surveys. 'Google form for personal use' was the platform where 12 close-ended and five open-ended questions were written and sorted out and after completion, direct link of the form was sent to the students through their email ID's and WhatsApp. In Close-ended questionnaire, five Likert scales were used in which options moved from agreeing, strongly agree, neutral, disagree to strongly disagree. Secondly, in the case of Open-ended questions, the participants were given freedom of speech as they can write and share their own subjective views on the asked statements. Thirdly, in WhatsApp call interviews the notes were taken, and calls were recorded to keep the data safe for analysis and notes were taken. Permissions were taken from the participants to record the calls to ensure their readiness to record their call, which contained their personal information like (names, city of residence, institute in which they study etc.).

After data collection, the data was represented in vertical bar graphs made on excel sheets, manually.

### **Findings and Analysis**

On the basis of collected responses that data was analyzed. First of all, the eligibility criteria were set in the questionnaire that the respondents must have much knowledge regarding COVID and its deadly consequences.

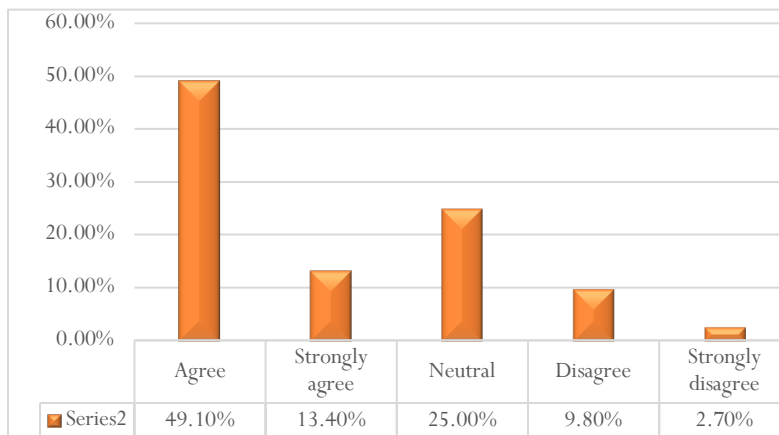
So, the data showed that almost 80% of respondents, responded in ‘yes’ while only 9% and 10% responded ‘no’ and ‘maybe’ thus maintaining that all the respondents knew clearly about COVID and its effects. From a hundred plus responses majority of the learners agreed with the hypothetical statement that COVID is the source of stress and anxiety.



**Bar Graph 1:** Showing COVID as Source of Stress and Fear.

According to the data presented in the bar graph it can be seen that accumulatively  $53.2+18.9= 71\%$  learners agreed to the fact that COVID is the source of stress and fear and only 6% disagreed to the given statement. While on the other hand, to the statement ‘Outbreak of Covid-19 has affected students psychologically.’ Overall  $52.3+ 36.9 = 90\%$  learners agreed to it. So, it can be summed up according to the perception stage of ‘The Transactional Model’ that, learners perceived the event of COVID as fearful, stressful and psychologically disturbing.

Moreover, language learners showed that their learning had been affected by stress. More than 66% of students agreed to this statement, 22% showed neutral response while almost 11% disagreed to the postulate. Then the students were asked about the relationship they feel between COVID, stress and language learning.



