

Impacts on academic life by the COVID-19 pandemic on nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro

Impactos en la vida académica por la pandemia de COVID-19 en estudiantes de enfermería de una universidad privada de Río de Janeiro

Impactos na vida acadêmica pela pandemia da COVID-19 em estudantes de enfermagem de uma universidade particular do Rio de Janeiro

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Abstract

The research aims to analyze the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the academic life of nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro. The methodological approach was qualitative, with the participation of 23 nursing students from the 6th to the 10th period. Data collection was carried out at the educational institution through an open questionnaire, from September to November 2022, with ethics opinion No. 5,558,461, which generated the thematic unit: Impacts on academic life due to the COVID pandemic -19 in nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro and was divided into categories. Category 1: Characteristics of the difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to academic life; category 2: Academic performance during the pandemic; Category 3: Seeking psychological help during the semesters during the COVID-19 pandemic; Category 4: The academic today after going through the pandemic in the years 2020 and 2021; and Category 5: The positive and negative points generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in academic life. It is concluded that the pandemic affected nursing students at different levels, but in the face of all the adversities, students found ways to face them and move towards academic training.

Descriptors: COVID-19; Distance Learning; University Education; Universities; Nursing Students.

Resumen

La investigación tiene como objetivo analizar los impactos de la pandemia de COVID-19 en la vida académica de los estudiantes de enfermería de una universidad privada de Río de Janeiro. El abordaje metodológico fue cualitativo, con la participación de 23 estudiantes de enfermería del 6º al 10º período. La recolección de datos se realizó en la institución educativa a través de un cuestionario abierto, de septiembre a noviembre de 2022, con opinión ética N° 5.558.461, que generó la unidad temática: Impactos en la vida académica por la pandemia COVID-19 en estudiantes de enfermería de una universidad de Río de Janeiro y se dividió en categorías. Categoría 1: Características de las dificultades que trajo la pandemia del COVID-19 a la vida académica; categoría 2: Rendimiento académico durante la pandemia; Categoría 3: Buscando ayuda psicológica durante los semestres durante la pandemia de COVID-19; Categoría 4: El académico hoy después de pasar por la pandemia en los años 2020 y 2021; y Categoría 5: Los puntos positivos y negativos generados por la pandemia del COVID-19 en la vida académica. Se concluye que la pandemia afectó a los estudiantes de enfermería en diferentes niveles, pero ante todas las adversidades los estudiantes encontraron la manera de enfrentarlas y transitar hacia la formación académica.

Descriptorios: COVID-19; Educación a Distancia; Enseñanza Superior; Universidades; Estudiantes de Enfermería.

Resumo

A pesquisa tem como objetivo de analisar os impactos da pandemia da COVID-19 na vida acadêmica dos estudantes de enfermagem de uma universidade particular do Rio de Janeiro. A abordagem metodológica foi qualitativa onde participaram 23 acadêmicos de Enfermagem do 6º ao 10º período. A coleta de dados foi realizada na instituição de ensino através de um questionário aberto, no período de setembro a novembro de 2022, com o parecer de ética n° 5.558.461, que gerou a unidade temática: Impactos na vida acadêmica pela pandemia da COVID-19 em estudantes de enfermagem de uma universidade particular do Rio de Janeiro e foi dividida em categorias. Categoria 1: Características das dificuldades que a pandemia da COVID-19 trouxe para a vida acadêmica; categoria 2: O desempenho acadêmico durante a pandemia; Categoria 3: A procura de ajuda psicológica durante os semestres no período da pandemia da COVID-19; Categoria 4: O acadêmico hoje após ter passado pela pandemia nos anos de 2020 e 2021; e Categoria 5: Os pontos positivos e negativos gerados pela pandemia da COVID-19 na vida acadêmica. Conclui-se que, a pandemia afetou em diversos níveis os estudantes de enfermagem, mas diante de todas as adversidades os alunos encontraram maneiras de enfrentá-las e de seguir rumo à formação acadêmica.

Descritores: COVID-19; Ensino à Distância; Ensino Superior; Universidades; Estudantes de Enfermagem.



