

# **Consequences Of School Closure Due To Covid-19 For The Education Of Students With Intellectual Disabilities Studying At Govt. Special Education Institutes In Punjab: Teacher's Discernments**

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## **Abstract**

This study seeks to examine teacher's discernments about the consequences of school closures due to COVID-19. Which proved to be a disaster primarily related to school children and more especially students with intellectual disabilities (SWIDs). School's closure means postponement of resources students normally utilize to enhance their learning and adaptive skills. The researcher used descriptive research design to describe the school closure consequences. The data were gathered from 120 randomly sampled teachers of SWIDs at govt. special education institutes of Punjab. A questionnaire was developed as an instrument consisted of 28 items using five-point rating scale to identify the consequences of school closures. Data was examined by using SPSS version 21. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The results revealed that consequences of school's closures due to COVID-19 were majorly decline in adaptive skills, interruptions in the education, suspension of IEP & suspension of therapeutic services of SWIDs. Recommendations were also made on the basis of conclusions.

**Keywords:** School Closure, COVID-19, Intellectual Disabilities, Special Education

## **Introduction**

The consequences of the Covid-19 resulted in shutdown of educational institutes causing problems for SWIDs, their families and teachers. To control the spread of the COVID-19, governments around the globe closed schools for numerous months during the first half of year 2020. It was predicted by the experts that the closures of schools would interrupt student's teaching and learning process (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). Data provided by the (Bank, 2020) manifests that around 1.6 billion school children were affected by these school closures.

Pakistan was one of those pioneer countries around the world who closed school across the country to control widespread of COVID-19. This pandemic COVID-19 deprived of millions of students from classrooms in Pakistan like the whole world throughout the entire

year 2020. It will be important to describe that Pakistan already had an estimated 22.8 million out of school children which is the world's second highest number (Mian & Chachar, 2020).

It is quite evident that all those children who are out of school learn less in spite of the provision of best available resources for home schooling or distance education. Closure of schools proved to be a calamity chiefly for the school going children and more specifically for the SWIDs. A study of (Das et al., 2020) noted when schools remained closed, new learning stops and students are likely to forget already learned concepts. Such a school closure means absence of access to the learning material and resources they frequently utilize in school to improve their adaptive and learning skills. As a result, they are likely to face emotional, social and educational challenges and are likely to suffer drastically during this pandemic (Parsons & Platt, 2020).

Students with Intellectual disabilities are at high risk after the closure of govt. special education schools in Punjab (Malik et al., 2020). According to the latest figures provided by statistical officer of directorate general of special education Punjab, approximately 6041 SWIDs (4283 boys and 1758 girls) across Punjab remained deprive of special education and its related services due to school closure.

Finally, the schools are re-open and SWIDs are back, it is quite possible that few of them may have returned to school with phenomenal progress, not only in academic learning, but also in terms of improved mental health and wellbeing, while majority of them may have arrived on shaky ground in all areas (Lalrinzuali, 2020). Now teachers need to identify their major areas of learning loss to help them bridge up this educational gap. For this reason, the researcher felt the need to highlight the consequences of school closures resulting from covid-19 on the schooling of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes of Punjab.

## **Literature Review**

A crucial aspect of school closure is that students are not able to avail the expertise of trained educators and professionals as in traditional classrooms where teachers engage students in teaching learning activities elaborating wide-ranging material and providing active feedback. While on the other hand learning out of the school requires self-regulated learning where students attain and understand their academic content independently without the help of qualified staff (Rivkin et al., 2005).

In addition to learning, families and SWIDs heavily rely on schools for better socialization, improvement of adaptive skills, organized opportunities for physical activities and more importantly easy access to therapeutic related services (Rothstein & Olympia, 2020). Schools play very vital role in eliminating discriminations in the society by supporting unbiased access of educational sources to SWIDS to learn and enhance their potentials. The consequences of school closure, and, more broadly, of the COVID-19 pandemic, are likely to be experienced inequitably (Glover et al., 2020).

Students with intellectual disabilities require a wide range of services for instance modified reading and writing instructions, in-class accommodations, assistance from teachers and professionals and best available assistive technology for paced learning. Approximately 80% of the SWIDs, neurodevelopmental & mental disorders, and behavioral issues depend manly on school services and may be predominantly affected due to lack of resources,

structured learning environment and specially trained educators (Masonbrink & Hurley, 2020). Similarly, a study of Fazil, Ali and Anser (2020) reported that school closure consequences can affect the teaching and learning process and academic achievement especially for SWIDs that demands supplementary physical attention and supervision from the teachers.

