



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Not everything is condemned by COVID-19

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Abstract: The increase in the number of studies related to the health of university students has attracted attention at the time of COVID-19. This initiative contributes to preparing the school environment for the return of face-to-face activities with conducts that minimize the damage caused by the pandemic. The role of each actor in the educational scenario is fundamental for us to be able to reap good fruits after this storm.

Key words: COVID-19, students, psychological well-being, psychic health.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 pandemic has changed people routine. Its consequences are spread around the world and clearly influenced all society sectors. Optimists believe in some new normal for a new time with human relationships improvement, while pessimists are still reluctant to believe in the existence of SARS-CoV-2, clinging based on unfounded justifications, taking it as inventions or political coups.

Regardless of who is right, there is an evident increase of concern regarding the physical and emotional integrity of college students. The emergence of research studies evaluating the health state of this subjects shows this trend. This way, depression, anxiety, stress, quality of life, and loneliness are among the points surveyed. But was this concern raised by COVID-19?

In part, yes! The development of educational work at a distance, the activities accumulation, the lack of skill, and the resources availability for the teaching-learning process development, in addition to the absence of physical contact between teacher and student, generated uncertainties regarding to the students health. It is worth mentioning that many Higher Education Institutions, even before COVID-19 (Manchri et al. 2017), carried out an assessment of students health, including mental health. However, the current pandemic world status seems to have strengthened and stimulated interest in this type of work (Huckins et al. 2020).

Physical and psychological students well-being are beyond epidemiological surveys, and the possibility of publications and simple evaluations of students characteristics. It is precisely these aspects of mental health that should be the main focuses of attention when returning to face-to-face activities of College courses. This is the way to have the greatest achievement and academic performance, the essential interpersonal relationship, as well as the certainty that one can learn and grow in times of uncertainty and insecurity determined by COVID-19.

During an undergraduate course, students face numerous obstacles! For the most of them, this trajectory represents the interval between adolescence and professional life, generating certain conflicts, yearnings, anxieties and fear. Studying this population and assessing their health conditions represent the possibility of intervention and strategies articulation that could minimize the negative disorders caused or aroused at this time.

But what about the university as an institution? Is it prepared to use the data in favor of better conditions for university students? In fact, will these studies contribute to a more humanized professional and citizen formation? Although we can identify the Institutions good will, these questions will be only answered with time, once the results of these surveys begin to define the true conditions of their university students.

Faced with the uncertainties of the near future, hope will prevail! Hope that COVID-19 can really serve to awaken nobler feelings, hope that researchers will mediate between the past and a new future for university students, hope that students will know how to take advantage of this moment of protagonism, and hope that the institutions managers will have the sensitivity to put into practice actions that contribute to the maximum physical and mental well-being of their academic community.

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