Introduction

In December 2019 in Wuhan, China, a series of cases of pneumonia was identified for the first time, with a clinical presentation very similar to that of viral pneumonia. In a short time, the acute coronavirus syndrome 2 (SARS-CoV-2), as it was called, took on pandemic proportions and in a few weeks had already affected more than 100 countries¹⁻⁶.

The COVID-19 is considered an infectious disease that spreads from person to person, through contact with secretions or face-to-face contact with a sneeze or cough from droplets from the mouth or nose of infected people^{7,8}.

One of the epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19 is precisely its ability to replicate in the upper respiratory tract and during its initial phase, symptoms may seem less abrupt. For this reason, an individual infected during the prodrome period tends to carry out their usual activities⁹.

In Brazil, the COVID-19 pandemic began on February 26, 2020, when a 61-year-old man, a resident of São Paulo, who upon returning from Italy confirmed to be positive for SARS-CoV-2. Since then, until August 28, 2021, 20,728,605 cases and 579,010 deaths have been confirmed in the country^{5,6}.

With the arrival of COVID-19 in the country, social distancing and quarantine measures were adopted in order to prevent the spread of the virus. Higher education units in the country underwent the emergency adoption of remote teaching, which consists of a teaching modality that provides for the temporary geographical distance of students and professors in an attempt to avoid the total interruption of academic activities¹⁰⁻¹⁷.

In Rio de Janeiro, Decree No. 46,973 of March 16, 2020, in Art. 4°, established exceptionally and in order to protect the community from the contagion and spread of COVID-19, the suspension for 15 days of various activities, including classes, without prejudice to the calendar of the Ministry of Education in the public and private network in all levels of education⁸.

From that moment on, the suspension of face-to-face student activities in the State was gradually extended, until on August 18, 2020, Law No. 14,040 came into force, which provided for educational standards that should be adopted during the state of public calamity⁸.

Art. 3 of Law No. 14,040 provides for higher education, where it effectively eliminated the obligation of a minimum of school days while the state of public calamity lasted, provided that the workload of the curriculum of each course was maintained and that there was no loss of important content for the exercise of the profession^{9,18-25}.

Some critical effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on education that deserve to be highlighted refer to the negative consequences manifested by the impairment of the teaching-learning process and the increase in student dropout during this period^{10,26,27}.

The present study aimed to analyze the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the academic life of nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro.

Methodology

This is a study with a qualitative, descriptive approach, in which a phenomenon that can be better assimilated in the scenario in which it occurs, having to be investigated from an integrated point of view²⁸⁻³⁰.

The study setting was a Higher Education Institution located in Rio de Janeiro, whose choice was justified by the need to describe and document the changes that occurred in the lives of nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro.

In order for the research to take place, there was a requirement for proper authorization in order to begin data collection. That said, the work was conducted on the Brazil Platform, with the approval of the Ethics and Research Committee of the Castelo Branco University (CEP-UCB/RJ), by Opinion No. 5,558,461.

The research participants were 23 nursing students, who met the inclusion criteria: students from the 6th to the 10th period of a Private Higher Education Institution in Rio de Janeiro who experienced theoretical and practical classes before the COVID-19 pandemic. As exclusion criteria we had: Nursing students who were not between the 6th and 10th period of a Private Higher Education Institution in Rio de Janeiro.

Regarding the Informed Consent Form (TCLE), the research participants signed before answering the questionnaire, it is clear that they can leave the research at any time, which guarantees the freedom to refuse to participate or withdraw the consent, without prejudice and any penalty for the subject regardless of the phase of the study.

To ensure that participants were kept anonymous, they were assigned names of neighborhoods in the West Zone of the State of Rio de Janeiro. The choice of the names of the neighborhoods was made randomly by the researchers and the participant had no way of knowing the name of the other's neighborhood, with the justification of ensuring the maintenance of the confidentiality of the study and the confidentiality of the participants during all stages of the research³⁰.

As a data collection instrument, an open questionnaire was used, which was answered by the research participant, in his own handwriting, transcribed in full and data interpretation through the thematic analysis method³⁰⁻³².

