

# **Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences**

# Volume 10, Number 4, 2022, Pages 1580-1592 Journal Homepage:

https://journals.internationalrasd.org/index.php/pjhss



# A Pragmatic Approach to Academic Challenges of Students with Visual Impairment during Covid-19: Teacher's Experiences

Tehmeena Hanif<sup>1</sup>, Sajida Naz<sup>2</sup>, Ayesha Ahmad<sup>3</sup>, Momna Azmat<sup>4</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Email: tehmeena.shiraz@yahoo.com
- <sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Email: dr.sajida@fjwu.edu.pk
- <sup>3</sup> Lecturer, Sir Syed College of Education & Professional Training Campus X, Wah Cantt, Pakistan. Email: sayeshaahmad89@hotmail.com
- <sup>4</sup> Department of Education, Sir Syed College of Education & Professional Training Campus X, Wah Cantt, Pakistan. Email:momnaazmat2018@gmail.com

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

# ABSTRACT

# Article History:

Received: September 12, 2022 Revised: December 25, 2022 Accepted: December 27, 2022 Available Online: December 31, 2022

# Keywords:

Academic Challenges

COVID-19

Students with Visual Impairment Teachers

#### Funding:

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

COVID-19 which was followed by the lockdown all over the world is seriously affecting the lives of students with visual impairment, especially their academic activities. The aim of the study is to understand the current situation of special schools and explore the academic challenges of students and the ways of academic success for students with visual impairment during COVID-19. The study will aid in raising awareness for the government, decision-makers, and policymakers to consider initiatives to reduce the challenges faced by students with visual impairment during this pandemic. This study is based on semistructured interviews with teachers that included the epistemological nature of research questions. A total of 15 teachers were selected by using a purposive sampling technique. The current research paper provides a pragmatic approach by using a type of thematic content analysis. The study's findings revealed that COVID-19 has a negative impact on the interactional and online learning, emotional state, and behavior of students with visual impairment. It is recommended that future studies may be conducted with parents and children with visual impairment, and it may investigate the other life challenges that are being faced by visually impaired students during this pandemic.

© 2022 The Authors, Published by iRASD. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License

Corresponding Author's Email: tehmeena.shiraz@yahoo.com

#### 1. Introduction

Covid-19 has a major impact on our daily living. No doubt, online education is the best practice that can be the choice of advanced countries. Online distance learning education has been implemented throughout the world due to the covid-19 pandemic spread (UNESCO, 2020a). Online distance education mostly depends on individual needs and includes those teaching strategies that should be a supportive online system of education. Physical distancing physical distance and learning during lockdown including contextual and economic factors that are related to the covid-19 pandemic have a very bad effect on those groups, which are vulnerable for example families and children with several disabilities (UNESCO, 2020a). There have been several measures taken to avoid the spread of coronavirus including social and physical distancing. The main idea behind these strategies is to stop the transmission of this viral disease. But when we talk about the visually impaired people, they are sometimes not able to maintain the distance from the nearby persons and between themselves.

During the spread of this coronavirus disease, there were no such measures were taken additional while considering the blind people as most of the markings for the social distancing were created without taking into account the visually impaired people's accessibility. Vision is

1580

eISSN: 2415-007X

divided into different four categories the first one is normal vision second is mild vision third is significant low vision and total blindness or no vision is the fourth category (WHO, 2009). Glasses and lenses that are considered regular text accessories are used by individuals who have significant vision loss because they cannot read without these accessories. It is completely impossible to read with total blindness (Speelman & Kirsner, 2005). Braille is used by these individuals for reading and writing they can take help from electronic devices (Halfon, Houtrow, Larson, & Newacheck, 2012). These are the different challenges that are faced by the visually impaired individuals but they are getting a qualification as normal individuals do and they are acquiring different skills through educational programs. (Kumar et al., 2001), similarly, they also have full cognitive abilities as they are developed in normal individuals (Mezirow, 1990). People with different disabilities are affecting more during the covid-19 pandemic as compared to the people without any disabilities (Armitage & Nellums, 2020). The objectives of the study were;

- To explore the academic challenges of students with Visual Impairment during COVID-19.
- To study the teacher's strategy for educational plans for students with Visual Impairment during this pandemic.
- To explore the ways of academic success of students with Visual Impairment.