The interruption to everyday routine activities caused by lockdown can have negative impact on learning of SWIDs (Adam, 2020), and possibly can aggravate behavioral, communication, cognitive and self-care problems, maximizing the challenges for parents. The SWIDs have been observed to be frustrated and ill-tempered when they are unable to follow their everyday schedules are disturbed (Dunn, 2007). This pandemic has forced all the world to impose forceful lock down which has resulted in the postponement of speech therapy sessions, social skills groups' suspension and IEP implementation (Lee, 2020).

The pandemic has undoubtedly lasted longer than anyone expected, and now learning gaps are widening and regression is mounting. Previous researchers showed the intentions of researcher towards the impacts of school closures on the children and youth due to COVID-19. However, this study is conducted to highlight the consequences of school closure due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes of Punjab. The study was conducted to:

1. Describe the consequences of school closures on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab as per the discernments of teachers.
2. Pinpoint the severity of consequences of school closure on the education of SWIDs.
3. Uncover the differences among the opinions of govt. special education teachers based on locality, gender and designation regarding school closure.

Efforts were made to answer the following questions:

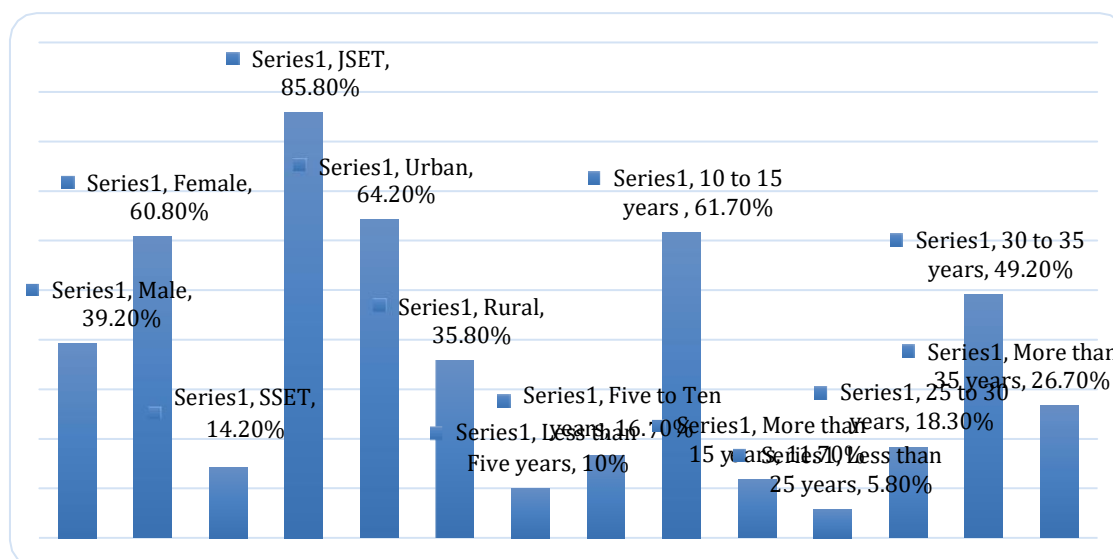
1. What were the consequences of school closures on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab as per the discernments of teachers?
2. What was the severity of consequences of school closure on the education of SWIDs?
3. What were the differences among the discernment of govt. special education teachers based on gender, locality, and designation regarding school closure?

### **Research Methodology**

To describe the consequences of school closures due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab. The descriptive research design was used along with survey method to collect the data from the research participants.

### **Population and Sample of the Study**

Total number of elements from which sample was selected is called population (Azeem et al., 2021; Siddique et al., 2021). The population of this study entailed teachers of SWIDs working at govt. special education institutes of Punjab. Sample was the selected subjects from the population on the basis of some specific technique (Ali et al., 2021; Siddique et al., 2020). Sample of this study was comprised (120) male and female teachers of SWIDs working at govt. special education institutes of Punjab. The Researcher selected the sample randomly from the govt. special education institutes of Punjab.



