

Research Question:

What are student perceptions of remote learning a year into the pandemic? Is there a difference in the online learning environment prior to the start of the pandemic vs now? Will this affect college enrollment when universities return to normalcy?

Introduction:

The coronavirus pandemic has caused a major change in the lives of people around the world. One group that has been affected physically and mentally is college students. My topic involves focusing on the perceptions of switching from in-person learning to remote learning during the pandemic. This includes perceptions near the beginning of the pandemic, and now. Implications of higher education will also be assessed.

Literature Review/Background info:

The introduction to remote learning in early 2020, was because of a new variance of SARS-CoV-2 which has disrupted the lives of everyone around the world. College students have transitioned from in class learning to remote learning, this inspired research on the transition. Since the change from in-class learning to remote learning, there has been research focusing on the impact this change has had on students. Garris and Fleck (2020) reported that student evaluations of online learning were described to be less engaging, interesting, and enjoyable. In addition to this, Gurung and Stone (2020) reported that the switch from in-person learning to remote learning added more stress on students as they had to worry about internet access, their living conditions, anxiety and stress from the pandemic, and their existing mental and physical health issues. Students also reported feeling less motivated, more bored, more anxious more depressed and reported more sleep (Tasso et al., 2021).

There is an even bigger issue that higher education may face. With the introduction of remote learning, there is uncertainty on whether students would want to continue their education. This information comes from a study conducted by SimpsonScarborough (2020). From the 513 college students surveyed, 82% reported that they were expecting to return the following term. While the remaining 18% were not completely sure that they were going to return the following term. Thus, there is the possibility of lower enrollment and retention in the years following the pandemic than years prior.

Methods:

Participants

- CSU Stanislaus students voluntarily recruited through the online database (SONA)
- At least 80 participants who are 18 or older

Design

- A correlational design will be utilized via a survey made available on SONA to California State University, Stanislaus (CSU Stanislaus) students.
- The survey will be administered to assess student perceptions of remote learning during the pandemic and implications for higher education. The association between perceptions of online learning and desire to continue education will be measured.

Materials

- A demographic survey.
- A version of the survey conducted for student evaluations by Garris and Fleck (2020) will be used. In addition, I will be using my own set of questions with this survey.

Procedures

- The survey will be made available on SONA.
- Participants will view the consent form and those who give consent will be redirected to the instructions and questionnaires.
- After completing the survey questionnaires, a final message screen saying “Thank you for your participation and time” will appear, followed by a debriefing form.

Expected Results:

I predict that there will be a positive correlation such that participants who report positive perceptions towards their remote learning experience will be more likely to continue their education once universities return to in person courses.

Significance:

Understanding the potential consequences of this pandemic can help universities cater to the needs of their students and provide adequate resources during these unprecedented times. We may also have a better idea of whether this experience has impacted students' decisions to enroll or continue their education despite the change in learning style.