#### 2. Literature Review

The literature review revealed that many challenges were faced by visually impaired students. For example, they feel difficulty participating in questions answers, and discussions in the class during online classes (Khan, 2019). Some teachers do not allow their disabled students to record the lectures and it becomes hard for the students to approach the educational centers during the COVID-19 period. This study also identified that there was a lack of appropriate computer programs for the students with Visual impairment (Fuller\*, Healey, Bradley, & Hall, 2004). If we compare the current period with the last two years our world is different even if it is different from the past 2 months. Covid-19 has shut down all agencies and schools and pushed all of us to explore the new channels to do our job which is to provide rehabilitative and educational support to the students with visual challenges (Knafl, 1991). There are now twin challenges while working with visually impaired people as we have to follow the mandates regarding social distancing and prohibit proximity to other individuals (Crossman, 1959). So, in this situation teaching people with these visual challenges becomes difficult because the teachers have to educate the students without demonstrating physically or through textual approaches (Hodges & Keller, 1999). There has been a solution to these challenges which is video conferencing. Perhaps it may not be so ideal but many professionals are agreed that it can still be effective by its creative use (Lewis, 2020).

In addition to those related to the pandemic, several factors correlating specifically with distance (online) learning have been reported for various groups involved in the educational system worldwide, especially in countries where distance (online) learning had not been previously implemented (Dekeyser, 2007). The main related concerns of parents include lack of experience in supporting their children with distance (online) learning, lack of access to technology, and economic constraints. Teachers' concerns include a lack of knowledge and skills to implement online learning and restricted access to technology (UNESCO, 2020b). Likewise, teachers and parents in Kosovo have reported numerous factors that impact the successful implementation of and support for distance (online) learning. As factors that influence this process, teachers report a lack of previous experience with distance (online) learning and insufficient knowledge for utilizing technology during teaching, while parents report feeling overloaded by the need to support their children's learning process (Korir, 2015).

During covid-19, online distance learning has been introduced even in those countries, which were not following the distance online learning. The challenge related to online distance learning is the lack of experience, economic constraints, and lack of access to technology (UNESCO, 2020a). Parents and teachers have reported various factors that influence the implementation of distance online learning successfully (Goffman, 2002). These factors included a lack of preceding experience with distance online teaching and inadequate knowledge regarding the technology (Ngubane-Mokiwa & Khoza, 2021). According to a literature review during covid-19 parents reported changes in children's behavior and modes increase stress levels (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020).

Literature review reveals that 35% of students with visual impairment get the plain language materials and only 7% access the transcripts of audios or interpretation in sign language resources. Parents of students with visual impairment reported that only 6% have Braille material and 18% have audio format access. There is unjust and unfair access to broadcast, digital devices, the internet, and data packages. Research data also indicate that there is no or limited access to assistive devices that can facilitate online learning for children with visual impairment (Bank, 2020).

The significance of education is widely recognized among individuals belonging to various categories and backgrounds. The study will be beneficial for all educationists, teachers, students, parents, and practitioners. The study will also provide recommendations to overcome those problems which are experienced by visually impaired students.

# 3. Methodology

Qualitative data were collected by conducting interviews. Qualitative research entails looking into and understanding the importance that individuals or groups place on a social or human issue. Data collected in the participant's surroundings, data processing that evolves inductively from particular to broad themes, and the researcher's interpretations of the data are all part of the research process. The final written report's structure can be changed. Those that conduct this form of research advocate for an inductive approach to research, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of expressing a situation's complexity (Creswell, 2009). The population of the study was comprised of all the teachers from visual impairment schools in Rawalpindi (Pakistan) who were teaching students with visual impairment during COVID-19. The population was 40 teachers. The sample consisted of 15 teachers, of which 8 were female and 7 were male. Out of which, three male teachers and one female teacher were visually impaired. The sampling process was carried out using a purposive sampling technique. This sampling technique enables the researcher to select participants who have knowledge about research questions so relevant information can be collected.

#### 3.1 Validity of the Instrument

Expert opinion was used to assess the instrument's validity before conducting interviews. The expert's suggestions and opinions were incorporated into the questionnaire and taken into account for future improvements.