**Figure No. 1:** Demographic Information of the research participants taken as a sample

Above figure showing the demographic information of the participants of the study there were 39.2% male teachers and 60.85 female teachers. Majority 85.8% Junior Special Education Teachers and 14.2% Senior Special Education Teachers were participated whereas 64.2% were belong to urban areas and 35.8% from rural areas of Punjab. Mostly 61.7% were having 10 to 15 years and minimum 10% were having less than 5 years of teaching experience. Majority 49.2% teachers were between 30 to 35 years of age whereas only 5.8% were less than 25 years of age in this study.

### Instrument

The researcher developed 28 items against five-point rating scale to identify the consequences of school closure due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs. The first component of the questionnaire comprised of demographic variables e.g., gender, age, job experience, locality, and teaching experiences. The 2<sup>nd</sup> component consisted of 28 to probe interrupted learning, rise in dropout, limited educational opportunities, social isolation, suspended IEP, suspended therapeutic services, lack of parent-teacher coordination, and decline in adaptive skill areas. The items of the questionnaire were validated by expert of the relevant field and its reliability was also checked. The Coefficient Alpha Value was .780.

### Data Analysis and Interpretations

Data was analyzed by applying descriptive analysis with the help of SPSS. The SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of the data. To answer the first question of the study frequency distribution of the responses of teachers about the consequences of school closure due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs were analyzed through descriptive statistics.

**Table 1** Showing frequency distribution of the responses of teachers about the consequences of school closure due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs were analyzed through descriptive statistics.

Sr.	Statements	Rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>A Interrupted Learning</b>						
1	SWIDs* were able to continue their learning at home to overcome educational gaps during school closure.	F 65 54.1%	F 24 20%	-- --	F 21 17.5%	F 10 8.33%
	Parents provided enrich learning experience to cater interrupted learning of SWIDs during school closure.	F 60 50 %	F 33 27.5%	F 4 3.3%	F 15 12.5%	F 8 6.6%
3	Parents were appropriately guided to effectively manage the interrupted learning of SWIDs during school closure.	F 10 8.3%	F22 18.3%	F 8 6.6%	F 32 26.6%	F 48 40%
4	School administration designed activities and accelerated program to deal with interrupted learning of SWIDs during school closure.	F 16 13.3%	F 19 15.8%	F 9 7.5%	F31 25.8%	F 45 37.5%

Results of statement 1 show majority (54.1%) of the respondents perceived that SWIDs were unable to continue their learning at home during school closure. Results of statement 2 indicate majority (50%) of the respondents point out that parents were failed to provide ample learning experience to SWIDs at home during school closure. Results of statement 3 depict mostly (40%) respondents believed that parents were appropriately guided to cater interrupted learning of SWIDs at home during school closure. Results of statement 4 manifests that about (37.5%) of respondents stated that school administration designed activities to deal with interrupted learning of SWIDs during school closure.

**Table 2** showing frequency distribution of the following:

<b>B Rise in Dropout</b>						
5	School closure caused a rise in dropout of students with intellectual disabilities.	F 46 38.3 %	F53 44.2 %	F 6 5%	F10 8.3%	F5 4.1%
	Lack of counselling with parents of SWIDs caused increase in dropout due to school closures.	F45 37.5 %	F28 23.3 %	F23 19.2 %	F18 15%	F6 5%
7	Health issues of SWIDs resulted in the rise of dropout rate due to school closure.	F35 29.1 %	F33 27.5 %	F20 16.7 %	F15 12.5 %	F17 14.2 %

Results of statement 5 show that about (44.2%) of respondents stated that school closure didn't cause a rise in dropout of SWIDs. Results of statement 6 show that about (37.5%) of

respondents believed that lack of counselling of parents of SWIDs did not become a cause of increase in dropout during school closures. Results of statement 7 show that about (29.1%) of respondents perceived that health issues of SWIDs didn't result in the rise of dropout rate during school closures.

**Table 3** showing descriptive analysis of the following:

<b>C</b>	<b>Limited Educational Opportunities</b>					
<b>8</b>	Educational opportunities of SWIDs lessen due to school closure.	F10	F19	F7	F51	F33
		8.3%	15.8%	5.8%	42.5%	27.5%
<b>9</b>	SWIDs are at the same learning where he/she was before school closure.	F70	F30	F7	F8	F6
		58.3%	25%	5.83%	6.6%	5%
<b>10</b>	SWIDs failed to complete home assignments due to the minimal educational opportunities during school closure.	F4	F7	F5	F34	F70
		3.3%	5.8%	4.1%	28.3%	58.3%

Results of statement 8 show that about (42.5%) of respondents believed that educational opportunities of SWIDs lessen due to school closure. Results of statement 9 show that about (58.3%) of respondents stated that SWIDs are not at the same learning where they were before school closure. Results of statement 10 show that about (58.3%) of respondents perceived that SWIDs failed to complete their home assignments due to the minimal educational opportunities during school closure.

