



## Research Article

# Challenges to gifted education in the Covid-19 pandemic about online learning in Saudi Arabia from the perspective of gifted students and parents

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the challenges to gifted education in the Covid-19 pandemic about online learning in Saudi Arabia from the perspective of gifted student and their parents. Participants of gifted students were (n = 30); parents were (n=15). Using the in-vivo coding, the case studies of were analyzed. Semi-structured interviews, interviewer observations, and notes taken during the interview were the tools used to gather data and build the case studies. By in-vivo coding, the coding process was carried out through which categories and their corresponding codes were create. The results indicate that school closures and isolation have led parents of gifted children to experience a higher psychological burden and more family conflict than normal. In their self-regulated learning, gifted have experienced changes. Covid-19 has also disrupted their daily activities and prevented their free movement, making them feel like they are not doing something important, resulting in adverse effects such as sleep disorders, depression, isolation, frustration, and loss of motivation. Most gifted students often have negative online learning perspectives, indicating it as inefficient and lacking in effectiveness and connections.

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## Introduction

The world is currently witnessing a major event that may threaten education with a huge crisis, which may be the most dangerous in this era. The current, as of March 28, 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused more disruptions to 6.1 billion children and youths, nearly 80% of students are enrolled in 161 countries in schools worldwide<sup>2</sup>. This came at a time when the countries of the world are already suffering from an educational crisis, as there are many students in schools, but they do not acquire the basic skills needed in practical life. Some of the steps taken by many countries to avoid or reduce the spread of Corona virus infectious disease in 2019 are physical distance, quarantine, home isolation, and school closure (Murphy, 2020; Weeden and Cornwell 2020). School closures are projected to have affected 67 percent of the world's student population including school gifted program as part of the Covid-19 initiatives to prevent the spread of the virus. The Corona crisis came without a date forcing Arab countries to make a sudden transition to online learning.

Most countries around the world are struggling to provide ways to allow free access to educational platforms for students. Despite the widespread use of the Internet in the world, many countries in the Arab region, except in some rich oil countries, have not previously experienced the technology offered by online learning. Saudi Arabia has conducted online learning using state-of-the-art devices through an educational computerization project started after the corona crisis. It was an attempt in parallel with the national computerization trend to introduce new information and communication devices into the fields of education. As a result of these projects, more computers in the fields of education and high-speed broadband communication were placed in place in which online learning could be applied.

Therefore, most learners in Saudi Arabia are new to different types of online learning, and content providers provide reliable online learning services through ongoing research and content development. A rich supply of materials and learning opportunities that overcome spatial-temporal limitations, considered to be the advantages of the online learning system, could match the characteristics of gifted students, which can be particularly suitable for gifted education (Lesia & Netteloton, 2015). With the wide availability of learning, the expansion of internet learning opportunities for gifted students has also emerged (Pfeiffer, 2018). Van Tassel-Baska noted that in particular, developing websites that can be accessed via mobile environments can freely and actively support more educational activities for gifted students (2007, 367). In response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, most gifted education centers in Saudi Arabia have provided open-access resources for gifted students and their parents. Taking into account the educational characteristics of online-learning after the corona crises, the following areas were chosen that need the most public education budgets: reducing educational disparities between learners, encouraging a selection-oriented curriculum, and gifted education. Initially, online learning was seen as a way of complementing the face-to-face education problem that arose from the corona crisis, offering supplementary educational material that could be learned at times other than normal class time, presenting assignments, or providing a means of online question and answer session. Subsequently, associated programs were established to incorporate online gifted education and an experimental program produced by the Ministry of Education taking into account the characteristics of the gifted student (Ministry of Education, 2020). Saudi parents are genuinely concerned about the education of their children, particularly if the latter has exceptional skills. Such parents also claim that the system of public education does not adequately enhance the potential of their gifted child. Consequently, parents also enroll their children in private schools and after school programs. For a decade now, online learning opportunities have shown a marked advance in options for gifted learners, future research efforts may expand this study to explore the long-term use of online learning as a single method after corona crises for gifted education.