#### 3.2 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Exploratory research questions i.e., an open-ended questionnaire that was comprised of epistemological types of research questions, were used in the current study. The researcher conducted 15 interviews of teachers with the help of online means such as Zoom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp Voice Call and recorded the interviews after seeking permission from the interviewee. Each interview lasted 60 minutes. The purpose of the interview guide is to better help the researcher stay on track while interviewing the participants by providing a chance to respond to questions that are open-ended in nature. This qualitative study was analyzed through thematic content analysis. In terms of similarity of occurrence in response codes, categories, and emerging themes were identified. In the first stage, the recorded interviews were transcribed by the researcher as mostly done in qualitative interviews. Then the researcher took written notes of items in which she was interested.

Coding and categorization for each theme are done before finalizing the results. A review of themes was conducted by mapping provisional themes and their relationship with the research questions. The whole interview conduction and transcription were done in a month. The transcript was analyzed carefully to ensure the accuracy of the data. After the transcription of the data coding was assigned carefully to different responses of the interviewee. The coding and categorization of the data were conducted manually instead of depending on the software. Coding is part of qualitative research to analyze and compare the data in later stages. Based on similar themes, the codes from the data were categorized. During the categorization of the data, there is a need for constant comparison to establish the connections between the categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). After the codes and categorization, themes were generated. Concepts maps are supported by the construction of

cohesive narratives by the participants. Narratives and quotes of the participants are added to add richness and depth to the current study.

# 4. Results

Following are the findings of the current study:

**Table 1: Groups of TVI and Gender Description of the Study Population** 

Groups of TVI	Male	Female	Totals	%
Sighted teachers	3	5	8	53
Non Sighted teachers	3	1	4	26
Sighted teachers teaching blind students in general education	0	3	3	20
Totals	6 (40%)	9 (60%)	15	100

Note. TVI; Teachers of Visually Impaired.

Table 1 shows that the total number of participants was 15. Out of 15 respondents, 8 (53%) were sighted teachers, 4 (26%) teachers were non-sighted and 3 (20%) teachers were sighted teachers teaching blind students in general education. Out of 15, 6 (40%) teachers were male and 9 (60%) teachers were female.

Table 2: School Sector and TVI working area description of the Study Population

School sector	F	%	Teachers working area	f	%
Public	6	40	School for blinds	9	60
Private	9	60	Special Education Centres	3	20
			General education	3	20
Totals	15	100		15	100

Note. TVI; Teachers of Visually Impaired.

Table 2 depicts that the total number of participants was 15. Out of 15 respondents, 6 (40%) teachers of students with visual impairment are from the public sector and 9(60%) teachers of students with visual impairment are from the private sector. Out of 15, 9 (60%) teachers of students with visual impairment are from the school of blind children, 3 (20%) teachers of students with visual impairment are from Special Education centers and 3 (20%) teachers of students with visual impairment are from general education.

**Table 3: Characteristics of TVI Students** 

Respondents	Gender	Teaching Grade	Education	Level of blindness Teachers Teaching	Teaching Experience	School Sector
1.	F	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup>	MA English	Both partial & complete VI	5	Private
2.	F	4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup>	MA Urdu	Both partial & complete VI	2	Private
3.	М	8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	12	Private
4.	F	9 <sup>th</sup> ,10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Sociology MA Defence and Strategy	Both partial & complete VI	2	Private
5.	M (Visually Impaired)	4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	7	Private
6.	М	9 <sup>th</sup> . 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	15	Public

				Dath partial			
7.	М	Primary & 9 <sup>th</sup> . 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	6	Public	
8.	M (Visually Impaired)	Primary & 9 <sup>th</sup> . 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education Braille proficiency certificates	Both partial & complete VI	4	Public	
9.	F	Metric & Intermediate	МВА	Both partial & complete VI	6	Private	
10.	F (Visually Impaired)	9 <sup>th,</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	4	Public	
11.	F	9 <sup>th,</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	5	Public	
12.	M (Visually Impaired)	9 <sup>th,</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup>	MA Special Education	Both partial & complete VI	4	Public	
13.	F (General Education)	Intermediate	MA English	Partial blind	2	Private	
14.	F (General Education)	Metric & Intermediate	MA Economics	Partial blind	4	Private	
15.	F (General Education)	Intermediate	MA English	Partial blind	1	Private	
Note TVI: Teachers of Visually Impaired F: Female M: Male VI: Visual Impairment							

Note. TVI; Teachers of Visually Impaired. F; Female. M; Male. VI; Visual Impairment.

