

ISSUES OF ONLINE EDUCATION SYSTEM: FAMILY LEVEL FACTORS

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Abstract: *With the social distancing on COVID-19 outbreak, in-person education has changed to online teaching and learning. It has affected the needs of education of children around the world. According to the UNICEF (2020), around 1.5 billion school children were affected by school closures (UNICEF, 2020). Literature shows that the school closures has affected not only children but also parents. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the issues of online learning due to COVID-19 pandemic at the family level. The study was based on primary data, which was collected from Western Province based on snowball sampling method through an online questionnaire in 2021 and analyzed using SPSS. The sample size was 156. The mean age of children is 14.95 and majority of them were spending 5-9 hours daily for their learnings. Findings revealed that there are advantages as well as disadvantages with online learning.*

Keywords: Social distancing, COVID-19 outbreak, school closures, in-person education, online learning

Introduction

COVID-19 has become a major global health crisis in the 21st century. It hits global education as well as human health. With the COVID-19 crisis, social distancing and stay-at-home procedure has disconnected in-person education. According to the UNICEF, at the height of nationwide and local lockdowns, around 1.5 billion schoolchildren were affected by school closures (UNICEF, 2020). Therefore, it forced millions of parents around the world to educate their children at home and nearly 80% of parents were educating their children at home, at the beginning of the pandemic (Wadley, 2020).

In this era, education has become a major need of people apart from food, water and shelter. In Sri Lanka, earlier, right for education was limited to wealthy people, and in 1948, after the act of free education (Liyanage, 2014) it became universal. In person teaching is the main method of sharing knowledge in the field of education of Sri Lanka. With the effect of COVID-19 pandemic it has changed to the distance learning methods such as online teaching.

Majority of studies have focused on the impact on online education in the perspectives of the parents Wadley (2020) mentioned in his study that the parents are experiencing numerous daily schedule disruption such as changes in sleep patterns, lack of physical activity, social isolation from relatives, disconnection with leisure and entertainment etc. with children's home schooling. The study by Wadley (2020) was conducted in associated with a group of 405 people in the United States and revealed that the half

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