Despite the urgent need for online learning in the time of Corona, there are prolonged criticisms of experts in gifted education for these technologies, and even a study of the Center for National Educational Policy in the United States in 2019, recommended halting or reducing digital schools in the country until the causes of weakness are confirmed its impact was evident in many studies compared to traditional schools (Ghanayem, 2020). The Corona crisis imposed in most countries of the world to find solutions to confront the problem of gifted education from a distance, as the new Corona epidemic "Covid 19" overran the barriers of time and place, and from here came the calls for "online learning of the gifted" to overcome the barriers of time and place. The biggest challenge facing gifted teachers is meeting the needs of gifted students in light of the Corona virus pandemic. Teachers of the gifted have shown great interest in distance education as a way to increase their ability to provide wider services for the gifted, especially for those who were not fortunate enough to join the gifted sponsorship programs (Aboud, 2015). The simplicity with which they can be homogeneously grouped with their intellectual peers is one of the most noticeable advantages of online learning for gifted students (Potts, 2019). Steenbergen-Hu, Makel, & Olszewski-Kubilius (2016) found that gifted students benefit in particular from being put in special groups expressly designed for their academic needs. online learning for gifted people may allow avoiding the shortcomings and disadvantages left by traditional education, where overcrowding classes, poor financial resources, and the lack of access to services to remote areas ... are factors that make remote gifted education the best option. Gifted teachers show an interest in online learning as a way to increase their ability to provide wider services to gifted students, especially those who have limited opportunities to attend advanced courses (Kubilius & Corwith, 2010). Online learning programs for gifted students seem to be a good option for gifted students whose circumstances prevent them from actually attending the gifted programs (face to face), including those who have a crowded class schedule, or who do not have gifted care programs in their schools (Milkine, 2007). There are a variety of factors that theoretically impact both traditional and gifted students' motivational trajectories. The school gifted programs have a readily accessible peer group with many of the brightening students, the most important role that gifted adult students play with their peer group, these honors programs and are structured to give gifted students the opportunity to excel with a group of peers of a similar level of skill, motivation, and previous academic achievement (Lesia & Netteloton, 2015). The challenge lies in gifted students' online learning to fulfill their needs away from the peer group. As Potts (2019) found in his study that gifted students are flexible and often competitive in heterogeneously clustered classrooms, they typically excel in distant learning environments as well. On the other hand, there are many problems related to online learning, such as the inability of students to use body language as an indicator of student participation and understanding (Gallagher, 2011).

### Online Learning of Gifted Students

By definition, gifted students are those whose needs in traditional educational environments are not adequately met (Wallace, 2009) and for whom the differentiation of curriculum and activities plays a critical role in meeting their learning needs (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020). With the growth of technology and networking that has expanded across the world, the expansion of online learning opportunities for gifted students has also arisen (Pfeiffer, 2018). The development of curriculum design based on developing talented individuals has been encouraged by new technology and communication methods (Kettler, 2016). Online education promotes student-centered, one-on-one teaching (Potts, 2019). The teaching method was mainly the face-to-face method in the first stage of gifted education, in which no consideration was paid to gifted students who were geographically remote. While several training courses were offered specifically to improve the skills and abilities of gifted teachers, 44.5% of teachers responsible for gifted education, according to statistics from gifted centers, did not engage in training due to lack of time and some personal circumstances, which created questions about whether they had sufficient educational experience. As the curriculum for gifted education is determined at the discretion of the principles of the school, without consulting experts in gifted education, the teachers responsible for providing gifted education have developed their own school curriculum. While previously developed online learning materials were accessible, no sharing system was put in place between gifted Saudi educational centers of gifted education, resulting in a lack of educational content that could be used. Actions that can overcome time and geographical disadvantages and provide a rich educational atmosphere are therefore urgently needed, thus promoting teaching practice and the need for an online training course. Thus, most gifted education centers in Saudi Arabia have provided open-access services for gifted students and their parents in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The following areas were chosen that require most public education budgets, taking into account the educational characteristics of online learning after corona crises: reducing educational gaps between learners, supporting a selection-oriented curriculum and gifted education.

