

Effects of Pandemic Crisis Among Nursing Students of the University of Bohol

APRILLE KYLA T. ARACO

aktaraco@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9800-2650>

ELEN FIN B. ALABA

efbalaba@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9274-6919>

JAMAICA S. PAÑA

jspana@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-3233-1994>

JOHN MICHAEL E. CHATTO

jmechatto@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-4861-4736>

CHERRY IRISH N. CUBERO

cincubero@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-6029-3772>

ZENELYN C. LIWAGON

zcliwagon@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0467-3640>

MARIA CHARMIN M. MEJIA

mcmmejia@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-2815-0115>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

LAYNA B. OPACO

lbopaco@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6383-076X>

BONNIBELLA L. JAMORA

bljamora@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8864-6890>

BIENVENIDA P. BORJA

bpborja@universityofbohol.edu.ph
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1309-1135>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the nursing students at the University of Bohol. The researchers utilized the descriptive correlational quantitative research design aided by a modified questionnaire. The tool was pilot-tested and underwent Cronbach's Alpha test with a reliable result. It was distributed to the two hundred (200) randomly selected nursing students of the University of Bohol, College of Nursing, who were enrolled in the academic year 2020-2021, during which the e-learning educational platform was implemented. The gathered data was subjected to Spearman Rho's and Chi-square tests to determine the relationship between the respondents' profiles and the level of effect on the pandemic crisis. Results revealed that the respondents were "Moderately Affected," especially in their mental and emotional status. Most of the respondents who were more affected during this pandemic crisis are young adults who are adjusting to the challenges of implementing new educational platforms as they experienced slow connectivity that affected their academic performance. The mobilization of the school's student services and guidance services is one way of helping the students become adaptive to the challenges they face.

Keywords: Pandemic Crisis, Physical, Social, Emotional, Mental, Spiritual, Spearman Rho test, Chi-square test

INTRODUCTION

In December 2019, a previously unknown virus was identified in Wuhan, China, which later spread worldwide and affected people's health and lives. The Pandemic has impacted people's lives. Non-essential establishments, including shopping malls, tourist destinations, hotels, transportation, and even schools, were forced to stop their operation. It has made the broadest interruption to the education systems in history, influencing almost 1.6 billion students in over 190 countries worldwide (World Health Organization, 2020). The Pandemic has exposed many inadequacies and inequities in our education systems – from access to the broadband and computers needed for online education and the supportive environments necessary to focus on learning to the misalignment between resources and needs. Although higher education institutions quickly replaced face-to-face lectures with online learning, it has negatively affected nursing schools. Most of the schools did not have an online tailored curriculum. As such, faculty members must re-design the curriculum to an e-learning one. Implementing the e-learning approach in the educational platform poses many challenges to students and instructors. Faculty have to think of innovative ways to make teaching effective and efficient. The Pandemic limited the development of the competencies of nursing students as their Related Learning Exposure is only limited to hypothetical case scenarios, video demonstrations, and return demonstrations. It is on this premise that the researchers conducted this study to determine the level of effectiveness of the Pandemic on nursing students at the University of Bohol.

This study is anchored on the Adaptation Model of Nursing by Sister Calista Roy, Interpersonal Relations Theory by Hildegard Peplau, and the nature of Nursing by Virginia Henderson.

According to the Adaptation Model of Nursing theory, individuals are psychosocial and constantly interact with their constantly changing surroundings. An individual must adapt to his ever-changing environment to maintain his normal function. The Pandemic brought many changes to the educational system that posed many student challenges. The students need to interact with other students to adapt to these challenges. Interpersonal Relations, as seen in the theory of Peplau, are essential as this will help the individual cope with challenges. Helping others identify their needs to cope positively is one way of maintaining one's health (Henderson, 1978).

Virginia Henderson's theory about the Nature of Nursing emphasized that the nurse's unique function is to help the individual, debilitated or well, to perform activities to maintain the individual's health. Working through a pandemic has changed all aspects of one's life. In these times of pandemics, Virginia Henderson's theory has a significant influence on how healthcare practitioners are going to take care of patients and themselves as well. Nursing students should become accustomed to adapting quickly, cycling through areas, and moving swiftly from one challenge to the next.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 3 of the United Nations is about good health and well-being. This goal emphasizes ensuring a healthy life and promoting well-being for every individual. This includes the students' physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being.

