Impact of Online Learning on Learners' Self-Reported Satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19: A University Level Scenario

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Abstract- In the wake of COVID-19, and to counter this horrible pandemic, the government of Pakistan introduced the policy of strict lockdown and to continue teaching/learning activities, online teaching/learning system was introduced in the higher educational institutes, especially in the public and private sector universities which were already devoid of cybernetic milieus. The aim of this was to explore the impact of online learning on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19 in the universities of the Punjab. This research uses mixed method type and in this context a students' questionnaire was circulated online among students and around 500 out of 800 students responded. Most of the respondents indicated that they find complications and problems about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic as these contents are suited in face to face classroom settings and if, unfortunately this pandemic situation lasts for a long period of time the revision of the L2 course contents is inevitable otherwise the performance of the students will decrease rapidly. Similarly, a number of challenges were reported from the research population about the second question of research, as the major part of the population lives in villages, desserts, and hilly areas by which their socio-economic condition usually remains very low by which the students of these areas are devoid of economic and social resources to provide themselves internet facilities, smartphones and laptops that are inevitable to their online learning. Most of the foreign language learners during their online classes remained absent and the have different reasons in this context and their reported proficiency in various segments i.e. in assignments, presentations and quizzes program remained lesser as they were showing in traditional classroom environment. The outcomes from the research will be of great importance to the federal and provincial ministries of education, universities administrators, teachers and students in taking future emergency decisions relating to the execution of online learning programs for students in general and L2 learners in particular.

Keywords: COVID-19, L2 Learning, L2 Self-reported satisfaction, Pandemic

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning is the procedure of gaining understanding and proficiency. Therefore, learning is in due course considered one of the necessary props that bring changes in the society (Indira, D., & Sakshi, A., 2019). In the present era, technology and machinery has noticeably made our lives stress-free. That means internet technology has been measured as an imperative medium for several features of our lives together with educational learning. Online learning has acknowledged considerable consideration in the 21st century especially in the developed world, nearly, 6 and a half million learners are registering in one or more than one online course every year (Ananga P., &Biney, I. K., 2017). Internationally, online learning spreads its roots deeper as learners and their teachers realize relaxed and view probability in building up and retrieving chances to learn by other means (White, 2008). Online learning is viewed as a collection of learning accomplishments in a course or subject supplied through network system offering right to use and exchange of facts and knowledge. This is the term which is coined and acted specifically to pin down a methodology of teaching and learning which encompasses internet technology. Online learning milieu is not only convenient and beneficial for learners to gain access to the knowledge and learning constituents but also to associate and make cooperation in the midst of course partakers (Krish, 2008). Similarly, Ally (2008) extended the scope of online learning and observed it as the application of internet in retrieving educational materials; ensuring collaboration with the course contents, instructors, and other learners; achieving backing in learning procedure to receive knowledge and familiarity, make meaning, and progress through learning experience

