

Covid-19 Related Stress and the Affects on the Academics of College Students

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Introduction

The 2019 Coronavirus pandemic had affected the world in a variety of ways, and still is today. What was said to be a short term shut down, turned into a multi year shut down. It is safe to say that a large number of people have been affected by the virus. In this research study we focused on the ways that college students and their academic achievements have been affected from the start of the pandemic. In March of 2020, colleges campuses switched to remote learning in hope of preventing a larger spread of the virus. There was uncertainty during the lockdown, because it was unknown when if it would be safe to return to on-campus learning amongst other individuals. The level of uncertainty as well as, various stressors from the pandemic itself had caused a decline in mental health. People were frightened that their livelihoods would be affected. This study will determine in which ways and what stressors affected student learning and motivations during the pandemic. This study will also highlight what coping mechanism students used during off-campus learning, and how it affected personal well-being.

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Research Question

How has the stress from the Covid-19 pandemic affected the academic achievement of college students? The fear and stress induced by the pandemic has led to a potential increase in the number of students suffering from anxiety and depression. In turn, this has led to their academics and future goals being put on the back burner. The purpose of this study is to determine how the coronavirus pandemic affected the academics of students. This study will also characterize the variables and stressors that either positively or negatively affected the students. I also think it is important to be able to understand in which ways, students coped with increased stress and anxiety. I would also like to see if any students shared coping mechanisms or similar outlets to deal with their stress.

Background and Literature Review

Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States: Interview Survey Study

- A survey was conducted at a public university and there were 195 student participants
- 71% of the students surveyed indicated increased stress and anxiety because of the pandemic
- This study concluded that coronavirus has negatively impacted students and their education

College students' stress and health in the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of academic workload, separation from school, and fears of contagion

- Based in China and wanted to understand if coronavirus stressors led to decreased health
- Results showed that academic workload, separation from school, and fears of contagion had negative effects on college students' health via perceived stress
- The study concluded that their results enriched the literature on stress and health under the context of the coronavirus pandemic

Academic Stress and Emotional Well-Being in United States College Students Following Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- 295 students reporting their emotional well-being and academic perceptions during May of 2020
- Students reported high levels of uncertainty regarding their academic futures as well as significant levels of stress and difficulty coping with COVID-19 disruptions
- Female students reported worse emotional well-being compared to males, and the students of color reported significantly higher levels of stress and uncertainty regarding their academic futures compared to White students

Methods

Participants

- College students at CSU Stanislaus ranging from the ages of 17 to 28
- Willing professors will assign the survey to their students with an incentive of extra credit
- Demographics will be collected to examine any correlational trends

Materials

- The survey will be created using Google Forms
- The questions will be composed of yes or no, scales/rating, and open-ended
- The Google Form will upload the answers into excel

Design

- Quantitative non experimental study with qualitative aspects when participant opinions and perceptions were assessed
- Stress and Anxiety levels as well as motivation and drive levels will be assessed and defined in their personal lives

Procedure

- Participants will give consent for their answers to be used in the research
- Everything will be done electronically
- Collected data will be analyzed through excel and stactical analysis will be used
- Statistical analysis will allow the question to be answered and data trends to be identified

Expected Conclusions

It is expected that a majority of students, roughly 75%, will indicate that stress caused by Covid-19 negatively affected their academic achievements. I believe that the students will also indicate that their motivation dropped as well. Due to online classes and a disconnect from professors and fellow classmates, I believe that students will express that they did not prioritize school. The lack of on-campus education may have lead students to feel as though they were lacking the proper education. I expect at least 70% of students to say that financial hardships caused them to have increased levels of anxiety and stress. Therefore, the stressors that affected their learning would fall under the category of financial hardship. I expect 60% of students to express that instead of trying to cope with their stress that they just attempted to suppress it.

Significance

The fact that the Covid-19 pandemic was so recent, gives major significance to this research. People are still affected and could still be going through the stressors caused by the pandemic. This research will contribute greatly to many fields, especially to psychology and education. Further research can also be done in neurobiology to understand the affects on the brain. This study will help us in future if a pandemic like covid was to captivate the world once again. Understanding the affects can help us better prepare us for future epidemics or pandemics.