Initially, online learning was seen as a way to supplement the face-to-face education problem that resulted from the corona crisis, offering additional instructional content that could be learned at times other than traditional class time, providing assignment, or providing an online question and answer session. Subsequently, similar initiatives were set up to combine gifted online education and an experimental program created by the Ministry of Education, taking into account the characteristics of gifted students.

### The Historical Backdrop of Gifted Education in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has seen dramatic developments in gifted education over the past decade. The approach for recognizing and maintaining gifted students may be one of the most important topics for educators (Aljughaiman and Ayob, 2017). There are three combined initiatives in the Kingdom for gifted education: a) King Abdulaziz and his Companions Foundation (Mawhiba), b) the Ministry of Education, and c) the National Center for Assessment and Evaluation (Qiyas). The official beginning of gifted education in Saudi Arabia dates back to 1999 (Aljughaiman and Grigorenko, 2013). Enrichment is the most popular KSA form of care for gifted students where additional tasks have been provided to students identified as gifted, most of whom have not been given in regular classrooms (Algefari, 2010; Alamer, 2014). Besides the method of enrichment, academic acceleration began in 2014 in the Kingdom's schools (Alarfaj & Al-Omair, 2020). Although some aspects of enrichment are one of the types of acceleration, such as engaging gifted students in early research topics (Siegle, Wilson, & Little, 2013). There are several types of academic acceleration, but full year acceleration is the type of acceleration that is used in the kingdom (Algefari, 2010). Despite the reality that there are many forms of academic acceleration, the kingdom uses full-year acceleration (Algefari, 2010). Academic acceleration is widely used, and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of gifted students has been shown, but its use in the Kingdom is still limited due to teachers' and parents' accelerating attitudes (Alghamdi, 2018). A full-year acceleration in the Kingdom implies that students are permitted in their educational career to exceed one academic year or a maximum of two years, ensuring that they complete the pre-university stage faster than their non-accelerated peers (Ministry of Education, 2016). In Saudi Arabia, the beginning of an acceleration started implementing a gifted school program using the method of partial acceleration (based on the subject) to accelerate students in one classroom or by partial enrollment in advanced classes through academic content consistent with their abilities (Aljughaiman & Ayoub 2017). In 2005, the Ministry of Education began encouraging students who display exceptional higher superiority than their classmates. And set up a committee to establish acceleration system implementation procedures.

**Problem of Study**

This study was therefore intended to explore the challenges of gifted education in the Covid-19 online learning pandemic from the perspective of gifted students and parents in Saudi Arabia. The research attempts to answer the questions below:

- Q<sub>1</sub>: What are advantages of online learning for gifted student, in your opinion? What are disadvantages?
- Q<sub>2</sub>: What is the impact of online learning during Covid-19 on socioemotional status of gifted students from parents' and gifted students' perception?
- Q<sub>3</sub>: What are the perceptions of parents and gifted students on the technical challenges of online learning during Covid-19?
- Q<sub>4</sub>: How satisfied are parents and gifted students with the online learning curriculum and evaluation methods during Covid-19?

**Method**

**Research Model**

This research is designed as a case study, one of the qualitative research methods. Case studies are studies that aim to describe the existing situation, facts and events in depth. In this study, a description was made with the focus of the opinions of gifted students on online learning opportunities in the Covid19 process.

**Participants**

**Table 1.**

*Participants' Characteristics*

		n	%	
<b>Gifted students</b>	Gender			
		Male	14	47
		Female	16	53
	Age			
		15 year	20	67
		16 year	10	33
<b>Parents of gifted children</b>	Grade level			
		10 <sup>th</sup> grade	14	47
		11 <sup>th</sup> grade	16	53
	Gender			
		male	7	47
		Female	8	53
	Child's grade			
		male	7	47
	Female	8	53	

Participants in the group of gifted students attended public schools in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade, (n = 30). The participants were aged 15 to 16. Fourteen of the participants were male in relation to gender, while sixteen were female. Table 1 provides a description of the characteristics of the participants. Of the 15 parents who participated in the study, 47% of the fathers were parents of a gifted son, while 53% were parents of a gifted daughter.

