

Abstract:

INTRODUCTION. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated social inequalities, negatively affecting the mental health of Latinx college students in the United States. Closures of college campuses severely limited engagement in social interactions, increased food insecurity, and resulted in job loss and financial burden. As a result, Latinx students experience higher rates of stress, anxiety, and depression, leading to adoption of maladaptive behaviors such as substance abuse and emotional disengagement. The study aimed to assess the lived experiences of Latinx college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODS. Thematic analysis of in-depth one-on-one Voces of a Pandemic interviews conducted with six Latinx individuals who attended higher education institutions in the United States during 2020. Then, we extracted the participants' views rather than previously defined views by the researchers.

RESULTS Interviews were majority Latina. Three themes emerged from the testimonies: directly COVID-19 related, psychological state during the COVID-19 pandemic, and coping during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most salient subcategories in the directly COVID-19 theme included social responsibility, stay-at-home orders, and sickness. The psychological state theme's findings included high anxiety and stress levels. The most salient subcategories in the coping theme included faith and healthy coping behaviors.

DISCUSSION Institutions of higher education must support Latinx students during the COVID-19 pandemic to ameliorate anxiety and stress. When college leadership did not provide concrete plans for the fall semester at the onset of the pandemic, many students felt uncertain about their future and anxious. In addition, students felt stress due to social isolation and loss of employment.

Title:

A qualitative study on the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Latino college students in the United States

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Preferred Presentation Format:

No Preference

Presentation Preference:

In-person Only

Learning Outcome(s):

Discuss the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of Latino college students in the United States.

Identify mental health coping mechanisms by Latino students in lieu of institutional responses.

Learning Areas:

Social and behavioral sciences

Health Indicator(s):

Access to educational opportunities, Social determinants of health and Socioeconomic conditions (e.g., Exposure to concentrated poverty and the stressful conditions that accompany it)

Presenter

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Any relevant financial relationships? No

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: I have researched along with my coauthors on the subject matter of health and economic impact of Covid-19 on the Latino population. Among my scientific interests has been the assessment of socioeconomic conditions for diverse populations.

Signed on 03/26/2021 by Pablo Pejlatowicz

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A qualitative study on the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Latinx college students in the United States

Presented by: Marisol McDaniel

Main Finding

Institutions of higher education **must support** Latinx students during the COVID-19 pandemic to ameliorate anxiety and stress. ***Students felt neglected*** by their colleges, leading to mistrust and anxiety. In addition, ***students felt fear and stress*** due to *social isolation* and *loss of employment*.

Intro:

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated social inequalities.

Closures of college campuses severely limited engagement in social interactions, increased food insecurity, and resulted in job loss and financial burden.

As a result, Latinx students experience higher rates of stress, anxiety, and depression, leading to adoption of maladaptive behaviors such as substance abuse and emotional disengagement.

The study aimed to assess the lived experiences of Latinx college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods:

1. The research team conducted a thematic analysis of in-depth one-on-one Voces of a Pandemic interviews. Voces of a Pandemic is a collaboration between the Voces Oral History Center and other higher education institutions. More than 321 interviews are available in the project's YouTube channel. The research team analyzed those interviews in search of the topics that pertain to the Latina/o/x population amidst the pandemic.
2. The team analyzed six Latinx individuals who attended higher education institutions in the United States during 2020.
3. The themes that emerge from the testimonies come as extractions of the participants' views rather than previously defined views by the researchers. Then, the researchers used Nvivo 12 (2020) to do a double coding on each transcript to find the salient topics and subtopics.

Results:

Themes	Subcategories	Saliency
Directly COVID related		6 out of 6
	Social responsibility	5 out of 6
	Social unrest	3 out of 6
Psychological state		6 out of 6
	Fear	4 out of 6
	Anxiety	2 out of 6
Coping		4 out of 6
	Unhealthy behaviors	3 out of 6
	Healthy behaviors	2 out of 6



Franklin Mauchese (1967) - Voces Oral History Center.

And I would say that some of my fear definitely stemmed from some of my family members, contracting the virus and hearing on the media about black people being (...) affected more, because of pre-existing conditions like heart disease or high cholesterol. (...) Um, I would just have to say my strength grew even more or my faith. My faith? Yeah, my faith grew even more during this time. And yeah, I'm still trying to I'm still developing it.

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References

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2020), <https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home>