The material was transcribed and read in full, in which the bodies were separated, the units of meaning, for the formation of thematic categorization, which characterized the study under thematic content analysis by Laurence Bardin, in which one was generated five categories.

Results and Discussion

The research consisted of 23 participants, who are nursing students, it was noticed among the categories, how much the pandemic impacted on student, personal and even professional life, which reflected in the learning process and in the way of teaching teachers in the face of the pandemic.



Characteristics of the difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to academic life

Because it is something new, research participants had difficulties in online classes in terms of maintaining good concentration, understanding and dedication.

"The dedication ended up not being the same as in face-to-face classes" (Campo dos Afonsos).

"Difficulty concentrating and understanding some subjects" (Camorim).

"I had a little trouble concentrating in online classes, as I developed better in face-to-face classes" (Santa Cruz).

In the reports, students show that they had difficulties in concentrating classes, which can be assumed that, because they are in an environment different from the learning space, and that being in another place, it was favorable to meet other demands, losing focus, what "froze" and "delayed" the information during the class.

The difficulty in reconciling classes with the home environment linked to demotivation are the main factors that impact remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic, which directly affected student productivity³⁴.

The research subjects showed difficulties in their studies, to maintain a good level of learning, to understand the contents and to adapt.

"Difficulties in learning the important subjects of the last period of college that became distance learning" (Anil).

"During the pandemic, it was very complicated, as we had to adapt to having teletransmitted classes, and it was very difficult" (Guaratiba).

"During the period of isolation, I could see that my academic performance reduced the quality of learning to a certain extent, as face-to-face classes were interrupted, impairing the quality of teaching" (Campo Grande).

As many subjects needed practical classes and which, due to the pandemic, became scarce, the participants felt a greater difficulty in understanding the classes, in addition to feeling that their studies were affected and, consequently, their academic performance decreased. The difficulty that the transmitted classes caused triggered poor learning, without stimulation and for some, it gave the false perception that they were doing well during this period.

It is undeniable that remote teaching brought about by digital technology in this pandemic situation is far from meeting educational proposals that guarantee satisfactory learning outcomes. Therefore, these activities without simultaneous interactions require students to practice self-study, which they are not used to, given that until recently they were immersed in a different dynamic and not very digital³⁵.

The lack of stimulation and difficulty concentrating caused students to stop attending online classes, which led to the appearance of negative feelings.

"Very discouraged, due to the lack of approach to classes" (Cosmos).

What can be seen is that these students, in addition to the inconvenience of online classes, portray the personal complications that hit them during this pandemic period, the fear of not being a good professional is evident.

There are countless questions raised about the difficulties in remote teaching. It is possible to highlight that this new scenario is being challenging, despite being considered the best option at the moment, since it minimizes the delay of school activities. Even so, it faces a series of complications related to problems of access to classes and the lack of support from educational institutions, which results in low participation in classes, due to the lack of methods that arouse the interest of students³⁶.

For some participants, the lack of practical classes hindered teaching, as the subjects they studied during the pandemic needed practice to assimilate the content passed during online classes.

"Lack of care preparation, due to lack of practical classes" (Jacarepaguá).

"We did not have practical classes, which is very important for our course" (Vila Militar).

"Lack of knowledge in practical classes, difficulties in online classes" (Magalhães Bastos).

Practical classes are essential for good learning, especially for those who are guided by the kinesthetic experience. People whose learning style is kinesthetic find it easy to learn when involved in laboratory practice, they need tactile, motor and "hands-on" senses to perform better³⁷.

The participants also reported that there was the appearance of emotional problems related to the pandemic that interfered with their academic life.

"During the pandemic, anxiety crises, insecurity, fear for not having the competence to work in the area increased" (Freguesia de Jacarepaguá).

"It brought me anxiety and I got depressed, because it was all on the computer" (Jardim Sulacap).

Emotional overload is a striking feature that the pandemic has brought to several people. The fear and insecurity of not becoming a good professional, social isolation, financial problems, not mastering the use of technologies necessary for distance learning so well, the loss of close people or family members, are all factors that also directly interfered on student performance during this period.

