

A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON LATINX COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE MIDWEST

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INTRODUCTION:

- In the chaos of the initial switch to online learning in the spring semester of 2020, students were faced with many unique challenges including accessing reliable internet and necessary technology for online class, job loss, and many other stressors.
- Existing evidence demonstrates that university shutdowns exacerbated existing inequalities within the student population (Aucejo et. al, 2020).
- The Latinx population broadly has been more harshly impacted by the pandemic than the general US population, for example on measures of job loss and health concerns (Pew Research Center, 2020).

PARTICIPANTS:

The participants in this study will be former or current undergraduate students. They are required to have been students at the time of the initial switch to online learning in the spring semester of 2020. We will interview students who self-identify as Latina/o/x.

ABSTRACT:

This study proposes to examine how Latinx Illinois State college students who were enrolled in the Spring, 2020 semester experienced the transition to online learning after the onset of the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic. We are interested in investigating how they were affected by the pandemic and how they coped with it in the aftermath of college closures and movement to online learning. We draw on qualitative data which will be collected through a series of 30 total interviews collected in a snowball sample with various starting points. We anticipate that the pandemic affected the students' learning and college experiences. Given what we know about racial differences in the impact of COVID-19 more broadly, we anticipated that Latinx students were uniquely impacted in both the transition to online learning and their college experiences. We anticipate that our research will contribute to existing research by giving voice to the unique experience of Latinx students. We also want to examine the student's perception of the university's response. This study will contribute to the growing body of work that is emerging about the impact of the 2020 pandemic in college campuses across the nation.

METHODS:

We will rely on qualitative research to collect our data. We intend to conduct a total of 30 interviews for this study. These interviews will be conducted over Zoom and will be recorded and transcribed through the platform as well with express permission of the participants.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How did Latinx students cope with the initial switch to online learning?
2. Were their college goals and dreams delayed or stopped as a result of the COVID-19?
3. How were their families and communities impacted by the pandemic more broadly?