**Instrument**

The aim of this study was to address the challenges of gifted education in the Covid-19 pandemic in Saudi Arabia from the perspective of gifted students and parents about online learning. To collect data, semi-structured interviews were used with gifted students and their parents. The four key subjects of these interviews were: 1) advantages and disadvantages of online learning, 2) The impact of online learning during Covid-19 on socialemotional status of gifted students from parents' and gifted students' perception. 3) Technological challenges of online learning. 4) Parent and gifted student satisfaction with online learning approaches as well as assessment methods during Covid-19. In addition, demographic data was also collected in the initial interview process.

## Procedures

To collect the data, a semi-structured interview was used with gifted children ( $n = 30$ ) and parents of gifted children ( $n = 15$ ). The participants (gifted students) were identified using ability tests developed and implemented by King Abdul-Aziz and his Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity. For the conduct of the research, approval was obtained from the Ethical Committee at King Faisal University. Participants were contacted via e-mail and briefly informed of the study's purpose and objectives. The data collected from every interview was arranged in the form of a case study. The length was 40 to 50 minutes for each semi-structured interview. Data was collected during September and November 2020.

## Data Processing

Using the in-vivo coding, the case studies were analyzed. Semi-structured interviews, interviewer observations, and notes taken during the interview were the tools used to gather data and build the case studies. By in-vivo coding, the coding process was carried out through which categories and their corresponding codes were created. Classical content analysis focused on content analysis and coding of certain sections of the material was used to analyze the data collected, followed by the compilation of similar codes in groupings. The process of coding ensured that codes were obtained in all cases, that the distinction of content between codes was carried out and that the frequency of each code (quantitative information) was clarified. The data processing and coding process is independently worked on by two coders. The categories of responses and discrepancies were discussed in depth after completion and, after an agreement was reached, randomly selected case studies were coded by a third coder, who was generally aware of the main subject and fields of study. The degree of reliability provide to be acceptable for this study (88%).

## Results and Discussion

The study results show the views of parents of gifted adolescents, as well as those of gifted children themselves (students). The first part discusses the results with the parent group, while the second discusses the responses of gifted students.

### **Q1: What are advantages of online learning for gifted student, in your opinion? What are disadvantages?**

Gifted adolescents during the COVID-19 period favored online learning, according to participating parents ( $n= 11$ ), since they can study whenever and wherever they want, regardless of spatial and temporal constraints, resulting in high satisfaction with learning. In contrast, according to participating parents, many gifted adolescents ( $n= 22$ ) have experienced stress from loads of homework, attending classes, and learning. The unexpected circumstances that resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic altered their adolescents' daily lives and made it almost difficult to escape the home setting and socialize in the conventional way with peers. These findings were similar to Potts' (2019). Parents indicated that these circumstances led to their children not being able to participate in other extra - curricular activities and had a negative impact on their interest in attending school, leading some of them to fail to complete their schoolwork and fulfill other school-related responsibilities. Nevertheless, the same conditions were also claimed to have a positive effect on the participation of online gifted education (Aboud, 2015). Perhaps the primary advantage of online gifted education is the flexibility to provide gifted learners with adequate and differentiating lessons without the need to consider peer-mate abilities. In addition, the problems of getting younger learners in the classrooms of those who are older are eliminated (Kubilius & Corwith, 2010).