Considering the changes in the living standards of the world's population and, consequently, in the routine of academics brought about by social isolation. Throughout the pandemic period, it is possible to observe numerous changes in the psychic well-being of university students, who began



to live with insecurity, fear and a sense of loss. Such circumstances reflect on the academic training plans of these future professionals³⁸.

Students also showed that the lack of communication with teachers, problems with the internet and other technical impasses during classes also made learning difficult.

"In general, the biggest difficulty was not being able to ask questions about the online materials" (Padre Miguel).

"Difficult because of answering questions and classes being teletransmitted, which makes it worse for the student to understand the subject" (Anil).

It is essential for the student to have good communication with the teacher. The failure in communication due to the separation of the student and the teacher from the classroom made it difficult to assimilate the subjects, as the exchange between teacher and student became scarce and timid. The setbacks with the Internet and other technical problems during classes, such as the lack of electricity and the internet dropout during class also led students to refrain from attending classes. It is observed that the impasses of access to technological means represent a limitation for the teaching-learning process during the pandemic. It is also possible to point out that the difficulty of interacting with teachers and the absence of an appropriate environment to study are the negative aspects that have the most impact on emergency remote teaching³⁹.

Academic performance during the pandemic

As the expectation for online classes was not fruitful, some participants reported that they had a poor performance.

"Difficult, without commitment and reduced frequency of studies. I didn't feel like studying, reviewing content" (Jacarepaguá).

"I think it was bad, especially in the more specific subjects that should have been practical" (Campo dos Afonsos).

"I felt difficulty in a few subjects, however, in the classroom I realized that I did not learn enough" (Senador Camará).

Many students felt lost and discouraged without face-to-face classes and without practical activities, although the grades were good for some or who managed to follow the distance classes, knowledge and performance were insufficient.

Despite educational institutions adopting remote teaching due to the urgency proposed by the pandemic scenario. There was a lot of dissatisfaction with regard to the absence of practical activities, which generated a feeling of frustration and unpreparedness among students in relation to their conduct as a future professional⁴⁰.

Two participants reported what they did during the pandemic to improve academic performance.

"I needed to make a schedule according to social change, focus and persistence were my companions in the pandemic" (Campo Grande).

These lines show the importance of maintaining a routine even when the moment or situation is not favorable. The organization allowed these students to create measures to adapt to the new reality, to better manipulate the content taught during classes, maintain focus and make better use of the available time.

Amid the adversities of the pandemic and changes in the teaching-learning process, it was necessary for educational practices to be reinvented. With this, the new modality of education requires self-organization and discipline, so that the study method is meaningful⁴¹.

For these participants, academic performance was efficient despite the adversities encountered in the period.

"It was great even with the online classes, because the platform was well developed and it was possible to study" (Padre Miguel).

"I managed to unfold well, due to the help and teaching of the professionals" (Rio das Pedras).

It is possible to observe that even in the face of the adversities that the pandemic brought to academics, the instruments made available by the university for online learning were sufficient for some students, who managed to maintain good or regular learning.

In this sense, during this period of remote classes, people with auditory or visual learning styles, due to the ease of learning by listening or through written language, benefit more than those with kinesthetic styles, who need to touch and interact to perform better and learn more effectively³⁷.

The search for psychological help during the semesters in the period of the COVID-19 pandemic

Five research participants reported that psychological help was needed during the pandemic period.

"Yes, because I worked on the front line and it was quite difficult" (Guaratiba).

Psychological help is an emerging need from the moment mental health is affected, either for any reason or event that the person has gone through. Recognizing that you need help is a very important step towards recovering your health and these students did just that, they sought the necessary help to help with the treatment.

Regarding all the unforeseen events experienced by the pandemic, the impact suffered on the mental health of the population, the dissemination of myths, misinformation about COVID-19 and the public's difficulty in understanding the guidelines of the health authorities, led people to a great psychological suffering⁴².