**Table 4:** showing frequency of the following responses

<b>D</b>	<b>Social Isolation</b>					
<b>11</b>	SWIDs actively participated in social gatherings during school closure.	F34	F47	F22	F12	F5
		28.3%	39.2%	18.3%	10%	4.2%
<b>12</b>	Parents showed concern to avoid social isolation of SWIDs during school closure.	F40	F22	F35	F15	F8
		33.3%	18.3%	29.1%	12.5%	6.6%
<b>13</b>	After the re-opening of the school SWIDs manifested acceptable social behaviors with peers.	F78	F22	F4	F11	F5
		65%	18.3%	3.3%	9.1%	4.1%

Results of statement 11 show that about (39.2%) of respondents believed that SWIDs did not actively participated in social gatherings during school closure. Results of statement 12 show that about (33.3%) of respondents found that parents did not show concern to avoid social isolation of SWIDs during school closure. Results of statement 13 show that about (65%) of respondents stated that after the re-opening of the school SWIDs did not manifest acceptable social behaviors with peers.

**Table 5** showing descriptive analysis of the following:

<b>E</b>	<b>Suspended IEP</b>					
<b>14</b>	School closure interrupted the IEP implementation of SWIDs.	F9 7.5%	F25 20.8 %	----	F35 29.1 %	F51 42.5 %
<b>15</b>	IEP and its related services were provided at to SWIDs during school closure.	F60 50%	F43 35.8 %	F13 10.8 %	F4 3.4%	----
<b>16</b>	IEP team members have to alter the set targets and timeline due to school closure.	F2 1.6%	F3 2.5%	F22 18.3 %	F37 30.8 %	F56 46.6 %

Results of statement 14 show that about (42.5%) of respondents stated that school closure interrupted the IEP implementation of SWIDs. Results of statement 15 show that about (50%) of respondents believed that IEP and its related services were not provided to SWIDs during school closure. Results of statement 16 show that about (46.6%) of respondents pointed those IEP team members must alter the set targets and timeline due to school closure.

**Table 6** describing frequencies of the following responses:

<b>F</b>	<b>Suspended Therapeutic Services</b>					
<b>17</b>	Parents provided therapeutic related services to SWIDs during school closure.	F26 21.7 %	F38 31.7 %	F42 35%	F12 10%	F2 1.7%
<b>18</b>	Speech therapy services were provided to SWIDs at home during school closure.	F25 20.8 %	F39 32.5 %	F35 29.1 %	F18 15%	F3 2.5%
<b>19</b>	Psychological therapy services were provided to SWIDs at home during school closure.	F31 25.8 %	F38 31.7 %	F28 23.3 %	F6 5%	F17 14.2 %
<b>20</b>	Physiotherapy services were provided to SWIDs at home during school closure.	F28 23.3 %	F37 30.8 %	F35 29.2 %	F10 8.3%	F10 8.3%

Results of statement 17 show that about (31.7%) of respondents believed that parents did not provide therapeutic related services to SWIDs during school closure. Results of statement 18 show that about (32.5%) of respondents stated that speech therapy services were not provided to SWIDs at home during school closure. Results of statement 19 show that about (31.7%) of respondents show that psychological therapy services were not provide to SWIDs at home during school closure. Results of statement 20 show that about (30.8%) of respondents noted that physiotherapy services were not provided to SWIDs at home during school closure.