Most of the gifted students in this study have a positive perception of online learning. Most of them assume that participating styles of learning can be valued higher, indicating that they are able to learn, enjoy sharing with others what they learn, and make continuous efforts to meet the expectations of their teachers. Similar, Thomson (2010), in a study in which he conducted interviews with gifted students and their parents, explained that online learning was able to differentially communicate all individual experiences to gifted students more than the regular class does, and the results of the interview showed that the gifted students were able to work safely and at a speed that suits them while they were online learning. Most gifted students in this study have more time to meditate, feel that they have more control over their learning process, and are occupied with independent self-learning. In addition, gifted students reported that they are attracted to online learning and fulfilled their academic needs that are not met in traditional classrooms with the unique characteristics of allowing them to choose when, where and how to learn this result similar to Gilbert (2015). It can be seen a description of the required sub codes (Table 2).

**Table 2.**

*The Effect of COVID-19 on the Perspectives of Parents Regarding online Learning*

<b>Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Learning</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub- codes</b>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has helped in directing the emphasis in student's areas of special interest increased interest and commitment for learning and reading.</li> <li>- A rich supply of resources and learning opportunities that transcend spatial-temporal limitations.</li> <li>- Provide appropriate and differentiating lessons for gifted students without the need to consider peer-mate abilities.</li> <li>- Eliminate the problems of getting younger learners in the classrooms of those who are older</li> </ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involvement in extra curricular activities was discouraged.</li> <li>- Decline in interest in attending online courses disregard for schoolwork and other school-related duties.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.**

*Show the Effect of Covid-19 on the Perspectives of Gifted Student Regarding Online Learning*

<b>The Effect of Covid-19 on the Perspectives of Gifted Student Regarding Online Learning</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub- codes</b>
<b>Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participating learning styles can be scored higher, suggesting they are willing to learn, enjoy sharing what they learn with others.</li> <li>- They have more time to meditate, feel more in control of their learning process, and are engaged in independent self-learning.</li> <li>-Online learning attracts them and fullfied their academic needs that are unmet in conventional classrooms.</li> <li>- Online learning offers gifted students unique properties that help them to choose when, where and how to learn.</li> </ul>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inability of students to use body language as an indicator of student participation and understanding.</li> <li>- Most activities and exercises are not varied and do not challenge gifted students' abilities.</li> </ul>

**Q2. What is The impact of online learning during Covid-19 on socioemotional status of gifted students from parents' and gifted students' perception?**

Table 4 Demonstrates a description of the required sub codes.

**Table 4.**

*Show the Impact of Online Learning on Socioemotional Status of Gifted Students from Parents' and Gifted Students' Perception*

<b>The impact of online learning on socioemotional status of gifted students from parents' and gifted students' perception</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub- codes</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of communication with students, isolation, and separation of students.</li> <li>- Lack of emotional support for gifted students from their peers and teachers personally.</li> <li>- Isolation period has made their children more lonely.</li> <li>- More time as a family together</li> <li>- Closer collaborations with children</li> <li>-A strong opportunity to consider the needs and aspirations of children</li> </ul>
<b>Gifted students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students expressed a preference for a teacher-led learning environment over the more independent online learning system environment.</li> <li>- Gifted students were found to have reservations about the absence of social interaction.</li> <li>- Parents (teachers and friends) expect us all the time to be exceptional, to do our hardest.</li> <li>- Among friends who truly understand us, there are few and far between.</li> <li>- Teenagers feel very disconnected from themselves and very alienated.</li> <li>-Ease of home learning, and not having to go to class.</li> </ul>

A number of parents (n = 13) perceived that online learning is not preferable to traditional learning, arguing that regular school has its advantages, especially in terms of socialization, and that online learning prevents teenagers from achieving their full abilities. However, fewer parents (n = 2) have indicated that the isolation period has made their adolescents more lonely. Parents who suggested that during the isolation period their adolescents felt happier and content, however, attributed those changes to the increased amount of time their teens had to focus on personal interests or hobbies. In a more positive perspective, parents (33 percent) report that they discovered during the pandemic that their adolescents participated in more adequate peer interaction compared to the pre-pandemic period, and reported that their adolescents developed more quality friendships. In general, parents' enjoyment of online classes seemed to depend on their views of their children's social climate. This result similar to Potts (2019). While social interactions were significant for the participants, all students also expressed a preference over the more independent online learning system setting for a teacher-led learning environment. Potts' (2019) research verified this finding.

