

Correspondence

Addressing the psychosocial needs of students attending online classes during this Covid-19 pandemic

ABSTRACT

An earlier article discusses that the Coronavirus pandemic stirred a challenging situation for many educators in online classes. The correspondence proposes that teachers in a work-from-home environment should be provided with psychosocial supports to address the mental and emotional stresses caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is also noted that the outbreak of the Coronavirus disease poses a serious threat to millions of students enrolled in online classes. The shifting from face-to-face classes to online classes caused students to experience psychological or psychosocial distress. In response to the previous article, this paper presents how students' psychosocial needs should be addressed through psychosocial supports.

Keywords psychosocial needs, online classes

The emergence of Coronavirus (COVID-19) creates an unparalleled impact on humanity. The pandemic causes a phenomenal crisis that spread like wildfire and led to the deaths of millions of people all over the world. One of the affected sectors of our society is education resulting in the closure of the operation of educational institutions.¹ The sudden change in the educational system pressured schools to formulate a teaching-learning program that will meet the requirement of the new normal classroom setting. Schools introduced teaching methodologies and approaches to adopt with the needs of the students in online classes. The previous correspondence stated that with these changes educators need to be provided with psychosocial supports.² The shifting of educational processes also made school authorities to discover the students' psychosocial needs that have to be addressed immediately. Several studies claim the Coronavirus pandemic prompted students to face multifaceted pressures such as: understanding the conceptual framework of online learning, academic burdens and workloads, limited interaction with other students and boredom.³ A recent study conducted in China, identified that psychosocial anguish and depression during social isolation and quarantine are the most common mental health issues that many young adolescents experienced during the pandemic. Psychosocial and behavioral issues such as inattentiveness, insecurities, lack of focus and fear

for queries about the Coronavirus were developed among children and adolescence ages 3–18 during the pandemic. The paper also cited, that children and adolescents living in areas with widespread Covid-19 cases can easily develop serious fear and anxiety.⁴ In another study, comprising of 564 Chinese junior high school students, revealed the Covid-19 pandemic has a significant impact on the students' psychological and mental health,⁵ education and their day to day routines.⁶ The World Health Organization (WHO) declares that in 2012, 5.6 million students enrolled in online education who belong to low-income families and minority groups in the USA are more at risk for psychological health issues.⁷

The current findings on the condition of students' emotional health and well-being in online classes are clear indications that the existence of the psychosocial needs have to be addressed through psychosocial support. As valuable stakeholders, the safety and welfare of the students must be the priority of the schools, especially during this pandemic. Studies show that an online class supported by full array of psychosocial supports in the form of student services such as: enrichment and remediation tutorial, academic advising, guidance and counseling program, fitness and wellness resources, spiritual formation activities and faculty–student consultation can result to very satisfactory performance of the students.⁸

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doi: [10.1093/pubmed/fdab101](https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdab101)