

Home Activities of Students to Counter Psychological Disturbances during COVID-19 Pandemic

¹Cherish Kay L. Pastor, ²Caren C. Orlanda-Ventayen, ³Timothy Joshua M. Ventayen,
⁴Lemuel M. Ventayen, ⁵Randy Joy M. Ventayen

Abstract

The effects of coronavirus that cause COVID-19 have been felt all over world. All institutions in Luzon, Philippines are closed due to the suspension of classes. The College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) of Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus, initiated a survey to determine the leisure activities conducted by student at home and their preferences to counter emotional and psychological disturbances during COVID-19 Pandemic. An open-ended question was created using online forms, and class group chats through messenger were used to float the link of the questionnaire and to gather qualitative responses. Convenience sampling was used in determining the respondents and the answers were tabulated using Google Sheet. The result shows that students use messaging services, surfing the internet and social media in order to counter the boredom that could lead to psychological problems. While students understand that those leisure preferences may not hinder loneliness and mental illness, students are finding other activities that contribute in combatting the negative mindset during COVID-19.

Keywords- COVID-19, CBPA, sampling

I. Introduction

Pandemic, which is caused by Coronavirus COVID-19, was disrupting operations around the world (Heymann & Shindo, 2020; Velavan & Meyer, 2020). Students are one of the most affected individuals where there were no classes being conducted from the institutions because of the suspension of classes. Luzon in the Philippines imposes an extreme community quarantine all over the area that creates considerable adjustments to the institutions

¹Core Faculty, Business Administration Department, Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus

²Planning Officer, Pangasinan State University, Alaminos City Campus

³Core Faculty, Business Administration Department, Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus

⁴Chairperson, Business Administration Department, Pangasinan State University, Alaminos City Campus

⁵Dean, College of Business and Public Administration, Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus

around the country. Most of the students, together with their families, are not prepared for the situation, and it is an eye-opener for institutions to generate global preparedness for future pandemics (Jacobsen, 2020).

The effects of the disease have been felt all over Luzon, suspension of classes, temporary closure of businesses, restricted operations, curfew, and disruptions of logistics operations. The College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) of Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus, initiated a survey to determine the activities and preferences of students to counter emotional and psychological disturbances during COVID-19 Pandemic. They were also asked about the effects of the chosen activity to their mental well being.

Same as other pandemics in the past, the coronavirus could create psychosocial disturbances among people that could be hard to detect from more benign illnesses. The absence of a vaccine may allow us to continue the non-pharmaceutical interventions that we are doing to prevent infections but may cause community quarantine or lockdown that prevents students from going to school.

Other students may face unique stressors, where students will get bored because they are asked to stay out of public and receive fewer visitors, and their loneliness may deepen. The need for both universal and targeted mitigation of COVID-19's psychosocial impacts is arising in the context of the mental health system.

II. Methodologies

This study utilizes a quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method) as adopted by several authors (Camara, 2020; Casama Orlanda-Ventayen & Ventayen, 2017; Queroda, 2017). An open-ended question was created using Google Forms, and class group chats through messenger were used to float the link of the questionnaire. The respondents are the students of Pangasinan State University with the Business Administration and Public Administration program. Convenience sampling was used in determining the respondents where it is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected not only because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The link of the open-ended question was converted and shortened using Bit.ly, and the answers were tabulated using Google Sheet.

III. Results and Discussion

With a total number of 998 students in the college based on the records of the registrar's office, the impressive number of respondents with a size of almost 58.71% answers the survey that proves the reliability of the study (Etikan, 2016). While there are 586 responds, only 402 students contribute information on what are the activities they are doing during the lockdown. In the total number of the respondents, there is 33.6 percent of 2nd-year college students who responded. This is expected since there is more sophomore in the college than any of the other year level. In terms of Age distribution, the majority of the respondents are 20 years old, with 25.8%. The expected age of sophomore is 20 years old due to the implementation of the Kto12 curriculum. The majority of the students of the college are females, which account for 77.6 percent. The majority of the respondents are taking up Business Administration Program with a percentage of 83.3 percent. Meanwhile, the Public Administration program, which is considered as allied of the business administration, has a limited number of students.

Activities

Based on the table, out of 402 students in the college, there are 390 students or 97.01% use messaging service such as messenger, Viber, WhatsUp, and other related services. Students are also aware that maintaining a proper communication with friends and relatives helps them to feel better. Some students avoid negative communication with enemies to maintain suitable mode in order for them to avoid overthinking about negative situations. Some students suggest that using the videoconferencing function of messaging service is more effective in combating boredom than regular text messaging service without enabling video. Zoom application is being used by some students in order to communicate with others, and they also acknowledged that their skills in terms of using the technology also increases.

The use of social media during the Pandemic increases as it is the primary source of information by the netizens. Misinformation and fake news shows in every news feed of the users (Depoux et al., 2020; Pennycook et al., 2020), while students belongs to the millennial group, most of the students know how to identify fake news and genuine compared to adults (O'Keeffe, 2014).

Table 1 shows the Frequency on the Activities of the Students

Rank	Activities	F	%Total
1	Messaging Services	390	97.01%
2	Surfing the Internet	384	95.52%
3	Social Media	349	86.82%
4	Listening to Music	234	58.21%
5	Eating	214	53.23%
6	Sleeping	168	41.79%
7	Reading Non-educational Resources	152	37.81%
8	Playing Offline Games	102	25.37%
9	Playing Online Games	68	16.92%
10	Watching Movies	58	14.43%
11	Watching TV Shows	54	13.43%
12	Reading Educational Resources	52	12.94%
13	Playing Sports	48	11.94%
14	Gardening	14	3.48%
15	Taking Care of Pets	8	1.99%

Total Respondents: 402 | Legend: F – Frequency

Surfing the Internet, Social Media, listening to Music and Eating are the next top 5 activities that the students are doing during the community quarantine. The majority of the first five activities are related to internet activities, where it can be seen that students are more exposed and finding a way to communicate to the outside home through the use of technology.