Align to this SDG, Section 1.04 of RA 11469, known as the "Bayanihan Act of 2020 (United Efforts) to Heal as One," has been formulated to increase the mobilization of assistance in the provision of necessities to families and individuals affected by the imposition of Community Quarantine, especially the indigents and their families. This act also undertakes measures that will prevent the overburdening of the healthcare team and amply provide the healthcare the needed medical tests and treatments to COVID-19 patients, persons under investigation (PUIs), or persons under monitoring (PUMs) (Official gazette, 1986)

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) also issues advisories in line with this proclamation of RA 11469. A CHED COVID-19 Advisory No.1 announces suspending classes at all levels and for students to continue fulfilling their education requirements during said periods. The local government units shall be responsible for implementing measures to ensure that students remain in their homes during the stated duration. This started the implementation of blended learning, distance learning, homeschooling, and other delivery modes.

Various researches on the effect of COVID-19 on students have been conducted. One of these is the research conducted by Hyseni & Hoxha, 2020 on the impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study of interaction among students' mental health and attitudes toward online learning. It looks into the study habit of students during online classes and changes in students' life. Results revealed that web-based learning gives many challenges to students, including lack of attention during online classes, lesser focus, and lack of interest in attending virtual classes (Hyseni & Hoxha, 2020).

Lovrić (2020) conducted a Qualitative Inductive Content Analysis of Nursing students' Perceptions and Experiences during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The result indicates how students feel about the effectiveness of government agencies in times of crisis. All students in the study understand how social media impacted the actions and beliefs of people in the community towards COVID-19, and therefore take extra caution in sharing unverified social media posts that may lead to the dissemination of misinformation. Students' fear of infection in the classroom is minimal; however, they are terrified in clinical environments. Thirteen students said they had trouble focusing and learning but appreciated the teacher's support and faculty efforts during the crisis.

Furthermore, a study by Bernstein, Boburg, Sacchetti, and Brown in 2020 entitled Nursing education in a pandemic: Academic challenges in response to COVID-19 revealed that Students expressed concern about what an interruption in their nursing education would mean for their future careers as Registered Nurses since clinical exposure has been interrupted.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers utilized the descriptive correlational research design aided by a modified questionnaire. The tool was pilot tested on ten nursing students enrolled in the College of Nursing of the University of Bohol. These respondents were excluded during the actual data gathering. The data gathered was subjected to Cronbach's alpha test with an acceptable result of .70. Before data collection, the nursing students were informed about the survey with a formal letter addressed through a Facebook messenger account or email. The study underwent an ethics review from the University of Bohol Research Ethics Committee (UB-REC). After obtaining clearance from the UB-REC, permission was sought from the proper authorities. The tool was distributed to the respondents using the online platform. It was emphasized that the respondents' participation would be voluntary, that they have right to withdraw anytime without penalty. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly observed throughout the study, and the gathered data were used only for research purposes. Collected data were coded, and statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The majority of the respondents were level 1 students. Out of two hundred respondents, one hundred seventy-five, or (87.5%) were between 18 – 24 years old, one-hundred sixty-four, or (82.0%), are females, and a majority live in rural areas. It was also revealed that the majority of the respondents are full-time students, and most are the youngest child in the family—the majority of their guardian and parents were Overseas Foreign Workers (OFW).

Level of Effects of the pandemic crisis (Physical). The level of effects of the pandemic on the respondent's physical aspect. Data showed that respondents were "Moderately Affected" physically as they "developed headaches, body pains after attending online classes" and "often feel exhausted at the end of the day." With the existence of the new educational platform, students often become physically inactive as they try to complete the different tasks assigned to them in every subject. Overusing gadgets and the long hours spent on computers and smartphones for online classes often leads to headaches, eye problems, and stress (Pachiyappan, Kumar, Mark, Venugopal, Jilumudi, & Palanisamy, 2021). Respondents have difficulty relaxing, resting, and exercising during the Pandemic, as they often feel the need to complete homework over engaging in social, physical, and stimulating activities that could support their well-being." (Pachiyappan, et. al 2021).

Data also showed that respondents were socially "affected" by the implementation of online classes during the Pandemic. Students claimed they need to be more engaged in the virtual or online learning platform. The online platform gave the students limited time to interact with their friends. The presentation of online lectures made the student feel less interested in the topic affecting their active participation in the activity provided by the teacher. The student's lesser interest in the lectures presented online can be due to other factors, such as slow internet connectivity, which is a common problem among those students living in rural areas. The student's limited computer access and reliable internet sources may affect their interest in participating during synchronous meetings (Flaherty, 2020).