Although remotely, psychological help is effective and much needed. For the general population, these interventions suggested in the first care are, for example, psychological listening so that people can work out their negative emotions over the phone or through online platforms. Face-to-face psychological care during this period



should only be recommended when it is demonstrably unavoidable to postpone it⁴².

Four participants reported that they did not seek help, although it was necessary.

"It was very accurate, but I didn't go deep in the search" (Rio das Pedras).

"I needed it but I didn't look for it" (Vila Militar).

"No, but it should. During the pandemic, anxiety attacks were more frequent" (Jacarepaguá).

Psychological follow-up was necessary, but the search does not always happen, either for financial reasons, or even for not having the strength to look for it, which makes the performance of the institutional psychopedagogical core essential.

With the sudden and emergency change in the education scenario in all countries of the world, it is of paramount importance, the performance of the educational institution's psychopedagogical core, which aims at a preventive approach, carrying out methodological guidelines, rescuing the student's desire to learn in the midst of various adversities, working on the capacity for reflection and production⁴³.

It is important that psychological follow-up is always relevant and easily accessible to everyone who needs it, regardless of the scenario in which people are inserted, that it escapes the automatic and that it brings modernity to the reception, that it is honest in pain relief strategies and resolutions of problems⁴⁴.

We believe it is important to add in this research that the university has a free psychological care service, the SPA (Serviço de Psicologia Aplicada). This service serves the institution's community and students and takes place within the Clínica Escola on the campus itself. To access the service, it is necessary to pre-register through the university's digital media, which will be used to schedule future appointments.

The other participants reported that they did not seek and did not need psychological help.

"No" (Padre Miguel).

"I didn't look" (Bangu).

According to the writing, the participants demonstrate emotional balance, I believe that even with all the problems that were raised in the studies, they managed to overcome the barriers in a balanced and conscious way.

The fact that these students were able to take control of their own health favored their emotional balance. Knowing and understanding yourself is of great importance, as it favors behavior and responses for mental well-being⁴⁵.

The academic today after going through the pandemic in the years 2020 and 2021

Some survey participants reported being well after the pandemic period.

"I am fine but having some difficulties with online learning" (Cidade de Deus).

"I'm fine, but I have a lot of difficulty in the online subjects" (Barra da Tijuca).

"Well, but in college internships I have a lot of difficulty in practicing the procedures" (Magalhães Bastos).

Although students reported being well mentally and physically after the pandemic, some also showed dissatisfaction with remote teaching in their responses, as it led to withdrawal from learning and the emergence of difficulties in online classes or in practice during college internships.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have adopted remote teaching in order to make up for the absence of face-to-face teaching. There were many negative impacts on the students' academic life, such as limited interaction with professors, difficulty in accessing technological means and the absence of practical classes. It is noticeable that these changes generated dissatisfaction and insecurity with regard to experiences in the internship field⁴⁶.

Students evidenced that the pandemic resulted in troubled mental health due to past circumstances during this period.

"I think I'm fine, but my mental health is shaken" (Realengo).

"Anxious and unmotivated in relation to academic training. I feel more anxious and thoughtful during the day" (Jacarepaguá).

"My family had two losses in a period of 15 days, it's been very difficult" (Guaratiba).

The mental health of college students has been shaken to varying degrees during the pandemic. The students began to suffer from anxiety, psychological pressure due to concern with their studies and possible delays in graduating, in the future as a nursing professional, in addition to the affliction with economic instability and the fear of losing family, friends or even of life itself³⁸.

Self-care practices in mental health, such as exercising, having hobbies and finding new pleasures (music, movies, learning new languages, etc.), are considered health promotion measures and contribute to reducing negative feelings when systematically attributed in everyday life. It is important to think that even with the problems arising from the pandemic, it is possible to achieve mental well-being, learn from crises and have personal growth⁴⁷.

We can see that students also reported being afraid of the job market due to academic helplessness during the pandemic.

"I still feel lost with regard to teaching, it seems that I learned nothing, but surviving" (Grumari).

"Well, but afraid of the subjects that I didn't practice and afraid of the job market that awaits us, recent graduates" (Vila Militar).