Online learning is defined as learning carried out from a distance supported by electronic and cybernetic devices, for example smartphones, tablets, laptops, and desktop computers (Gonzalez & Louis, 2018). This extensive practice of online learning also unsurprisingly fetches learners into different places for online language learning (Plaisance, 2018). Online language learning may argument innumerable learning modifications, a web-facilitated learning, a blended or hybrid learning, and an effusively virtual or online learning. Furthermore, the online learning in L2 milieu in the universities of the Punjab province during COVID-19 pandemic takes place in completely online since it is impossible for learners and their English language teachers to gather in a face-to-face context. Coronavirus disease 2019 was broken out from Wuhan, Hubei Province of China but now it has become a pandemic all over the globe and termed as COVID-19. Almost all the world is severely affected by this life taking disease. World Health Organization's (WHO) emergency committee confirmed a worldwide health disaster at the end of January 2020, as the confirmed cases of COVID-19 started increasing internationally ((Velavan& Meyer, 2020; McAleer, 2020). In Pakistan the virus of this disease was firstly detected and confirmed on 26 Feb. 2020 when two cases were reported from Karachi and Islamabad respectively. On 13th March 2020 the Islamic Republic of Pakistan decided to close all educational institutes throughout the state and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), firstly, decided to continue online teaching/learning activities through Learning Management System (LMS) and in June 2020 the higher educational institutions were totally shifted on MS Teams or Zoom for better teaching/learning activities due to the spread of COVID-19 on large scale. These institutional policies lead the teachers to deliver their lectures from the homes and the learners to learn from their homes as the sole purpose of these policies was to safeguard the lives of the teachers and the students. With the initiation of these policies, face to face learning in classroom milieu was totally shifted into online learning which lasts till the end of the Fall Semester 2020 due to COVID-19. Online teaching/learning became a big challenge for both the teachers and the students, especially, in the country where basic requirements to run this system were few and far between. Cao, W., Fang, Z., Hou, G., Han, M., Xu, X., Dong, J., & Zheng, J. (2020) confirmed this state when they argued that these policies lasted impacts on higher education, specifically, learners' learning growth. The rationale of the current study was to investigate the learners' perceptions about the efficacy of L2 course contents for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic and to examine the challenges and opportunities for L2 learners while learning online in the wake of COVID-19 in the Punjab.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Gonzalez & Louis (2018) the single objective of online researches is to explore instructional methodologies, learning tools and techniques, distinctive milieus within an intermingled learning package, and comparison between classroom based and thoroughly online learning. During all these learning activities the focus remains on learners' perceptions, beliefs, evaluation, assessment, performance and satisfaction. Murphy (2020) extended the scope of online learning and is of the view that with the beginning of 21 centuries there have been a remarkable progress in the education field due to the invention and use the latest technology and particularly, it enhanced the level of superiority and usefulness in a great number of basic educational institutes that have incorporated e-learning. UNESCO (2020) reported that in excess of 1.5 billion students, nearly in 190 countries have to pay attention to the complete or partial closure of educational institutes due to COVID-19 pandemics and this number constitutes 87% plus of the world's students population. Apart from this, 'Times Higher Education' (THE), the renowned think-tank agency in the field of education conducted a survey on the projections of advanced education from the viewpoints of frontrunners of the prominent universities of the globe in the year 2018 and around 200 research participants were selected from 45 countries of the world to a single point agenda; 'online learning cannot compete the traditional learning methods and techniques'. On the other hand, 63% of the selected population anticipated that by the year '2030' the most prominent institutions for higher studies will be proposing all the courses online. Yet, 24% respondents also shown complete agreement that electronic and cybernetic learning would be more widespread than traditional methods of learning or classroom learning milieu.

Murphy (2020) vindicated the previous research and asserted that the technology will restructure and reform the higher educational institutes till 2030. No doubt online system of learning is comparatively new one, yet, in the upcoming years it would be as useful as classroom-based methods are. Another study conducted by the United States Department of Education (USDE) settled round about one thousand learning courses and conclude that learners who opted their courses through the online system of education left

behind the classroom-based learners in a number of courses. Similarly, WHO & UNESCO (2020) reported that higher education has been hard up into testing cybernetic learning system into a large scale since the medical staff and their supporting members in different universities are busy in finding out the remedial ways and procedures to end up COVID-19 pandemic which has already ate up the lives of the millions of people all over the globe and it also infected many more.

In China from tertiary to post-doctorate level were strictly asked to remain inside their homes and continue their learning activities through online system of education and this routine lasted for more than three months and then extended for few more days (Bao, 2020). Almost all the educational institutions took momentary measure and stepped out to establish online classes to try to bridge up the gap for the running and upcoming semesters. This critical situation not only affected the national but also international students equally and the number of international students who were affected by COVID-19 reached to nearly half-million, these students were sent to their own countries and were directed to continue their learning through cybernetic system of learning (Bao, 2020). In the meantime, UNESCO (2020) mentioned some other countries of the world, which were badly affected by the pandemic tried or trying to find out online learning solutions for their students as it seems hard to sit and learn through classroom milieus. Institutions for higher studies undesirably affect in Italy, Iran, Pakistan, Singapore, UK, USA, UAE, Saudi Arabia were partially or fully closed and learners were forced to learn through e-learning system.

The aforementioned information's provided a great number of explanations and details as to why the learners are to be expected to learn more meritoriously through online learning in the hours of ordeal. But, in the third-world countries, like Pakistan where socio-economic conditions of the people are miserable and the basic infrastructure and necessities for online learning are completely void, learners particularly, L2 learners have to face a magnitude of problems during COVID-19. Consequently, this study intends to explore the impact of online learning on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19 in the perspective of Punjab, Pakistan.

Aim of the Research

This work throws light on the impact of online learning on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19 in the universities of the Punjab province. It is crystal clear that the countries like Pakistan where the installation of internet technology and its use in online teaching/learning is at its initial stage in the educational institutes. So, the sudden shift from traditional classroom milieu to online L2 learning due to COVID-19 caused a series of problems for L2 learners i.e. course contents of L2 for online learning and various socio-economic challenges and opportunities at the same time. Subsequently, the core aim of the research is to examine L2 learners' self-projected level of satisfaction and contentment with this system of learning.