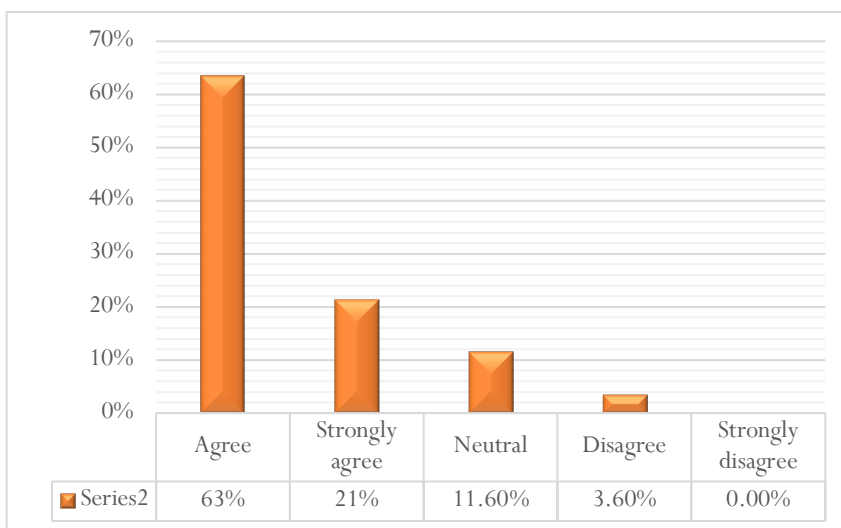
**Bar Graph 2:**

According to this Graph, it is quite eminent that ‘agree’ bar is of the highest peak, and overall aggregate becomes  $49.1+13.4 = 62.5\%$  plus respondents were of the view that COVID-stress and learning are in a direct and negative relation to each other. 12% disagreed with the fact while 25% had a neutral response. This shows that COVID has a negative impact on learning, and this is causing stress among students. Also, the learners

showed dissatisfaction towards the 'switching from traditional mode of education to online mode'. Overall, 66.8% of the learners held the view that switching from traditional mode of education to online mode is not a good alternative, while 20% of the students lied amongst agree and disagree. This shows that specifically in Pakistan, the online system is not helping all the students' equally, thus causing them to feel stress.

The case may not be the same in other countries where load shedding related problems are not to be found. In this regard, one of the reasons that came forward was poor internet connections in virtual classrooms. Out of 112 total respondents, 98 overall agreed that poor internet connections hinder the learning, showing the summative percentage of  $38.4+49.1 = 88\%$ . Only 11% held a neutral view, and 2% disagreed to it. To say, poor internet is also the reason for stress which keeps students disconnected from the participation in the class affecting their learning. The other reason which came forward from the data were 'Lack of teacher training and cooperation' and delayed degree and extension of the semester's period. Overall, 85% of students agreed 9% were reported neutral, and only 6% disagreed to it.

The underlying model talks about the primary appraisal stage, which is the evaluation of the danger by finding out cause and reasons for stress. Thus, learners viewed COVID as the cause of stress with many reasons enhancing that stress. Shift from the traditional mode of learning poor internet facilities, lack of teacher cooperation, delayed degree, extension of semester's duration was marked as major reasons behind learners' stress. After primary appraisal comes secondary appraisal, which is the assessment of the resources available to cope with the stress. So, the strategies that came forward were as follows.

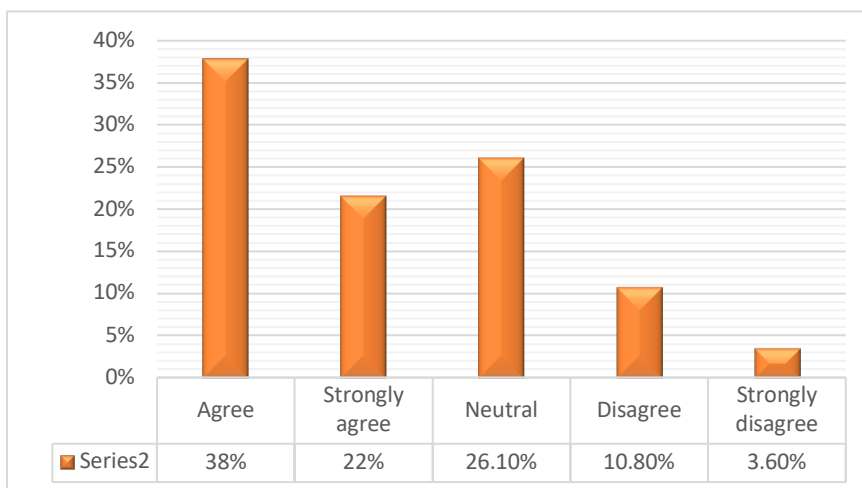


**Bar Graph 3:** Stress in Learners can be Tackled by Adopting Effective Strategies.

Total 95 learners out of 112 making 84% out 100% agreed that stress due to COVID could be coped. 13 were recorder as having a neutral view, and only four answered that they disagree.