The distance from college and face-to-face content leaves students afraid and insecure about what awaits them



in the job market, in addition to still having the feeling that they have learned nothing and that they are stuck in time.

The weaknesses that remote teaching has are countless, as student learning has been greatly impaired by the dynamics of access to classes, which made it difficult to organize the study routine. In this bleak and challenging context, amid doubts and fears regarding academic training in times of a pandemic, there are many uncertainties regarding unsatisfactory preparation for the job market⁴⁸.

Some research participants demonstrated a feeling of gratitude and relief for having survived the pandemic period.

"Valuing the simple things in life and my family" (Campo Grande).

"I am grateful that I survived and that I did not lose loved ones" (Campo dos Afonsos).

"My view of everything has changed, even with the next" (Anil).

The pandemic allowed us to look at the lives of others with empathy and compassion, it gave us the responsibility to learn to take better care of our health and left us with a feeling of relief that we are still alive.

The feeling of compassion in times of a pandemic is more than necessary. Given the current scenario, it is essential to act not only for individual care, but for collective well-being. Showing gratitude is the way to seek to alleviate the suffering caused by the current situational context⁴⁹.

One participant reported having acquired more responsibility for hygiene after the pandemic.

"More responsible regarding hygiene" (Senador Camará).

New and better hygiene habits were generated, many people began to follow these measures in order to prevent themselves from COVID-19 and to protect others, especially family members and close people.

With the onset of the pandemic, WHO instituted key measures to prevent COVID-19, including hand hygiene with soap and water, the use of alcohol gel, social distancing of at least one meter between people to reduce the risk of contagion of the disease and the use of masks⁵⁰.

The positive and negative points generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in academic life

For some participants, although the practicality of attending classes remotely was beneficial, there was a drop in the level of learning.

"Positive: The comfort of home and attending classes / Negative: The absence of important content" (Guaratiba).

"A positive point was staying at home more and being able to research more on other subjects/ A negative point was the online classes" (Santa Cruz).

"Positive: It was that I had to study a lot more to learn what I had a lot of difficulty and did not understand in the distance learning classes/ Negative: low performance, learning difficulties" (Anil).

In the reports on the financial issue, we observed as positive points the ease of attending classes at home, the economy for not having to spend money on public transport, not wasting more time going to and from college and the use of technology to help learning and make new discoveries.

It is noticed that, when asked about the new experience of learning at home, remotely and at a distance, students, in general, expressed acceptance regarding the convenience of the learning environment, the innovation and the flexibility of schedules that they now have⁵¹.

As a negative point, we see that the speech about study impaired by the poor conduct of online classes continues to be repeated, but in these specific speeches above, despite the performance being below expectations, students took advantage of the convenience of studying at home and also the practicality of the technology, but the "low quality" of the contents, as well as the "low quality" of the teaching process, evidences the lack of specific pedagogical guidance, which makes it difficult to understand the contents, makes the activities boring and facilitates that the student is more easily distracted, in addition to the absence of practical activities⁵¹.

There were also students who took advantage of remote learning, but the lack of practical classes was insufficient.

"Positive: Discoveries of other professionals in online lectures/ Negative: Little contact with practice" (Barra de Guaratiba).

"I didn't learn much, but I had a lot of accessibility to extracurricular courses" (Sepetiba).

"Positive: I learned to take classes online/ Negative: not being able to resolve doubts that arose during the period with the professor" (Padre Miguel).

Study participants expressed the discovery of new means of study as a positive point, such as online lectures, which became quite common during the pandemic, in addition to investments in extracurricular courses, which enriched knowledge and enabled the discovery of new teachers and health professionals. Once again, as a negative point, the students reinforced the lack of practical classes as a detrimental factor for full learning.

This new teaching-learning perspective enabled the construction of distinguished intellectuals through real-time technology. That is, it provided integration with different areas of knowledge, to meet pedagogical needs, with the aim of training and contributing to professional training, through the lack of face-to-face activities and practices⁵².

Some students reported that there were no positives, only negatives.