The least activities that students are doing are taking care of the pets, gardening, playing sports, reading educational resources, and watching TV shows. While those activities are only based on frequencies, it doesn't answer the effects of the activities to counter possible psychological disturbances during the Pandemic. Several studies suggest that there are positive effects of pets on mental health, such as the correlation of happiness to the ownership of a pet (Bao & Schreer, 2016; Brooks et al., 2018; Herzog, 2011). There might be evidence of positive effects from interacting with animals, but others study have found that the health and happiness of pet owners are no better than that of non-pet owners (Herzog, 2011).

Table 2 Shows the Perceived effects of the Activities to the Students

Ran k	Activities	P	%P	N	%N
1	Taking Care of Pets	8	100.00 %	0	0.00 %
2	Reading Educational Resources	49	94.23 %	3	5.77 %
3	Gardening	13	92.86 %	1	7.14 %
4	Reading Non-educational Resources	13 8	90.79 %	14	9.21 %
5	Eating	18 9	88.32 %	25	11.68 %
6	Playing Sports	42	87.50 %	6	12.50 %
7	Messaging Services	32 1	82.31 %	69	17.69 %
8	Watching TV Shows	33	61.11 %	21	38.89 %
9	Watching Movies	34	58.62 %	24	41.38 %
10	Sleeping	98	58.33 %	70	41.67 %

11	Listening to Music	12 3	52.56 %	11 1	47.44 %
12	Playing Offline Games	52	50.98 %	50	49.02 %
13	Playing Online Games	32	47.06 %	36	52.94 %
14	Surfing the Internet	18 0	46.88 %	20 4	53.13 %
15	Social Media	14 9	42.69 %	20 0	57.31 %

Total Respondents: 402 | Legend: P – Positive, N - Negative

Despite being online on a social media platform, it doesn't provide complete comfort to the students. Some students admitted that social media add more disturbances to them compared to other activities. Based on the given activities, taking care of the pets, which only eight students are practicing find out that 100 percent of the students who practice has positive effects on their mental health.

Other Cope-up mechanisms by the students

Despite the negativity, most of the students find some comfort from family and registered social workers in the country that aims to help those having problems with isolation and loneliness. Students are coping with financial stress by minimizing the expenses avoiding unnecessary expenses. Most of them are adjusting their expectations to be worst; this is in order to prepare themselves for possible hardship in the future. Some found comfort with reading biblical texts and articles to help them to minimize the negativity. A healthier family relationship is one of the best ways for the students in order to ease the worsening situation.

IV. Conclusion

The home activities of students to counter psychological disturbances rely on internet connectivity. The majority of the students are online in order to be connected and communicate. Communication is still the top activity that the students are doing in order to counter possible psychological disturbances. While most of the students prefer to be online, most of them admitted that social media, playing online games, and surfing the internet does not provide a fully positive effect in terms of psychological disturbances. It is recommended that students should practice activities that promote peace of mind and have proven positive effects on the mental wellbeing of the student.

References

1. Bao, K. J., & Schreer, G. (2016). Pets and Happiness: Examining the Association between Pet Ownership and Wellbeing. *Anthrozoos*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2016.1152721>
2. Brooks, H. L., Rushton, K., Lovell, K., Bee, P., Walker, L., Grant, L., & Rogers, A. (2018). The power of

- support from companion animals for people living with mental health problems: A systematic review and narrative synthesis of the evidence. *BMC Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1613-2>
3. Camara, J. S. (2020). Post-evaluative insights among filipino engineering students on alignment, spirality, strand, and awards (ASSA) in K to 12 implementation. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research*.
 4. Casama Orlanda-Ventayen, C., & Ventayen, R. J. M. (2017). ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN EDUCATION: A TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE. In *ASEAN Journal of Open Distance Learning* □.
 5. Depoux, A., Martin, S., Karafillakis, E., Bsd, R. P., Wilder-Smith, A., & Larson, H. (2020). The Pandemic of social media panic travels faster than the COVID-19 outbreak. *Journal of Travel Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jtm/taaa031>
 6. Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
 7. Herzog, H. (2011). The impact of pets on human health and psychological wellbeing: Fact, fiction, or hypothesis? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721411415220>
 8. Heymann, D. L., & Shindo, N. (2020). COVID-19: what is next for public health? In *The Lancet*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30374-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30374-3)
 9. Jacobsen, K. H. (2020). Will COVID-19 generate global preparedness? In *The Lancet*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30559-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30559-6)
 10. O'Keeffe, R. J. (2014). Baby boomers and digital literacy: Their access to, and uses of, digital devices and digital media. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses*.
 11. Pennycook, G., McPhetres, J., Zhang, Y., & Rand, D. (2020). Fighting COVID-19 misinformation on social media: Experimental evidence for a scalable accuracy nudge intervention. *PsyArXiv [Working Paper]*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/OSF.IO/UHBK9>
 12. Queroda, P. (2017). Professional Characteristics of Education Teachers in Pangasinan. *Southeast Asian Journal of Science and Technology*, 2(1). <https://j.sajst.org/index.php/sajst/article/view/44>
 13. Velavan, T. P., & Meyer, C. G. (2020). The COVID-19 epidemic. In *Tropical Medicine and International Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tmi.13383>