According to secondary appraisal stage, the solutions that came forward included: Proper teacher training, cooperation and above all good internet facilities can be a strategy towards reducing learners' stress. In this case, total 97/112 students (87%) agreed strongly with the strategies and solutions while minority disagreed. This shows that the stress is not an everlasting psychological illness but can be coped and manage using available resources.

Moreover, according to the theorists of 'The Transactional Model,' the perception of the danger is a subjective thing that varies from one person to the other. This point was proved when stress showed a higher level in females and lesser in males.



**Bar Graph 4:** Female LL are more Prone to Stress than Male LL

This final bar graph is again one of the crucial pillars of this research paper. And also answers one of the research problems/questions. Students were asked about the stress and its impact on learning, and also that is stress gender-oriented? Do two genders perceive stressful situations equally or not? So, the results tell us that more than 60% learners including both males and females were of the view that female learners become more nervous and worried encountering stressful situations and another way around, the minority held the view that males become less stressed.

### Open-ended Questions and Call Interviews

Besides using five Likert scales to record the responses, 3-4 questions were asked to share their views. The content, call duration and time was told to them before the interview. The questions mainly asked were as follows:

- What kind of relationship do you feel between COVID, stress and Language Learning?
- Female LL feels more stress than males LL. Comment on this.
- What is your view can be the most prominent Reason of stress?
- What strategies can be used to reduce stress" Comment

To question one majority of the students replied that they feel stressed, direct, negative and deep relation between the three factors. As to quote the responses their lines were,

- 'There is a deep direct relation between all these'.
- 'COVID 19, causing mental illness, aggression, anxiety, stress. So due to mental problems and lockdown LL is affected negatively.'
- 'Obviously, because of stress and this whole COVID-19 situation, students are not able to study properly'.
- 'These three are in direct relation to each other. COVID is adding to the stress, stress changes behavioural and cognitive patterns which in turn affects the learning of students.'
- 'COVID-19 has created such a problematic condition and scenario at this time that students of every filed. English language learners are also part of the affected side in Pakistan as we have many issues due to online classes, and they are affecting our language learning process.'

There are more responses that suggest that learners are viewing COVID as stressful, and their learning is affected due to many reasons. The reasons were also asked, and the respondents overall added that poor internet



connections, lack of teacher cooperation and motivation, delayed degree and fear of COVID are hampering their language learning. 2-3 respondents raised the point of media coverage in creating stress. Many held the view that they are being over-burdened by the teachers; others said that their lives have stopped and lived between all the fears we are not able to understand and participate in learning sessions. Few also talked about the lack of digital literacy and training in using the software and applications like LMS, Zoom etc. Then the respondents were asked about the strategies to cope with the stress, and they suggested that with teacher cooperation, better internet facilities, proper training of teachers and students in handling the digital gadgets and applications, the situation can be improved. 4-5 respondents suggested taking refuge in religion as one said, *'to minimize the stress and anxiety perform ablution five times a day as it keeps Satan and stresses away. And it will help a lot to manage the things, including learning.'* Many said that spending time with family can also help a lot. Finally, the views of respondents were recorded in term of gender. Overall, more percentage of respondents said that females become more stressed than males. To quote their views, they said,

- Females are more sensitive and cautious about their studies. On the other hand, they're less creative to switch to a completely different mode of studies. So yeah, they feel more stressed than males.
- Females are more likely to be stressed as compared to males because they are emotional by nature, while males have the ability to overcome stress.
- Males are tension free and don't care about anything, even if it is pandemic. Females are more meticulous about everything, and especially in the case of a pandemic, they feel stressed out.