References

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Figure 1. Coping with Covid Stress

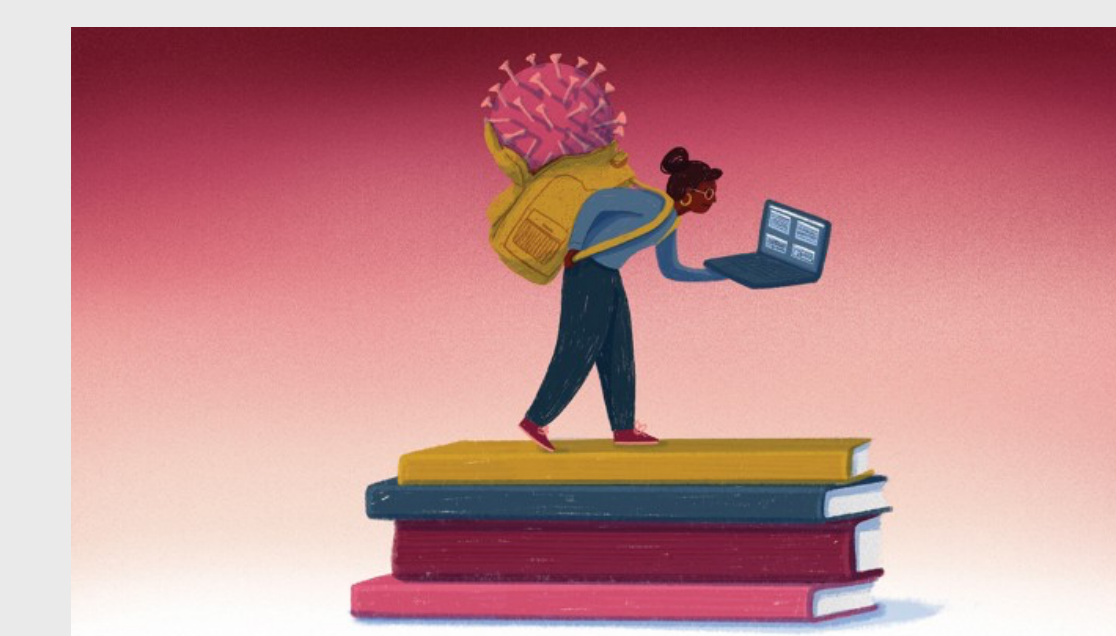


Figure 2. Pandemic Stress: Toll on Students

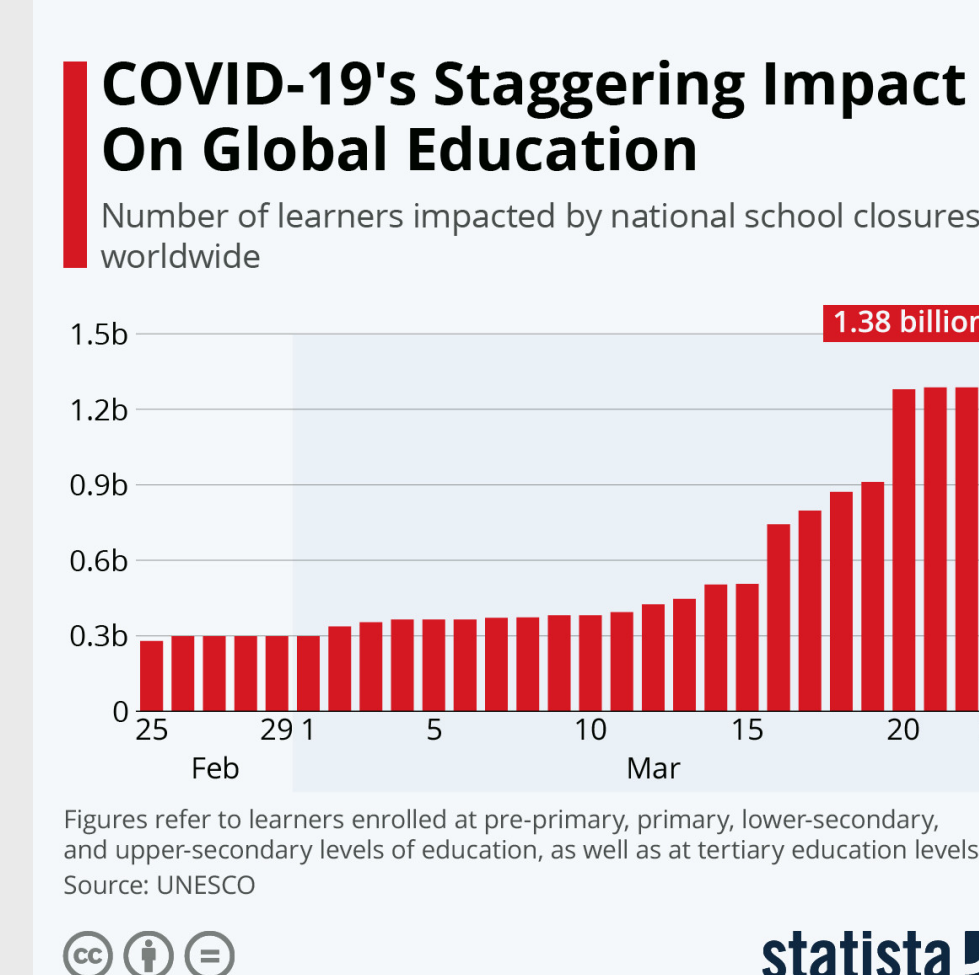


Chart 1. Covid-19's Impact on Global Education



Figure 3. Life on Zoom