Table 3 illustrates the characteristic of teaching visually impaired students. Out of 15 teachers, 12 were teaching both partial and complete visual impaired students and 3 were teaching partial blind students. So, 9 were teaching in private schools and 6 were in public schools.

# 4.2 Theme 1: Lack of basic facilities

The interviews demonstrated that students have a problem accessing lectures through online mode. They have difficulty attending online lectures because of their visual impairment. Teachers used WhatsApp as the medium to send them recorded lectures as most of the students have only this medium to interact with their teachers. Students do not have laptops, large print books, software for screen reading, and Braille books at home.

- Students have a lack of internet facilities, smartphones, and laptops, which is the big academic challenge they face during lockdown (**Respondent-1 & 3**).
- We are working with underprivileged students and they even do not have smartphones (Respondent-4).
- As government employees, we do not have any facility to teach our students. Our institute does not take any initiative to teach our students. Some students who want to learn and they have some facilities contact us and ask their questions. Otherwise, there is no strategy implemented till now in our institute (Respondent-6).

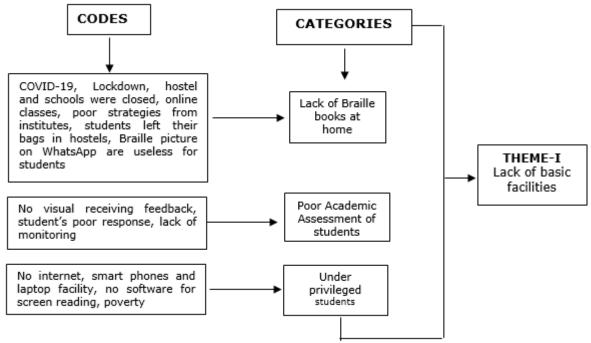
Participants also talk about the challenges that students faced subject-wise. Because it is difficult to understand math online and recorded lectures were useless if there is no practice. Subjects like English and Urdu can be assessed orally but oral assessment cannot be conducted for mathematics subjects. Respondents also talk about the spelling mistakes that they observed during their physical classes in schools after reopening.

• The major challenge faced by the students while studying mathematics. Verbally it was difficult for us to give them proper math's instructions. They also have a lot of spelling issues in Urdu and English (Respondent-10).

A teacher from general education teaching students with visual impairment added;

"I believed and it is the fact.... my student with visual impairment can better excel in class and perform much better as compared to her sighted peers. There is just a need for proper guidance, assistance, and academic material."

Figure 1: Codes, Categories & Theme-I



# 4.3 Theme 2: Lack of Family Support

The interviews demonstrated that parents are non-cooperative in this situation. Parents do not sit with their children and read to them so they can complete their school tasks. Students with visual impairment need continuous assistance to fully comprehend the reading materials. Parents even did not respond to teacher parents' meetings. This entire situation results in their academic failure.

- Some parents did not take online classes seriously and even did not respond when they were called for online meetings (**Respondent-3**).
- Parents take online teaching just a formality and do not respond appropriately (Respondent-1).
- Students were badly treated by the family members as they don't have any interest in the education of their sightless child (**Respondent-2**).

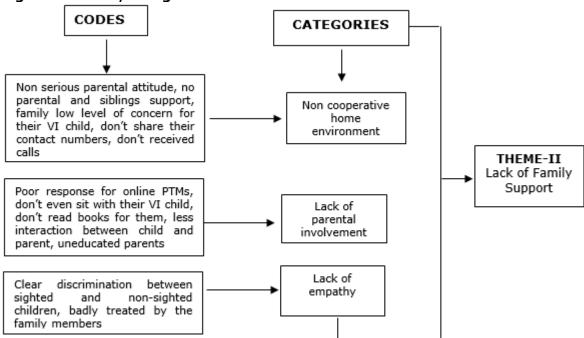
A non-sighted teacher added;

• I know the challenges of life very well... I also faced many bad comments and a non-supportive environment...a blind child is not deaf he or she is not with other disabilities. I believed.... if blind children are well cared for by their parents and society assists them to compensate for their vision loss they can do much better (**Respondent-10**).

Some respondents also show positive responses by adding that if parents cooperate with their children and teachers then they can give better performance even in the online education during COVID-19 and can face less educational loss. There is a need for complete guidance and parental education so they can support their child. According to the respondents, those parents who are educated and accept the disability of their child, even learn Braille for them and these students always get success in their life.