**Table 7** showing frequencies of the followings:

<b>G</b>	<b>Lack of Parent-Teacher Coordination</b>					
<b>21</b>	Parents often coordinated with you to design educational activities for SWIDs during school closure.	F51 42.5 %	F28 23.3 %	F7 5.8%	F19 15.8 %	F15 12.5 %
	Parents of SWIDs regularly discussed educational issues with you during school closure.	F55 45.8 %	F38 31.7 %	F5 4.1%	F12 10%	F10 8.3%
<b>23</b>	School coordinated with parents to monitor educational progress of SWIDs during school closure.	F61 50.8 %	F26 21.7 %	F2 1.6%	F18 15%	F13 10.7 %

Results of statement 21 show that about (42.5%) of respondents stated that parents did not coordinate with them to design educational activities for SWIDs during school closure. Results of statement 22 show that about (45.8%) of respondents show that parent of SWIDs did not regularly discuss educational issues with you during school closure. Results of statement 23 show that about (50.8%) of respondents believed that school administrations did not coordinate with parents to monitor educational progress of SWIDs during school closure.

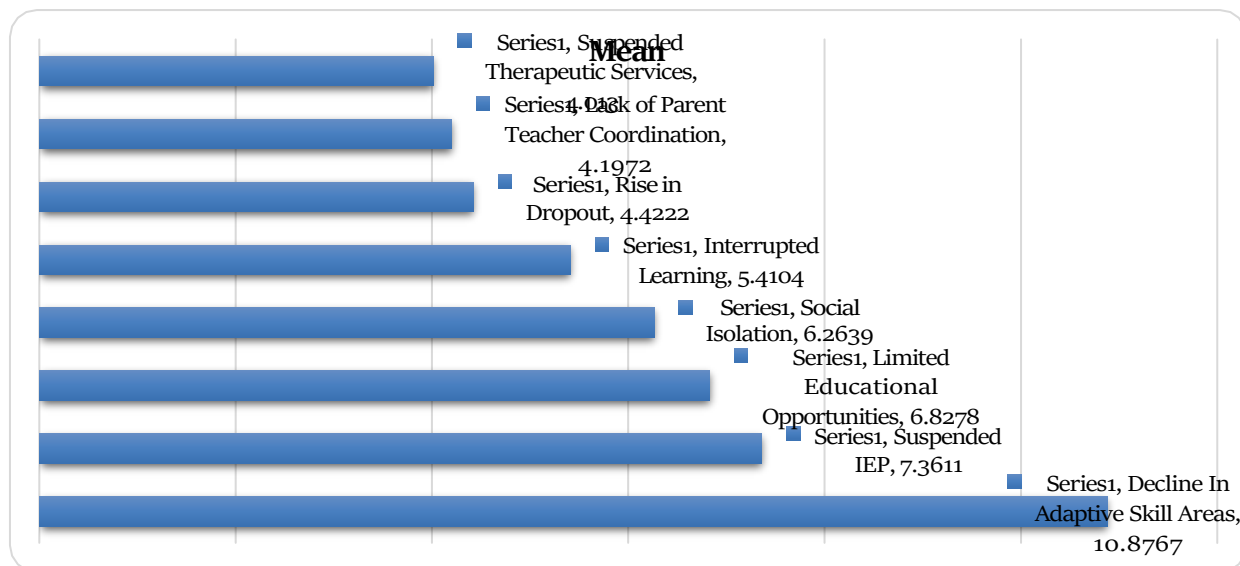
**Table 8** showing frequencies of the followings:

<b>H</b>	<b>Decline in Adaptive Skill Areas</b>					
<b>24</b>	School closure resulted in the decline of communication skills of SWIDs.	F12 10%	F21 17.5 %	F4 3.3%	F34 28.3 %	F49 40.8 %
	School closure deteriorated functional academics skills of SWIDs.	F2 1.6%	F6 5%	F4 3.3%	F31 25.8 %	F77 64.1 %
<b>26</b>	School closure caused a decline in self-care skills of SWIDs.	F18 15%	F21 17.5 %	F7 5.8%	F60 50%	F14 11.6 %
	School closure resulted in the decline of health and safety skills of SWIDs.	F61 50.8 %	F26 21.7 %	F13 10.8 %	F18 15%	F2 1.7%
<b>28</b>	School closure resulted in the decline of fine and gross motor skills of SWIDs.	F4 3.3%	F20 16.6 %	F17 14.2 %	F37 30.8 %	F42 35%

Results of statement 24 show that about (40.8%) of respondents believed that school closure resulted in the decline of communication skills of SWIDs. Results of statement 25 show that about (64.1%) of respondents respond that school closure deteriorated functional academics skills of SWIDs. Results of statement 26 show that about (50%) of respondents answered that school closure caused a decline in self-care skills of SWIDs. Results of statement 27 show that about (50.8%) of respondent's show that school closure did not result in the decline of health



and safety skills of SWIDs. Results of statement 28 show that about (35%) of respondents stated that school closure resulted in the decline of fine and gross motor skills of SWIDs. To answer the second question of the study, mean values of teacher’s responses about the school closure consequences due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs were analysed through the descriptive statistics. The most affected areas of the education of SWIDs were presented in the figure no. 2.