The respondents were "Strongly affected" emotionally as they get "Easily upset whenever they lost their connectivity during online classes due to poor signal," which leads them to "feel overwhelmed and frustrated during the submission of activities and tasks. "Without an internet

connection, students cannot connect with teachers or classmates, do independent research, or complete online homework. One of the major problems that students face without internet access at home is their inability to complete a task (Matthew, 2017). Furthermore, Respondents reported that they “cannot overcome the capacity to control their temper.” Students under much pressure tend to get angry more easily, might become unresponsive to the teacher, disengage from the learning process, and withdraw from their peers (Shores, 2020).

The findings revealed that respondents were “Strongly affected” mentally as “Online class provides many challenges to nursing students.” The students were anxious about what will result from an online class in their chosen profession. Some of the challenges they faced during this time of the Pandemic were their concern about being able to focus and maintain the self-discipline needed to study remotely (Friedman, 2020). Aside from that, providing authentic learning experiences related to real-world nursing situations is another challenge (Barnes & Noble Education, 2020), as this could directly impact the acquisition of bedside nursing skills. Meanwhile, the “proper management of schedule” has “moderately affected the respondents. Effective time management is crucial to helping students to stay focused (Kelsey, 2020).

The data revealed that they feel “unfulfilled and unsatisfied with their life at this moment” and “Devastated and hopeless thinking about the future.” However, respondents did not lose their belief and personal relationship with God during the pandemic”. As the Pandemic continues, church activities were provided virtually, giving hope to people and keeping their spiritual well-being intact (Rosales, 2021).

Table 1. Level of Effects of the pandemic crisis among nursing students at the University of Bohol per Category (N=200)

Category	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Value	Interpretation	Rank
Mental	3.090	Moderately Agree	Moderately Affected	1
Emotional	2.821	Moderately Agree	Moderately Affected	2
Physical	2.691	Moderately Agree	Moderately Affected	3
Social	2.150	Agree	Affected	4
Spiritual	1.804	Agree	Affected	5
Overall composite Mean	2.518	Moderately Agree	Moderately Affected	

Table 1 summarizes the Level of Effects of the pandemic crisis among nursing students at the University of Bohol per Category. Data revealed that the pandemic crisis “Moderately Affected” the respondents, especially mentally and emotionally. The new educational platform causes many challenges to the students as they adjust to the new system, trying to cope with the many demands and address limitations brought about by online classes. One of the significant challenges students face is being separated from their classmates and teachers (Calderon, 2020). Learning together face-to-face in the classroom provides more interaction and a more precise presentation of topics (Bdair, 2021).

Mental health is a fundamental and widespread concept with individual meanings. It is a multidimensional phenomenon in nursing students and is influenced by various factors. Stress is a physiological reaction that affects a person’s cognitive, mental, behavioral, and social aspects. The effects of stress on nursing students impact academic performance (Pulido-Criollo, Cueto-Escobedo, and Guillén- Ruiz, 2018). Student nurses have more robust emotional responses and are more willing to use Problem-focused coping (Xu, Ong, Tran, Kollar, Wu, Vujicic, & Hsiao, 2021).

The present educational platform has also affected the respondents’ physical, social, mental, and emotional status. However, with all the challenges, studies revealed that they are least affected spiritually. This shows the solid spiritual foundations inculcated in each of the respondents.

Table 2. Relationship between the Profile of Respondents and the Level of Effects of the pandemic Crisis (N=200)

Variables	Statistical Test	Statistical Test Value	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Age and Level of Effects of the Pandemic Crisis	Spearman’s rho	-0.171	0.016	Reject Null Hypothesis	There is a significant inverse relationship between the variables
Sex and Level of Effects of Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	.539	.910	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables

Religion and Level of Effects of the Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	1.362	.715	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables
Residential Area and Level of Effects of Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	2.547	.467	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables
Year Level and Level of Effects of Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	14.990	.088	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables
Status of Student and Level of Effects of Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	6.456	.327	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables
Order in the Family and Level of Effects of the Pandemic Crisis	Chi-square	2.589	.858	Failed to reject the Null Hypothesis	There is no significant relationship between the variables.

Table 2 shows the relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of effects of the Pandemic crisis. Data were subjected to statistical treatment using Spearman's rho and chi-square tests. Results revealed that the p-value on age and level of effect on the pandemic crisis is lesser than the 0.05 level of significance, showing a significant inverse relationship between the variables. This further means that younger students are more affected by the effects of the pandemic crisis. Students at the higher level still felt the impact of the pandemic crisis but to a lesser degree.

Data on sex, religion, residential area, year level, the status of students, and order in the family concerning the data on the level of effects of the Pandemic shows a p-value greater than 0.05, indicating an insignificant relationship between the variables. The sex, religion, residential area, year level, students' status, and family order has nothing to do with the effects of the Pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The Pandemic has a more significant impact on younger students. Implementing online classes as an effect of the Pandemic moderately affected Nursing students mentally, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually. The mental and emotional aspects had been greatly affected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the researchers came up with the following recommendations.