- We have students from different backgrounds. I believe if we teach online, parents will support us. If they will cooperate with their children we will face fewer problems (Respondent- 6).
- During the lockdown, I went door to door the counseling parents and students and I believe I remained successful to some extent. But it required a lot of effort because parents are not ready to cooperate (**Respondent-5**).
- Our student's parents are uneducated no one at home can teach them. I think there is a need to educate the families of Visually Impaired students that how they can assist and support their children during these days so they get comfortable and face the challenges (Respondent- 10).

Figure 2: Codes, Categories & Theme-II

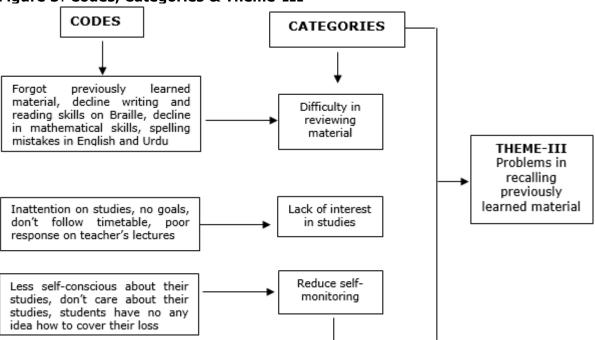


# 4.4 Theme 3: Problems in recalling previously learned material

The interviews demonstrated that students' poor response to online teaching and problem in recalling memorized material when they were assessed after the reopening of schools. The current curriculum is so much longer and it is difficult for VI students to memorize everything as they have to keep everything in their mind. Like other normal students, they don't have any written material for revision. Educators should develop a conceptual curriculum for these students so they can retain it in a better way. In COVID-19 it is observed that students lose interest in studies. After the reopening of schools, they don't care about their studies and showed poor interest in recalling whatever they learn before lockdown.

- Students were out of practice they forget how to read and write in Braille as it required practice. When we took the exam after the reopening of school, we observe they lose their understanding of different concepts (**Respondent-4**).
- As compared to the first lockdown students are losing their interest in studies (Respondent-6).
- We are facing a lot of problems as students lose their command of Braille during this lockdown (Respondent-5).
- My students were not responding to me on WhatsApp, few students contact me and I
  guided them but most students do not even bother to listen to audio instruction. Lack
  of interest in studies resulted in poor memory and retention of learned material
  (Respondent-8).
- Being a teacher of general education during online teaching I adopted the oral assessment system and I felt not only my blind student but the other normal students respond to me very well (Respondent-13).

Figure 3: Codes, Categories & Theme-III

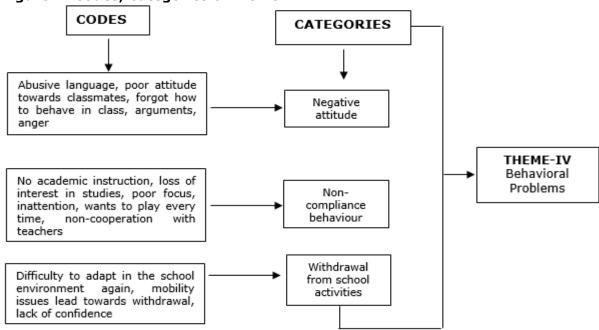


#### 4.5 Theme 4: Behavioral Problems

The interviews demonstrated that after the reopening of schools there were seen problems in the behaviors of students with visual impairment. They have a lack of motivation, low level of confidence, and poor focus on studies, and mostly they want to play with their classmates. It is observed during the interviews that parents are abusing their children both verbally and physically and that attitude of parents changes the behavior of students with visual impairment.

- Students were speaking in a louder tone and they were using abusive language sometimes. All entire situations were much disturbing for other students as well (Respondent-4).
- Those parents who are not accepting the disability of their child, have most behavioral issues like lack of confidence and aggression (**Respondent-10**).
- Students have poor attitudes as they were at home all the time, parent's negative attitudes towards them lead them towards aggressive behavior and poor confidence (Respondent-5).