Research Significance

The study is significant as it attempted to explore the impact of online learning on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19 in the universities of the Punjab, Pakistan and its importance stemmed from the following reviews:

I.   This work is about the investigation of the learners' perceptions and beliefs about the usefulness and reliability of the course contents for online learning in the course of COVID-19 pandemic in the Punjab province.
II.   Data from the present study examine the socio-economic challenges and opportunities that L2 learners are likely to encounter during online learning in the wake of COVID-19.
III.   The recent study would significantly contribute to the Punjab Curriculum Wing in planning suitable L2 curriculum for the students of the Punjab who are compelled to study online due to Coronavirus.

Questions of the Research

I.   What are the learners' perceptions about the efficacy of L2 course contents for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic?

II.   What are the socio-economic challenges for L2 learners while learning online in the wake of COVID-19 in the Punjab?

III.   METHODS AND MATERIALS

This research was accomplished with the support of mixed method approach which deals with both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. Selected whereabouts of this work were public sector universities of the province of Punjab. Total 800 student questionnaires were online distributed due to COVID-19) to the informants and only 500 were returned. The convenience sampling procedure was used to select the respondents for the current study. The respondents selected for this research work were the students were of BS English program of the selected institutions in the Fall Semester of 2020 academic year. These institutions are gender-integrated from graduation to post-graduation level and data was collected online due to COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown was observed throughout the country. One structured and close-ended questionnaire was used by the authors of this study through literature search and L2 learners were enquired to reveal their level of endorsement or discrepancy on a four-point rating scale type model, counting, Yes, No, No Idea, and No Comments. Four pieces of the questionnaire enclosed demographics, and four items of the questionnaire determined the positive or negative perceptions of L2 learners about online learning in the wake of COVID-19. Before the distribution of the structured questionnaire to the respondents, validation by two PhDs of the area concerned was done. Pilot study was also carried out and 35 respondents gave their opinions and reliability of the questionnaire was 0.86. Questionnaire was distributed to the respondents through MS Teams and Zoom and their consent for providing data for the study was taken in black and white.

Table 1: L2 Learners' Responses Description

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
• MALE	250	50.0%
• Female	250	50.0%
Universities		
• PU	50	10,0%
• University of Sargodha	50	10,0%
• University of Sahiwal	50	10,0%
• BZU	50	10,0%
• GU	100	20,0%
• IUB	100	20,0%
• KFUEIT	100	20,0%
Semesters		
• 2nd	125	25.0%
• 4th	125	25.0%
• 6th	125	25.0%
• 8th	125	25.0%
Choice of Online Devices		
• Smart Phones	340	68.0%
• Tablets	15	03.0%
• Laptops	140	28.0%
• Desktops	05	01.0%

Table 1 displays data about frequency and percentage of gender of foreign language learners, the universities of the Punjab province in which they are enrolled in Fall Semester 2020 and the devices they used during online learning. In this table the acknowledged data was divided into male and female categories of L2 learners on equal ratio of 250 each from the seven leading universities of the Punjab with the number of respondents as PU. 50, University of Sargodha. 50, University of Sahiwal. 50, BZU. 50, GU. 100, IUB. 100, KFUEIT. 100 and the semesters of L2 learners consists of even numbers i.e. 2, 4, 6, 8., and the devices they

used for online learning were: smart phones, tablets, laptops and desktops with the ratio of 340, 15, 140 and 05 respectively.

Table 2: I find difficulties about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	433	86.6	86.6	86.6
No	37	07.4	07.4	94.0
No Idea	20	04.0	04.0	98.0
No Comments	10	02.0	02.0	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In table 2 the results revealed that 433 L2 learners out of 500 which were 86.6% of the total number of the learners who were carefully selected for this research design and they were of the opinion that they feel hurdles difficulties about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is also 86.6%. On the contrary, only 37 out of 500 foreign language learners which were 7.4% of the total number of the learners and they were satisfied about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19. The 2nd group of the population carries 7.4 valid percentage and 94.0 cumulative. Irrespective of the aforementioned two arguments of the scale just 20 L2 learners out of 500 having only 04.0% of the thorough sample, valid percentage did not alter and it was stagnant as 04.0 while cumulative percentage touched to 98.0 and the targeted learners were of the thought that they have no idea about the issue. On the other hand, about the last point of the four-point rating scale 10 out of 500 learners said that they do not want to comment on the topic and it was just 02.0% of the total number, valid percentage was also 02.0 while cumulative percentage stretched to 100.0. Comparison between the first two main categories of the four-point rating scale show that the students who confirmed that they find difficulties about the course contents anticipated for online learning sessionduring the period of COVID-19 and they were around 433 out of 500 learners which were 86.6 % of the total sample. Opposite to it only 07.4% of the total number were of the view that they are fully satisfied with the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19 and they were only 37 out of 500 L2 learners.