1. In coordination with the student services and guidance center, the College of Nursing will continually provide activities, webinars, and programs. The program's goal is to enhance nursing students' mental, emotional, and physical health status to help improve their mindset and let them feel that they are not alone in this endeavor.
2. The College of Nursing will promote time management, use anti-radiation eyeglasses while doing school work, and use alternative ways like wide-screen monitors to prevent possible aftermath pains for nursing students.
3. The College of Nursing will create student-instructor communication, especially for First and Second-year students.
4. The instructors must make extra efforts to engage students effectively, and students, in turn, have to make an extra effort to stay involved amidst distractions at home, motivated to learn, and interested during the synchronous meetings.
5. The College of Nursing will continually enhance the role of class advisers as they closely monitor students' status.
6. The students should connect with the teachers as spiritual leaders. The teacher will nurture their students by meeting their needs, maintaining relationships with them, and how to develop a strong relationship with God based on their own experiences.
7. The LGU of every barangay in every Municipality in the province of Bohol will look for ways to provide a stable internet connection or give WIFI modems to every student, especially those currently studying and needing a stable internet connection during this blended learning.

REFERENCES CITED

- Bdair, I. A. (2021). Nursing students' and faculty members' perspectives about online learning during COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative study. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, 16(3), 220-226. <https://bit.ly/41u9TK7>
- Barnes & Noble Education, (2020). Many Students Worried About Learning Online, Says Survey. <https://bit.ly/3y1t3JP>
- Bernstein, L., Boburg, S., Sacchetti, M., & Brown, E. (2020). Covid-19 hits doctors, nurses and EMTs, threatening health system. *The Washington Post*. <https://wapo.st/3Z3Sgzz>
- Calderon, V.J., (2020). U.S. Parents Say COVID-19 Harming Child's Mental Health. <https://bit.ly/3ly1FjK>
- Flaherty, C., (2020). Faculty Pandemic Stress is Now Chronic. <https://bit.ly/40Xmaqz>
- Friedman, J. (2020). Tackle Challenges of Online Classes Due to COVID-19. <https://bit.ly/3SIIPsJ>.
- Henderson, V. (1978). The concept of nursing. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 3(2), 113-130. <https://bit.ly/3sDsUry>
- Hyseni, D, Z., & Hoxha, L. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study of interaction among students' mental health, attitudes toward online learning, study skills, and changes in student life. <https://bit.ly/302BNyp>
- Kelsey, M., (2020). What is Human Resources Management: Careers, Skills, Trends. <https://bit.ly/3YXcR8m>
- Lovrić, R., Farčić, N., Mikšić, Š., & Včev, A. (2020). Studying During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Inductive Content Analysis of Nursing Students' Perceptions and Experiences. *Education Sciences*, 10(7), 188. <https://bit.ly/3sFOcVc>
- Matthew L., (2017). The absence of Internet at Home is a problem for some students. <https://bit.ly/411jYOE>

Official gazette, (1986). <http://www.offcialgazette.gov.ph/>

Pachiyappan, T., Kumar, K. V., Mark, P., Venugopal, R., Jilumudi, D., & Palanisamy, B. (2021). Effects of excessive usage of electronic gadgets during COVID-19 lockdown on health of college students: An online cross-sectional study. *Asian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research and Health Care*, 139-145. <https://bit.ly/3XRDFpu>

Pulido-Criollo, F., Cueto-Escobedo, J., and Guillén- Ruiz, G., (2018). Stress in Nursing University Students and Mental Health, Health and Academic Achievement, <https://bit.ly/3EfU1RP>

Rosales, R. J. J. (2021). A year of COVID-19 and the spiritual well-being of the people. *Journal of Public Health*, 43(2), e354-e355. <http://bitly.ws/xt36>

Shores, K., (2020). Classroom Problem Solver Angry Outbursts In Class (Part 2). *Education World. Connecting educators to what Work.* <https://bit.ly/3KwFd5h>

World Health Organization (2020). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). March 26, situation report – 66. <https://bit.ly/3YYV3JA>

World Health Organization (2020). Director-General's remarks at the media briefing on 2019-nCoV on February 11, 2020. 2020/2/18. <https://bit.ly/3Xxaisg>

Xu, J., Ong, J., Tran, T., Kollar, Y., Wu, A., Vujcic, M., & Hsiao, H. (2021). The impact of study and learning strategies on post-secondary student academic achievement: A mixed-methods systematic review. <https://bit.ly/3EguCr7>