Figure 4: Codes, Categories & Theme-IV



#### 4.6 Theme 5: Emotional Issues

The interviews demonstrated decreased attachment with the teacher, interaction problems, anxiousness, low self-esteem, depression, and sad mood of VI students. For virtual classes, they need appropriate assistance from their parents or siblings and no supportive environment hurts them emotionally. Even after the reopening of the schools, they have another challenge of social distancing that impact their emotional health. Participants mentioned that during lockdown female students suffer a lot emotionally. Because their families don't accept them and their challenges and kept them busy with different household chores.

- They have an issue with wearing a mask too as they cannot see and wearing a mask become so disturbing for them. They felt much suffocated (**Respondent-4**).
- Some parents share with me that their children are much more emotionally disturbed they have less social interaction and remain sad, anxious, and irritated at home (Respondent-7).
- I can better understand their emotional level as I was also very much disturbed initially then I started to read books and healthily utilized my time so I could come out of this depressing state (Respondent-5).
- I have a student who became mute because of his conflict-oriented home environment (Respondent-11).

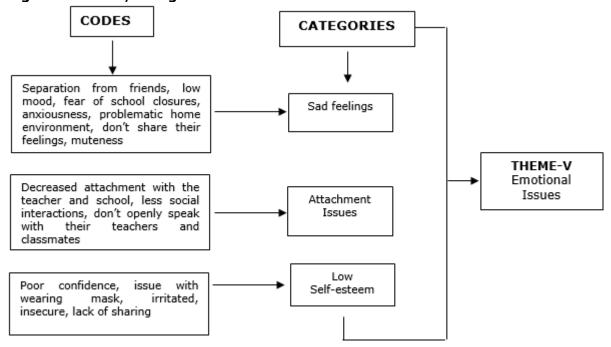
A teacher from general education reported in an interview

• Yes, I will add here that.....Special students in our education system face many emotional issues if I tell about my student I feel when I instruct my class for reading any book...I felt my blind student get disturbed she anxiously asked me during online class how she will read or if she can get the audio or Braille version of this book? They want to learn...we should provide resources to them (Respondent-14).

The non-sighted teacher added

During covid-19 I experienced that many sighted teachers are not taking interest or are not properly trained to deal with blind students in online teaching and they leave them to face the challenges alone.

Figure 5: Codes, Categories & Theme-V



# 4.7 Theme 6: Problems in social distancing

The interviews demonstrated that there are huge problems related to social distancing in visually impaired people. They have an awareness that they have to maintain the distance but due to their impairment, they remain to fail to do so. Ultimately this situation leads to emotional disturbance in them and they feel less comfortable in a social situation. After the reopening of schools teachers observed mobility issues of students on their campus. In this situation, social distancing was a major challenge for the school.

- Again... I would like to say that policymakers are doing nothing for our children with VI.
  We are trying to educate them about social distancing.... but they remain unable to
  follow our instructions. They have mobility issues now and they show confusion and
  frustration (Respondent-4).
- They know social distancing.... but they face a lot of issues while maintaining it (Respondent-6).
- While playing with other students they don't care about the social distance (Respondent-10).

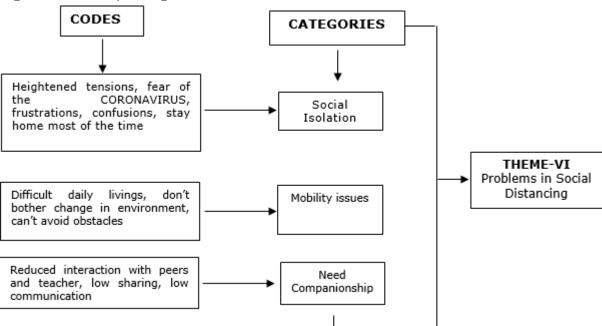


Figure 6: Codes, Categories & Theme-VI

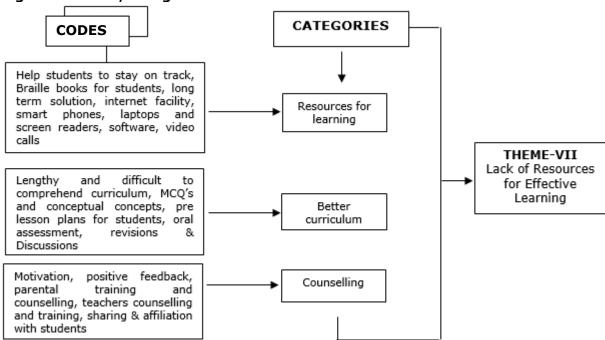
# 4.8 Theme 7: Lack of Resources for Effective Learning

The interviews demonstrated that to deal with the academic challenges of students with visual impairment there is a need for laptops, brailed books, and different software that can properly assist these students. COVID-19 is impacting badly on the education of students with visual impairment. Students with visual impairment have additional burdens of virtual classes. After the reopening of schools students are requesting books that they want to study at home. They want to learn like the students studying in general education. Interviews showed that there is a need for long-term solutions for children with visual impairment as this situation is getting longer and students have already faced a lot of academic loss. Teachers want a change in curriculum because it's difficult to comprehend this curriculum for the sightless student.