Parents who indicated that their children felt happy and content during the isolation period, however, attributed such improvements to the increased amount of time their teens had to concentrate on particular interests or hobbies. On a more positive perspective, parents (33%) report that, during the pandemic, they found that, relative to a before the-pandemic period, their adolescents engaged in more adequate peer contact, and they reported that their children developed more quality friendships. The enjoyment of online classes by the parents in general seemed to rely on their views of the social environment of their children. This result similar to Potts (2019). Although social interactions were important for the participants, all students also expressed a preference for a teacher-led learning environment over the more independent online learning system environment. This result was supported by Potts (2019) study. Parents may be a source of social support identified as verbal and non-verbal knowledge or advice, tangible assistance or action given or implied by their presence by social intimates and having beneficial emotional or behavioral effects on recipients (Duraku, & Hoxha, 2020, p. 4).

Gifted teenagers (n= 23) indicated a rise in sleep disorders during the pandemic compared to before the pandemic. They also (n= 20) reported a variety of negative emotions, as well as being both emotionally and physically exhausted, such as feeling bored, lonely, sad, frustrated, powerless, lazy, demotivated, useless, and concerned. Participants (n= 7) generally feel satisfied, happier, positive, calmer, and less nervous and anxious during the pandemic. They related these changes to the wealth of time they had to learn, study, and research about things and topics they were interested in, having more time to engage with their interests and hobbies

**Q3: What are the perceptions of parents and gifted students on the technical challenges of online learning during COVID-19?**

Table 5 Demonstrates a description of the required sub codes.

**Table 5.**

*Show Parents and Gifted Students Perception About the Technological Challenges of Online Learning During Covid-19*

<b>Technological Challenges of Online Learning</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub- codes</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide high-quality updates and virus protection systems for the educational platform.</li> <li>- Attractive e-courses in a way that students</li> <li>- Reliability, security, and beneficiary identification were provided.</li> <li>- Provided appropriate educational rooms.</li> <li>- Imaging and broadcasting devices, and equipment necessary to implement online learning.</li> <li>- Presenting an introductory video to the system helping gifted students to enter the system, interact with teachers.</li> <li>- Providing an electronic digital library to allow gifted students to download modern research papers and modern digital books in both Arabic and foreign languages</li> </ul>
<b>Gifted students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Unexpected technological problems.</li> <li>- Providing technical support to help overcome emergency technical problems.</li> <li>-Supporting students to use the blackboard, and create an e-mail account.</li> </ul>

66 % of parents involved in this study suggested that if teachers were qualified to use the technology, online learning would be of much higher quality. In this context, [Ali \(2007\)](#) describes that difficulties in learning and teaching have led to the development and application of technology. And it is possible to enhance the success of gifted students in academic and non-academic activities by arranging learning behaviors on the internet, enabling gifted students to develop their own capabilities.

78% of gifted learners revealed that there were many factors that encouraged them to take part in online courses, the most important of which was the use of technology. Where technology has changed the way information is provided and shared in the modern era, according to [Siemens \(2006\)](#), and that recent technological advances have made talented students more likely to learn at a distance, so they can create their own knowledge from the vast network of information available to them ([Greenhow, Robelia., & Hughes, 2009](#)). A number of gifted students (n = 19) who participated in this research, on the other hand, explained that online learning faces a major technological problem related to internet speed and the limitation of the capacity of the platform to enable large numbers of students to take part in the same class. Some (n = 4) also stated that they did not enter online at all, and that they trained independently because the teachers' topics did not fulfill their needs.

**Q4: How satisfied are parents and gifted students with the online learning curriculum and evaluation methods during Covid-19?**

Table 6 demonstrates a description of the required sub codes.