Table3: Socio-economic disparities are big hurdles for me in online learning L2 during COVID-19 pandemic.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	356	71.2	71.2	71.2
No	102	20.4	20.4	91.6
No Idea	22	04.4	04.4	96.0
No Comments	20	04.0	04.0	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In reply to the statement "Socio-economic disparities are big hurdles for me in online learning L2 during COVID-19 pandemic" table 3 indicates that356 learners of L2 out of 500 which were 71.2% of the total number of the learners who were of the thought that socio-economic disparities are big obstruction for them in online L2 learning L2 during COVID-19 pandemic.Both the valid and cumulative % of the first scale is identical as 71.2. On the other hand, 102 respondents out of 500 which were 20.4% of the total population,believedsocio-economic disparities are not big hindrance for them in online L2 learning L2 during COVID-19 pandemic. Second group of the respondents had 20.4 valid and 91.6 cumulative percentage. Contrary to the preceding 2 statements of the scale 22 respondents out of 500 which carries 4.4% of the whole sample, valid percentage remains unchanged as 4.4 whereas cumulative percentage stretched to 96.0. L2 learners were of the view that they do not have any inklingregarding the issue. 20 students out of 500 supposedspeechless regarding this concern, and it was 4.0% of the total number of the selected respondents.Valid percentage was 4.0 whereas cumulative grasped 100.0 percent.Assessment between L2 learners whocorroborated that socio-economic disparities are big obstruction for them in L2 learning L2

during COVID-19 pandemic, were 356 out of 500 which were 71.2 % of the total population. Divergent to this situation only 20.4% of the total number of the learners opposed this idea.

Table 4: I feel substantial burden of learning L2 through available online learning system during COVID-19.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	473	94.6	94.6	94.6
No	20	04.0	04.0	98.6
No Idea	05	01.0	01.0	99.6
No Comments	02	00.4	00.4	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In table 4 the results emphasized that 473 foreign language learners out of 500 which were 94.6% of the total number of the students who were randomly selected for this research design and they were of the view that they realize substantial burden of learning L2 through available online learning system in the course of COVID-19. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is also 94.6. reverse to this situation, 20 learners out of 500 which indicate 4.0% of the entiresample and they thought that they don't feel substantial burden of learning L2 through available online learning system during COVID-19. This second type of the learners had 4.0 valid percentage and 98.6 cumulative. Contrary to the prior2arguments of the scale, only 5 out of 500 learners which were just 1.0% of the entirepopulation, valid %does not transform and remain stagnant as 1.0%whereas cumulative %stretched to 99.6 and these respondents were of the view that they are neutral regarding the concern. Only 2 learners out of 500 said that they do not want to comment on the topic, and it was 0.4% of the total number, valid percentage was also 0.4 while cumulative percentage stretched to 100.0. Comparison between the students who confirmed that they realize substantial burden of learning L2 through available online learning system during COVID-19 were about 473 out of 500 students and they were 94.6 % of the total number. Opposite to it only 04.0% of the total number were of the view that they don't recognize substantial burden of learning L2 through available online learning system throughout COVID-19 and they were only 20 out of 500 students.

Table 5: Classroom milieus foster quality L2 learning instead of online learning.

Four-point rating scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	480	96.0	96.0	96.0
No	10	02.0	02.0	98.0
No Idea	04	00.8	00.8	98.8
No Comments	06	01.2	01.2	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

In table 5 the statement "classroom milieus foster quality L2 learning instead of online learning" Shows 480 target language learners out of 500 which were 96.0% of the total number of the students who were fascinated to learn in L2 classroom instead of online learning during the hard times of COVID-19. The valid and cumulative percentage of the first scale is same as 96.0. On the other hand, only 10 out of 500 students which were 02.0% of the total number of the learners who were of the belief that online L2 learning is much better for them. This second category of the students had 02.0 valid and 98.0 cumulative percentage. On the contrary to the previous two categories of the four-point rating scale 04 students out of 500 which were only 00.8% of the whole number, valid percentage remains same as 00.8 while cumulative reached to 98.8 and they were of the thought that they do not have any idea about this topic. Only, 06 out of 500 students said that they do not want to comment on the issue, and it was 01.2% of the total number, valid percentage was also 01.2% while cumulative percentage reached to 100.0. Comparison between the students who endorsed that classroom milieus foster quality L2 learning instead of online learning were 96.0% of the total number of the students. On the contrary, only 10 out of 500 students opposed this idea and were only 02.0% of the whole number.