- I think..... my students need more resources as compared to the students with other disabilities. They have vision loss..... and that is a big challenge for them. They need user-friendly software, laptops, a library, and maximum time for assessment & examination during COVID-19 (Respondent-4).
- According to my experience, we can go with an MCQ strategy that can better check their ability in different subjects (**Respondent-5**).
- Government should initiate steps for a better education system during COVID-19. They should facilitate our students' Government should support us and should equip us with software and hardware, and other resources (**Respondent-6**).

- As we all know the pandemic situation is getting worse so there is a need to take immediate action by educators and policymakers to develop programs that can facilitate the students with visual impairment (**Respondent-12**).
- I think there should not be locked down properly, at least call our students twice a week so we can educate them otherwise they will face major academic loss. Online education is not for blinds (**Respondent-10**).
- Our students should be equipped with facilities such as smartphones, internet, laptops, etc. so they can also get benefits during lockdown (Respondent-12).
- There is a need to train the sighted parents, staff members, and relatives to enhance their skills to assist the blind students (**Respondent-15**).

Figure 7: Codes, Categories & Theme-VII



# 5. Discussion and Analysis

Challenges faced by visually impaired students without the context of COVID-19, in their daily life activities for example difficulties in accessing public transportation, they have difficulty in moving around the community, a reduction in the access to healthcare facilities, and obstacles related to learning and communication. Hodges and Keller (1999) show that various challenges are faced by the students with Visual impairment especially regarding developing social relationships and transportation. As we know that as compared to the general population people with different special needs and disabilities have increased feeling of loneliness, higher risk of depression, and low level of satisfaction with life.

Teachers of the students with Visual impairment report different problems during covid-19 in their education. Because of spatial barriers, they encounter different emotional and behavioral issues. Teachers report that they face difficulty in accessing learning materials while teaching online. A study also identified that there was a lack of appropriate computer programs for the students with Visual impairment (Fuller\* et al., 2004). Teachers in the current study also reported that the students with visual impairment face difficulty in accessing the lectures during online teaching. As reported by the teachers during covid-19 students with Visual impairment face interactional problems after reopening schools, with other students as they find difficulty related to social distancing. They have fears of getting infected due to the close interaction with their group. 3

Teachers also reported that students with Visual impairment have close contact with their caregivers during the covid-19 situation. Some of the parents have a negative attitude towards their non-sighted children as compared to the sighted ones that approach disturbs them emotionally. When they returned to the school after the lockdown gets over teachers feel a lot of behavioral and emotional issues in the students as they become rebellious, anxious,

and aggressive and don't show proper interest in their studies and mostly they want to play games and sometimes tease their peers and distract them from their studies. Teachers also reported that in this critical situation one to one teaching becomes extremely challenged than it did before covid-19. According to a literature review during covid-19 parents reported changes in children's behavior and modes increase stress levels (Hyseni Duraku & Nagavci, 2020).

Teachers reported that the covid-19 adversely affects the interaction learning emotional state and behavior of the students with Visual impairment. Restrictions during the covid-19 situation amplified the daily difficulties of the students with Visual impairment. According to the teachers, some parents support their Visual impairment children who struggled a lot during covid-19 and learn through trial and error that would be the best strategy should practice during this critical situation, how they can encourage their students, how they can engage their students with Visual impairment during online education.

There is a huge difference seen in the public and private sectors of schools for blinds. Private schools are struggling to provide education to their students with visual impairment but government schools are not even taken any initiative till the third wave of covid-19. According to (Khan, 2019), Pakistan is still struggling because there is an absence of legislation and broad-based national for disabled people studying in the mainstream.