"Positive: There were none/ Negative: I learned almost nothing about the subjects" (Barra da Tijuca).

"Positive: I don't see positive points/ Negative: I didn't have a good use of the subjects studied" (Campo dos Afonsos).

"Positive: None/ Negative: I did not learn anything from the online subjects" (Cidade de Deus).



"I didn't see any positives, only negatives. loss of education" (Cosmos).

These students reported that there was not a good use of online classes and subjects, which characterized poor quality learning and impaired teaching. They did not point out any positive points during academic life during this period, which exposes a great dissatisfaction with the way of teaching during the pandemic.

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has altered school activities across the planet. Sudden changes directly influenced the learning process. The main problems encountered in remote activities are difficulties in accessing classes, lack of a suitable environment and distancing students from practical classes, generating negative impacts on academic performance⁵³.

For these students below, the positives and negatives generated by the pandemic are related to mental health, which was severely affected during the pandemic.

"During this period, I developed a negative point in myself, as a trigger for insecurity, a desire to drop out of graduation, a feeling of impotence and failure for not having a good development. On the other hand, I started to see life with different eyes, starting to value the smallest things" (Freguesia de Jacarepaguá).

"A positive point is that I'm giving more value to each step/ As for the negative point, in addition to discouragement, I'm sure I've lost a lot of practical content" (Bangu).

"Positive: More contact with the family, better food for being at home/ Negative: More anxiety. Difficulty in academic training and lack of contact with other people, in addition to the family" (Jacarepaguá).

This experience showed in people the need to give more value to life, family, friends, steps, achievements and to be more patient. On the other hand, it brought insecurity, trauma, fear of losing loved ones, the feeling that you could become a bad professional, in addition to the fact that social isolation itself helped to awaken triggers in people.

With the assumption of keeping people out of contact with other individuals, the quarantine was essential to mitigate the spread of the new virus. This period generated perceptions of greater appreciation of life and small achievements. However, the negative psychological repercussions are countless, due to the uncertainties proposed by the current scenario, many human beings began to experience feelings of fear, loss and insecurity⁵⁴.

Conclusion

In view of the above, we saw that the suspension of face-to-face classes in Brazil was a strategy implemented in an attempt to reduce the spread of the new virus nationwide. The importance of this work is based on the

investigation and documentation of important information about the benefits and losses that the pandemic has brought to nursing students at a private university in Rio de Janeiro.

We concluded that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to society the need to reformulate its many spheres, which greatly affected the lives of students. In view of this, academic performance was impaired due to the restriction of face-to-face and practical activities at the university.

It is clear, therefore, that the sudden change from face-to-face classes to remote ones initially came to the dismay of many, given the inexperience and uncertainty in the quantity and quality of content, as well as the absence of face-to-face sharing of the academic environment.

For the participants in this research, the lack of practical classes was what most hindered learning, as the content taught during online classes was scarce most of the time. This is the negative point that students considered to be the factor that most contributed to poor performance during internships and learning in general. This issue influenced the insecurity and fear of performing nursing care as an academic and as a future nursing professional.

Another negative point explained by these university students was that some had their mental health affected during this period, anxiety and depression being the most evident illnesses. Psychological follow-up was necessary and sought after by some students, but there were students who revealed that they needed this type of help, but who did not actually seek a specialized professional.

It was also possible to observe that for many students, over time, the view on distance learning changed, came the convenience of being able to attend and re-attend classes in the comfort of home, the saving of financial resources for no longer needing to use public transport daily, being able to participate in lectures and online courses, in addition to developing new ways to study at home and better organize the time available.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic still being quite recent, studies on this topic are few and do not cover the impact that the pandemic has had on students' lives as a whole, that is, on their personal, family and professional lives. It is suggested that more research be carried out on this subject, seeking to understand what happened to the life, physical and mental health of undergraduates in the field of health in general, not just nursing, during and after the pandemic period.

We see the need for new nursing research linked to field research to increasingly understand the view of academics, graduates, lay people, young people, elderly people, etc. about the changes that occurred during the pandemic, as we believe that this is an important topic that has impacted people's present and will impact their future.

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