## **Discussion and Results**

71% of learners agreed to the fact that COVID is the source of stress and fear. 90% of learners agreed that Outbreak of Covid-19 had affected students psychologically. More than 66% of students agreed that language learning LL process has been decelerated and negatively affected when learners are in the stress phase. 62.5% plus (by adding some fraction of neutral) respondents were of the view that COVID stress and learning are in a direct and negative relation to each other., 66.8% of the learners held the view that switching from traditional mode of education to online mode is not a good alternative. Out of 112 total respondents, overall respondents agreed to the statement that language learners feel anxiety and depression when they face poor internet connections in virtual classrooms showing the summative percentage of  $38.4+49.1 = 88\%$ . Overall, 85% of students agreed that lack of teacher training and cooperation delayed degree and extension of the semester's period has added to the learners' stress. Total 95 learners out of 112, making 84% out 100% agreed that stress could be reduced and controlled through effective strategies. Total 97/112 students (87%) agreed strongly that stress is not an everlasting psychological illness but can be coped and managed using available resources. More than 60% of learners, including both males and females, were of the view that female learners become more nervous and worried encountering stressful situations.

According to Lazarus and Folkman's theory, the stress has stages, and the stages are of perception, cause, reason, and coping. As far as perception is concerned learners perceived COVID as a stressful event and more ratio was of females. Secondly, the cause was recorded as COVID the reasons behind were reported to be many and finally to cope with it many strategies were told by the respondents. So, to say the study is shown to fulfil the Stress Stages' explained by the above-mentioned theorists.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, the interplay between stress and learning has proved to have far-reaching effects on students. COVID-19, as an external stress stimulus is inextricably linked with the disintegration of active learning, causing fear, anxiety, uncertainty and poor learning in students. The results also proved that the female gender seemed to be more vulnerable to the effects of stress due to COVID. However, familiarity with online learning, better internet access, and knowledge of the use of online applications can have huge implications in tackling such a stressful environment in order to facilitate learning. The research proves to be an initial model and step that has addressed the issue of learning in relation to stress due to COVID. Such studies can significantly help us to understand and tackle any future stressful situation which may again affect the learning of students.

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## Appendix

### 1. Questionnaire

'Interplay of Psychological effects of COVID-19 and students' Language Learning: A Mixed Method Research'.

The following questionnaire is designed by M.Phil. Scholar to evaluate the level of stress among English Language learners in Pakistan, due to lock down situation in the context of Covid-19. Your responses will help the researcher to find out the relationship between COVID, Stress and ELL.

#### Note:

Read and Mark all the questions carefully. Honest responses will be appreciated. Thank you.

### Section 1

Basic Information of participants

- Age
- Years of education
- Gender

### Section 2

1. Do you have sound knowledge regarding COVID-19? (It's Symptoms, causes and consequences?)
2. COVID-19 is an external stimulus of stress and fear.
3. Outbreak of Covid-19 has affected students psychologically.
4. Language Learning LL process is decelerated and negatively affected when learners are in stress phase. (Reason of stress can be COVID or any).
5. COVID, Stress and Affected language learning are in direct and negative relation to each other.
6. Switching from Traditional mode of education to online mode is successful in Pakistan.
7. Language Learners (LL) feel anxiety and depression when they face poor internet connections in virtual classrooms.
8. Lack of teacher training and Cooperation leads to stress in LL.
9. Delayed degree and extension of semester's period is also a reason behind stress.
10. Stress in learners can be tackled by adopting effective strategies.
11. Proper teacher training, cooperation and above all good internet facilities can be a strategy towards reducing learners' stress.
12. Female LL are more prone to stress than male LL.

### Section 3

Open ended questions/ Call interviews

1. What kind of relation do you feel between COVID, stress and Language Learning?
2. Female LL feel more stress than males LL. Comment on this
3. What in your view can be the most prominent Reason of stress?
4. "What strategies can be used to reduce stress" Comment.