The key purpose of this work was to discover the impact of socio-economic disparities on learners' self-reported performance in L2, using cybernetic learning milieus during COVID-19 in the Punjab, Pakistan.

Research Question# 01

What are the learners' perceptions about the efficacy of L2 course contents for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic?

Universities nearly all over the globe have previously been locked due to COVID-19 pandemic but this decision of closure was taken by the cabinet of Imran Khan in Pakistan from Friday March 13th. Due to this critical situation, the government of Pakistan, relevant educational institutions and the teachers, especially English language teachers suddenly faced with the trials and challenges of how to carry on the educational activities of the students, including L2 students, enrolled in millions in all over the public universities of Pakistan. It was an uphill task for Pakistani government, educational institutes and the students to cover the course contents that were used to be taught to the learners before the spread of COVID-19 in classroom milieus. In the month of April 2020 most of the universities of the Punjab started teaching foreign language students with Learning Management System (LMS) and within two months this system was altogether shifted from LMS to Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Within limited resources of technology, internet and untrained teachers and students, English language teachers and students started their online teaching/learning through synchronous and asynchronous mode. The synchronous approach means that L2 teachers and learners continue online teaching/learning at particular time in a week. While asynchronous style in the context of the current research means that foreign language teachers and students carry out online teaching/learning activities in a range of longer period, one week for example. So, the first approach was opted in all the universities of the Punjab province. But the problem in all the scenario was how to cover the course contents which were designed before COVID-19 era and all the universities strictly made the teachers bound to cover these course contents in two phases i.e. in mid-term and final-term exams. For this purpose most of the L2 teachers adopted readymade materials in the forms of PowerPoint slides, Word documents, PDF files, YouTube audios and videos, instead of trying to create their own materials according to the nature of the course contents provided by the university in the forms of audios, videos, word documents pictures, PowerPoint Slides, and PDF documents. That is why the results from the learners' questionnaire regarding 'they find difficulties about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19, most of the respondents gave their opinion that they find complications and problems about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19 as these are just suitable in the face to face classroom settings and if, unfortunately this pandemic situation lasts for a long period of time the revision of the L2 course contents is inevitable otherwise the performance of the students will decrease rapidly. The findings of this study are completely reversed to the study conducted by Demuyakor, J. (2020) on Ghanaian international students in China and majority of the learners supported online learning as good initiative during the pandemic and the sole reason behind this satisfaction is the compacted cybernetic infrastructure and highly trained teachers and their learners. On the other hand, the results of the present study confirm that the course contents which were created for the face to face learning, socio-economic disparities, substantial burden of learning L2 have negative relation with the learners' L2 satisfaction during online learning in the wake of COVID-19. Similarly, results also suggest that a greater number of respondents viewed and weighted classroom milieu more suitable and satisfactory as compare to online learning systems. The results of the present study are consistent with the studies of Upoalkpajor, J., L., N., &Upoalkpajor, C., B., (2020), Owusu-Fordjour, C., Koomson, C., K., Hanson, D., (2020) as their outcomes also showcased that the learners faced a number of problems during online learning but the talked about the learning problems in general but the findings of this study are related to only L2 online learning. It is also evident from the results of the current study that with the enhancement of basic cybernetic infrastructure in the higher education institutes and well-trained teachers and students in its utilization can attain favorable results and L2 satisfaction.