**Figure No. 2:** Mean values of teacher’s responses about the consequences of school closure

Figure No. 2 elaborates the school closure consequences resulting from covid-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. Special education schools in Punjab. The highest mean value (10.8767) of Decline in Adaptive Skill Areas depicts that this is most affected by school closure, followed by mean value (7.3611) of Suspended IEP, mean value (6.8278) of Limited Educational Opportunities is third most affected domain of education of SWIDs, mean value (6.2639) shows the Social Isolation as a result of school closure, mean value (5.4104) of Interrupted Learning and most importantly the mean value (4.4222) of indicate the rise in dropout. And the least mean value which is (4.1972) shows that the Lack of Parent Teacher Coordination is less effected by closure of school due to (COVID-19).

To answer the third question of the study independent sample t-test was used on each factor to uncover the differences among the opinions of teachers based on their school locality as they perceived the consequences regarding the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes of Punjab.

**Table 9:** Independent samples t-test on overall factors based on teacher’s school locality

No.	Factors Name	Locality	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.																																																																																						
1	Interrupted Learning	Urban	77	5.4091	1.22804	-.017	118	.987																																																																																						
		Rural	43	5.4128	1.07305				2	Rise In Dropout	Urban	77	4.3983	1.07882	-.330	118	.742	Rural	43	4.4651	1.03418	3	Limited Educational Opportunities	Urban	77	6.8528	1.28474	.291	118	.772	Rural	43	6.7829	1.21691	4	Social Isolation	Urban	77	6.2857	1.30755	.250	118	.803	Rural	43	6.2248	1.22738	5	Suspended IEP	Urban	77	7.3550	.72616	-.134	118	.894	Rural	43	7.3721	.56442	6	Suspended Therapeutic Services	Urban	77	4.0130	.67971	1.052	118	.295	Rural	43	3.8837	.57825	7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	Urban	77	4.2771	.92465	1.261	118	.210	Rural	43	4.0543	.93416	8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Urban	77	10.867	1.63502	-.083	118
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Table 9 reflects that independent samples t-test was applied to compare the difference in the teacher's discernments about consequences on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab. Results shows that there is no significant difference between the teacher's discernments who worked in rural or urban special education institutes regarding the determinants factors of school closure including Interrupted learning,  $t = -.017$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Rise in dropout,  $t = -.330$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Limited Educational Opportunities,  $t = .291$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Social isolation,  $t = .250$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Suspended IEP,  $t = -.134$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Suspended Therapeutic Services,  $t = 1.052$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination,  $t = 1.261$ ,  $p > .05$  and Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas,  $t = -.083$ ,  $p > .05$ . It is found that according to the teacher's discernments working in rural or urban special educational institutions, there is no significant difference in the discernments of Govt. Special Education Teachers on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education schools in all eight areas as the significant value is higher than the standard value (.05) in urban and rural areas of Punjab.

The third question of the study was answered using independent samples t-test on each factor to uncover the differences among the perceptions of govt. special education teachers based on their gender as they perceived in consequences on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes of Punjab.

