Impact of COVID-19 Distanced Learning Policies on College Students Qualitative Pilot Study

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Fall, 2020

Introduction

COVID-19 distance learning policies have moved college classes to a primarily online modality, which has shown to decrease student performance, focus, and motivation. Moreover, student mental health has been worsening in recent years with COVID-19 further impacting young adults and essential workers at a disproportionate rate. Premedical experiences have also been reduced due to COVID-19. Objective of this study is to look at the holistic impact of distance learning on student life.

Methods

Four students from the Public Health 3531 class were selected for 20-30 minute photovoice interviews. Informed consent was given by all participants. Interviewees were asked to bring four photos to the interview, signifying how distanced learning impacted their life. Interviews were audio recorded, and verbatim transcripts were created. Emergent codes were created from transcriptions for data analysis, and recurring themes were generated.

Selected Interview Quotes

“...doing just ask online, I am less likely to go because I prefer talking to the professors one on one.”

“I think COVID and being a pre med student is really hard to...get those opportunities that are pretty essential.”

Discussion

• Distanced learning has created a multitude problems in student lives
• May indicate trends around campuses nationwide
• Increased communication between student body and university leadership needed
• Further research looking at larger diverse populations is needed

THEMES

- Diminished Social Life
- Increased Stress & Anxiety
- Limited Professional Opportunities
- Improved Technical Skills

References