Research Question# 02

What are the socio-economic challenges for L2 learners while learning online in the wake of COVID-19 in the Punjab**?**

Several socio-economic trials and tribulations not only encountered by L2 teachers but also learners and their parents alike during online learning in the wake of COVID-19. In this context some valid reasons are identified:

- The very first challenge in online L2 learning is that more than 70% of the population of Pakistan is living in the far flung areas and villages, parents mostly belong to laborer class or they are farmers and their financial conditions are miserable, devoid of economic and social resources to provide L2 learners internet facilities, smartphones and laptops that are inevitable to their online L2 learning.
- The remote areas of Pakistan in general and Punjab in particular are lacking the internet facilities even in the 21st century. That is why most of the students have to travel on foot or on personal conveyance to reach near those areas where internet coverage was available to take their classes. Even students living in hilly areas have to reach at the top of the mountain to catch the internet signals. Even in the settled areas unstable internet coverage caused a number of problems during lectures, presentations, assignments submission and quizzes.
- Sometimes students don't have internet package, or they can only afford a short internet package that remains not sufficient to continue their online participation in the class. So, financial condition of the parents produces irreparable educational effects for their siblings.
- Low level of digital literacy and training both L2 teachers and learners obstructed their teaching/learning abilities resulting in poor performance of the students even in the online exams.
- During the online classes most of the L2 students having different reasons remain absent from their respective classes and their reported proficiency in various segments i.e. in assignments, presentations and quizzes program remained lesser as they were in natural classroom environment. In the present research overall situation in not in favor of online learning especially in the remote areas of the Punjab due to above mentioned socio-economic inequalities among the masses. The present study also links with the outcomes of Toquero, C., M., (2020), Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020), Dutta, A. (2020) as their findings also pointed out that due to COVID-19 pandemic the students in general and L2 leaners faced scores of social and economic problems during online learning and these learners demanded an adequate access to the cybernetic milieus. So that they can be able to develop a positive outlook toward their educational objectives.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATION

The findings about the 'the impact of online learning on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2 during COVID-19'revealed that the course contents for online learning and socio-economic disparities in the wake of COVID-19 for learning L2 through the use of internet technology, both brought significant negative effects on learners' self-reported satisfaction in L2. Giving response about the first research question most of the respondents indicated that they find complications and problems about the course contents projected for online learning in the wake of COVID-19 as these contents are suited in face to face classroom settings and if, unfortunately this pandemic situation lasts for a long period of time the revision of the L2 course contents is inevitable otherwise the performance of the students will decrease rapidly. Similarly, a number of challenges were reported from the research population about the second question of research, as the major part of the population lives in villages, desserts, and hilly areas by which their socio-economic condition usually remains very low by which the students of these areas are devoid of economic and social resources to provide themselves internet facilities, smartphones and laptops that are inevitable to their online learning. Most of the foreign language learners during their online classes remained absent and the have different reasons in this context and their reported proficiency in various segments i.e. in assignments, presentations and quizzes program remained lesser as they were showing in traditional classroom environment. In the present research overall situation in not in favor of online learning especially in the remote areas of the Punjab due to above mentioned socio-economic disparities among the nation.

VI. CONTRIBUTION/ORIGINALITY OF THE STUDY

Sense development among L2 learners regarding online learning with the burden of socio-economic disparities is the major challenge for educational institutes, ministry of education, federal government and especially for the Punjab Province. This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the COVID-

19 in a comprehensive way and the current research can assist the policymakers to tackle the issues raised over here especially socio-economic inconsistencies so that online L2 learning can be beneficial for the learners. After observing the indigenous needs and requirements of the foreign language learners such as course contents which are being taught to the universities learners and the socio-economic inequalities which are the big obstructions for the target language learners in the way of L2 learning in the Punjab Province. The study investigated that online L2 learning in the wake of COVID-19 is beneficial for the students as it not only saves their time but also guarantees their health. Yet the most crucial job which the government of Pakistan and the government of Punjab have to perform is that they have to revise the course contents according to the requirement of the electronic system and with this they will have to provide all the required facilities to the students in general but to the needy students in particular so that they can get best use of this system.

VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH GAPS

In conducting the present study, a few limitations were observed, and research gaps were created as revealed below:

i.   The respondents of this work were only male and female foreign language students and their age limit was ranging from 18 to 22 years. So, further researches on kids and Postgraduate level can be conducted to view the comprehensive standpoint of the target society.
ii.   These students were only belonging public sector universities of the Punjab. Contrary to this in future researches sub campuses of the public sector universities, colleges where BS in English language and literature is running, and private colleges and universities can also be included for better understanding of the issue.
iii.   The study was restricted to English departments of the public sector universities of the Punjab province only. While in other multitude of departments in public and private universities also carry the potential to respond on the confronted situation.
iv.   The contributors contained within this research were from only semesters 2, 4, 6 and 8. While in futuristic researches opinions from MA, MPhil and PhD students can also be invited. Further researches should guarantee the results and findings to be more universal and comprehensive.

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