**Table 10:** Independent samples t-test on overall factors based on gender

No.	Factors Name	Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.																																																																																						
1	Interrupted Learning	Male	47	5.2660	1.08273	-1.086	118	.280																																																																																						
		Female	73	5.5034	1.22155				2	Rise In Dropout	Male	47	4.4539	1.05735	.262	118	.793	Female	73	4.4018	1.06713	3	Limited Educational Opportunities	Male	47	6.7730	1.18995	-.382	118	.704	Female	73	6.8630	1.30388	4	Social Isolation	Male	47	6.2057	1.27699	-.400	118	.690	Female	73	6.3014	1.28039	5	Suspended IEP	Male	47	7.2199	.55724	-1.872	118	.064	Female	73	7.4521	.72301	6	Suspended Therapeutic Services	Male	47	3.9521	.72351	-.197	118	.844	Female	73	3.9760	.59536	7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	Male	47	4.1631	.85937	-.321	118	.749	Female	73	4.2192	.97850	8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Male	47	10.9702	1.66027	.510	118
2	Rise In Dropout	Male	47	4.4539	1.05735	.262	118	.793																																																																																						
		Female	73	4.4018	1.06713				3	Limited Educational Opportunities	Male	47	6.7730	1.18995	-.382	118	.704	Female	73	6.8630	1.30388	4	Social Isolation	Male	47	6.2057	1.27699	-.400	118	.690	Female	73	6.3014	1.28039	5	Suspended IEP	Male	47	7.2199	.55724	-1.872	118	.064	Female	73	7.4521	.72301	6	Suspended Therapeutic Services	Male	47	3.9521	.72351	-.197	118	.844	Female	73	3.9760	.59536	7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	Male	47	4.1631	.85937	-.321	118	.749	Female	73	4.2192	.97850	8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Male	47	10.9702	1.66027	.510	118	.611	Female	73	10.8164	1.58211								
3	Limited Educational Opportunities	Male	47	6.7730	1.18995	-.382	118	.704																																																																																						
		Female	73	6.8630	1.30388				4	Social Isolation	Male	47	6.2057	1.27699	-.400	118	.690	Female	73	6.3014	1.28039	5	Suspended IEP	Male	47	7.2199	.55724	-1.872	118	.064	Female	73	7.4521	.72301	6	Suspended Therapeutic Services	Male	47	3.9521	.72351	-.197	118	.844	Female	73	3.9760	.59536	7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	Male	47	4.1631	.85937	-.321	118	.749	Female	73	4.2192	.97850	8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Male	47	10.9702	1.66027	.510	118	.611	Female	73	10.8164	1.58211																					
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		Female	73	3.9760	.59536				7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	Male	47	4.1631	.85937	-.321	118	.749	Female	73	4.2192	.97850	8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Male	47	10.9702	1.66027	.510	118	.611	Female	73	10.8164	1.58211																																																												
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		Female	73	4.2192	.97850				8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	Male	47	10.9702	1.66027	.510	118	.611	Female	73	10.8164	1.58211																																																																									
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Table 10 reflects that independent samples t-test was applied to know the difference in the teacher's discernments about school closure consequences on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab. Results on the basis of independent sample t-test showed no significant difference between the teacher's discernments based on their gender regarding the determinants factors of school closure including Interrupted learning,  $t = -1.086$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Rise in dropout,  $t = .262$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Limited Educational Opportunities,  $t = -.382$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Social isolation,  $t = -.400$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Suspended IEP,  $t = -1.872$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Suspended Therapeutic Services,  $t = -.197$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination,  $t = -.321$ ,  $p > .05$  and Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas,  $t = .510$ ,  $p > .05$ . It is found that according to the teacher's discernments working in govt. special educational institutions, there is no significant difference in the discernments of Govt. Special Education Teachers about school closure consequences on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education schools in all eight areas as the significant value is higher than the standard value (.05) based on their gender.

To answer the third question of the study independent sample t-test was used on each factor to uncover the differences among the opinions of govt. special education teachers based

on their designation as they perceived the consequences of school closure on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes of Punjab.

**Table 11:** Independent samples t-test on overall factors based on teacher's designation

No.	Factors Name	Designation	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
1	Interrupted Learning	JSET	10	5.3374	1.1238	-1.696	118	.093
		SSET	3					
2	Rise In Dropout	JSET	17	5.8529	1.3751	-.531	118	.596
		SSET	10	4.4013	1.0565			
3	Limited Educational Opportunities	JSET	3			.987	118	.325
		SSET	17	6.5490	1.0988			
4	Social Isolation	JSET	10	6.2880	1.2585	.509	118	.612
		SSET	3					
5	Suspended IEP	JSET	17	6.1176	1.3991	-1.650	118	.102
		SSET	10	7.3204	.6330			
6	Suspended Therapeutic Services	JSET	3			.175	118	.861
		SSET	17	3.9709	.6718			
7	Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination	JSET	17	3.9412	.4721	.379	118	.705
		SSET	10	4.2104	.9122			
8	Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas	JSET	10	10.877	1.6366	.017	118	.987
		SSET	3	7				
				6				