**Table 6.***Show Parents' and Gifted Students' Satisfaction of Online Learning Curriculum and Evaluation Methods During Covid-19*

<b>Parents' and gifted students' satisfactions of online learning evaluation methods</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Sub- codes</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Developing and diversifying electronic evaluation methods.</li> <li>- use alternative method for online learning evaluation.</li> <li>- Lack of interaction between teachers and students during classes.</li> <li>- The lack of capacity for gifted students to participate in online teaching.</li> <li>- Lack of interactions during class</li> <li>- Lack of class competition, which can give encouragement</li> </ul>
<b>Gifted students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High homework load and disregard for the individual learning needs of students.</li> <li>- The material was repetitive.</li> <li>- In instruction, lack of creativity.</li> <li>- Many exercises and tests are not diverse and do not challenge the skill of gifted learners</li> </ul>

When asked for their perspective on the arrangement of online learning during the Covid pandemic in Saudi Arabia, the majority of the parent participants (88%) held a negative perception. Many parent participants (71%) noted that their gifted adolescents were frustrated with insufficient activities that did not meet their learning needs. A smaller number of parents (n= 4) confirmed that the curriculum aligned with the traditional curriculum of the school. 63 % of those interviewed indicated assessment methods in online learning did not evaluate their children's actual skills. They suggested that it was necessary to use alternative methods of evaluation. Many gifted students (n= 13) found that many factors did not encourage them to participate in the online course, including bad and unattractive online learning content.

Many gifted students (n=18) reported that the format of online learning was not effective, that it was more difficult for them to access information, and that the overall quality of the online curriculum was poorer than that of the face-to-face classroom. Others (66 percent) indicated that more science quizzes, games, online discussions, and experiments should be included in online learning, and they also thought that online education needs more interaction between them and their teachers. The curriculum should have a scientific basis and, as stated by [Aljughaiman & Mowrer-Reynolds \(2005\)](#), teachers should be familiar with all kinds of advanced web tools. The need to examine if educational teachers are sufficiently equipped to facilitate innovation in e-learning must therefore be emphasized ([Watson, Murin, Vashaw, Gemin & Rapp, 2010](#)).

### **Conclusion**

Physical distancing, quarantine, and isolation have resulted in difficulties regardless of their worldwide usage and efficacy against the spread of Covid-19. This research examined the impact of Covid-19, school closure, and social alienation on the perceptions of gifted students and their parents towards online learning. The results indicate that school closures and loneliness have resulted in a higher psychological burden than normal and more family stress for parents of gifted children. Teenagers have undergone socio-emotional status changes. Covid-19 has also interrupted their movement, making them believe they are not doing something important, leading to detrimental effects such as depression, isolation, frustration, and loss of motivation.

Gifted students still have a negative opinion about the online learning program and evaluation methods, seeing it as ineffective and lacking in effectiveness and interactions. If gifted students are to be encouraged to take part in classes and achieve their full potential, it is crucial that all stakeholders strive for student-centered programs when developing and implementing programs for them that encourage active participation with challenging and intellectually stimulating content that meets the needs of gifted learners.

Parents in the current study were very worried about social environment of their children. This indicates that educators should consider carefully how to infuse more social interactions with their online classes, or make the social interactions that already occur more satisfying. It is a legitimate concern for gifted students to build positive peer relationships. Teachers and students interact immediately in typical teaching settings, not just through verbal

interactions, but also through facial expressions and body language. For gifted learners, online learning is very effective because it allows them the flexibility to find high-quality resources and teachers that might not be accessible in their local communities.

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I confirm that the manuscript describes the original work. No part of the manuscript has been published before, nor is any part of it under consideration for publication at another journal. No financial support was received for this work. There are no conflicts of interest to disclose. The data will be made available online if needed. This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by the author. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the appropriate institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Every effort was made to undertake the best ethical practices, seeking to ensure that there was no harm to participants, no lack of informed consent, no invasion of privacy and no deception involved. I confirm that the manuscript follows the Instructions for Authors and your specific requirements. I also confirm that we have removed any identifying content that could compromise a blind review. There are no opposed reviewers to be identified. The data will be made available online.

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