The current study is creating awareness regarding the representation of blind students in the councils and parliaments so they can also get the basic facilities to continue their education. There should be appropriate aid and support from the government for the students with visual impairment and their teachers. There should be proper training for teachers in special education so the students and teachers can develop and excel in the field of education without any challenge.

#### 6. Conclusions

It is concluded that students with Visual impairment are facing many academic challenges. Institutions, government, and policymakers must consider the strategies to support the students with special needs and this pandemic. This research will hopefully create awareness in educators, decision-makers, and families of children with Visual impairment to understand their challenges in a better way. Students with Visual impairment are facing the same challenges that they were facing in the first lockdown in the spring, of 2020. Students with Visual impairment are not progressing in their education. Counseling, provision of facilities, training of the teachers and students, and proper education are needed so these children like their sighted peers can also get benefit during covid-19 and have a minimum academic loss.

It is recommended that future studies might be conducted with parents and children and might investigate the other challenges that are being faced by the visually impaired students during the COVID pandemic. There is a need to assess the developmental programs that are established during covid-19 for visually impaired regarding the knowledge and competence of these students.

Interviews should also be conducted with students with visual impairment and their parents as during the current study due to the lack of resources visual impaired students have, they are not included.

- Teachers of Students with other disabilities should also be included in the current study.
- Participants were from the same geographical area.

#### References

Armitage, R., & Nellums, L. B. (2020). The COVID-19 response must be disability inclusive. The Lancet Public Health, 5(5), e257. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(20)30076-1

Bank, W. (2020). Pivoting to Inclusion: Leveraging Lessons from the COVID-19 Crisis for Learners with Disabilities. Retrieved from

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research design: qualitative. Quantitative, and mixed methods.

- Crossman, E. R. (1959). A theory of the acquisition of speed-skill\*. *Ergonomics*, 2(2), 153-166. doi:
- https://doi.org/10.1080/00140135908930419
- Dekeyser, R. (2007). Skill acquisition theory. Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction (pp. 97-113). In: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Duraku, Z. H., & Hoxha, N. (2020). The impact of COVID-19, school closure, and social isolation on gifted students' wellbeing and attitudes toward remote (online) learning. *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education and Wellbeing; Duraku, ZH, Ed*, 130-169.
- Fuller\*, M., Healey, M., Bradley, A., & Hall, T. (2004). Barriers to learning: a systematic study of the experience of disabled students in one university. *Studies in higher education*, 29(3), 303-318. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070410001682592
- Goffman, E. (2002). The presentation of self in everyday life. 1959. Garden City, NY, 259.
- Halfon, N., Houtrow, A., Larson, K., & Newacheck, P. W. (2012). The changing landscape of disability in childhood. *The Future of Children*, 13-42.
- Hodges, J. S., & Keller, M. J. (1999). Perceived Influences on Social Integration by Students with Physical Disabilities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 40(6), 678-686.
- Hyseni Duraku, Z., & Nagavci, M. (2020). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Education of Children with Disabilities. *University of Prishtina: Pristina, Kosovo*.
- Khan, Y. (2019). Framing the disability debate. The News, Retrieved on September, 30, 2020.
- Knafl, K. A. (1991). Patton, MQ (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods . Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 532 pp., \$28.00 (hardcover). In: Wiley Online Library.
- Korir, B. C. (2015). The Perception of Students and Teachers on the Integration Programme of Students with Visual Impairment in Secondary Schools: A Case of Ainamoi Sub County, Kericho County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(12), 6-12.
- Lewis, S. (2020). Education for students with visual impairments in the time of coronavirus: An approach to education through videoconferencing. In (Vol. 114, pp. 171-172): SAGE Publications Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA.
- Mezirow, J. (1990). Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: Jossey-Bass Publishers San Francisco.
- Ngubane-Mokiwa, S. A., & Khoza, S. B. (2021). Using community of inquiry (CoI) to facilitate the design of a holistic e-learning experience for students with visual impairments. *Education Sciences, 11*(4), 152. doi: https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11040152
- Speelman, C. P., & Kirsner, K. (2005). *Beyond the learning curve: The construction of mind*: Oxford University Press on Demand.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research techniques.
- UNESCO. (2020a). Distance Learning Strategies in Response to COVID-19 School Closures. Retrieved from <a href="https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373305">https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373305</a>
- UNESCO. (2020b). Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives. Retrieved from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444
- WHO. (2009). *World health statistics 2009*. Retrieved from https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/44078