Table 11 indicates that independent samples t-test was applied to compare the difference in the teacher's discernments about consequences of school closure due to covid-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab. Results suggests of no significant difference between the teacher's discernments based on their designation by using independent sample t-test regarding the determinants factors of school closure including Interrupted learning,  $t = -1.696$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Rise in dropout,  $t = -.531$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Limited Educational Opportunities,  $t = .987$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Social isolation,  $t = .509$ ,  $p > .05$ ;

Suspended IEP,  $t = -1.650$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Suspended Therapeutic Services,  $t = .175$ ,  $p > .05$ ; Lack Of Parent Teacher Coordination,  $t = .379$ ,  $p > .05$  and Decline In Adaptive Skill Areas,  $t = .017$ ,  $p > .05$ . It is found that according to the teacher's discernments working at govt. special educational institutions, there is no significant difference in the discernments of Govt. Special Education Teachers about consequences of school closure due to covid-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in all eight areas as the significant value is higher than the standard value (.05) based on their designation.

## **Results and Discussion**

The researcher found insufficient data to assess school closure consequences due to COVID-19 on the education of SWIDs, in Pakistan. Until now few studies had conducted at international level to assess the impact of school closure due to COVID-19. During the pandemic-COVID-19, schools in most of the countries around the world were forced to close for almost the whole academic year. It is extremely important to know whether the SWIDs can fulfill their educational needs in these circumstances or not. The results of this study provide clear evidence that SWIDs are not learning at home as they were learning at home before the lockdown. These finding also match with the study by (Engzell et al., 2021). A survey conducted by Barr (2020) also opines that home learning is not suited for students with disabilities.

Another relevant source of comparison is study of (Patel, 2020), noted that school closure during pandemic has negative consequences on the social and emotional development of students with intellectual disabilities. Likewise, the results of this study showed that SWIDs socially isolated during school closure. Similarly, a prior study of (Jenipher et al., 2021) had identified that parents were aware of the lack of resources at home, they also knew their inability to support their special child. These results match with the findings of this study. According to the discernment of teachers, parents failed to provide ample learning experience to SWIDs at home during school closure.

Likewise, the findings of present research indicate that according to the perception of teachers, support services were not provided to SWIDs at home during school closure. A previous study by Barr (2020) supports the findings of this study by stating, one-on-one support and professional services for students with disabilities provided by the schools completely stopped during the school closure. Other programs have also been interrupted due to school closure. The results of this study showed that school closure interrupted the IEP implementation of SWIDs. These results have been also observed in the findings of Barker (2020) highlighted that interrupted schooling proved to be very tough for kids with individualized education program.

The results of this study also match with the study of Lee (2020). He noted that this pandemic has forced all the world to impose forceful lock down which has resulted in the postponement of speech therapy sessions, social skills groups' suspension and IEP implementation. While results of this study indicates that parents did not provide therapeutic related services i.e., speech therapy services, psychological therapy services and physiotherapy services to SWIDs during school closure.

## Conclusions

At the end researcher reached on the conclusions that as per teachers discernments the consequences of school closure on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. special education institutes in Punjab, badly effected many domains of education and caused severe decline in adaptive skill areas of SWIDs, suspended IEP, limited educational opportunities is third most affected domain of education of students with Intellectual disabilities, social isolation as a result of school closure, interrupted learning and the rise in dropout rate. And the Lack of parent teacher coordination is less affected by closure of school due to COVID 19.

It is also concluded that the discernments of govt. Special Education teachers about consequences of school closure due to covid-19 on the education of SWIDs studying at govt. Special education schools were same regardless of their gender, designation, and locality of schools.

## Recommendations

Following recommendations have made based on research findings:

- The learning of the SWIDs should not be stagnant even when the schools are closed. Parents and teachers of SWIDs both must play their role in this respect.
- Parents of the children with intellectual disabilities must provide significant learning opportunities to their children by providing them conducive atmosphere and learning materials.
- Parents and teachers of the SWIDs should establish a close working relationship by coordinating with each other to cater the learning needs of the SWIDs during school closure.
- Parents should provide therapeutic services to their children with intellectual disabilities at home when the schools are closed.
- Parents of the children with intellectual disabilities must ensure the implementation of the IEP at home during school closure and school administration must support parents by giving them training to implement the IEP at home during the out-break of any sort of pandemic situation.
- School administrations should devise strategies to facilitate SWIDs to learn through online learning system during school closure.
- School administrations should provide home task or home assignments to the SWIDs and parents must ensure the completion of these home assignments during school closure.

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