



# THE IMPACT OF THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON THE STUDENTS OF CHHS AT WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

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A special thank you to Dr. Pamela Wadsworth and Dr. Elissa Allen for their passion on this project with us and the push for change. Your encouragement and eagerness throughout this project is what kept us moving forward.

# Introduction

Personal experience with the difficulties of managing online school and life with COVID-19.

Feedback from peers of concern on how the virus was impacting their livelihood

Lack of research of online learning and impact of students struggles with the pandemic.

An overall need to assess these concerns in order to find the best way to promote change

# Current Research

- The impact of COVID-19 currently has affected the country with illness and death (2), financial stress (9), food insecurity (9), isolation (8), intimate partner violence (1;4), declining mental health and substance abuse (3)
- College student population lacks research on these effects due to the presence of the pandemic that is still ongoing (5)
- Studies that currently exist show increased stress, anxiety, and depression all directly related to the pandemic (6)

# Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the burden COVID-19 pandemic has caused on the student population of CHHS regarding their academic, social, mental, economic, and physical wellbeing.

# Assessments and Methods

- Electronic Software- Qualtrics was used for survey preparation and distribution
- Anonymous data collection from survey that was given for a two-week period
- Survey includes summary, risks to taking survey, consent and ensuring anonymity, contact information for questions.
- A series of questions about the student's program of study, race and ethnicity and questions regarding COVID-19 quarantine, exposure, food and economic stress, status of mental health, access to healthcare and mental health care services.
- The questions were a mix of both sliding Likert scales and open response questions.
- Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected

# Recruitment of Subjects

Limited demographic questions were asked in order to protect individuals and anonymity



Students in CHHS were 18 years and older



Recruited via email communication

# Data Analysis Overview

- Descriptive design was used to evaluate the responses
- Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the qualitative, open-ended questions.
- Data did not include identifying information.
- The data was then combined and formulated into graphs for visual representation of example statistics



# Sample Characteristics:

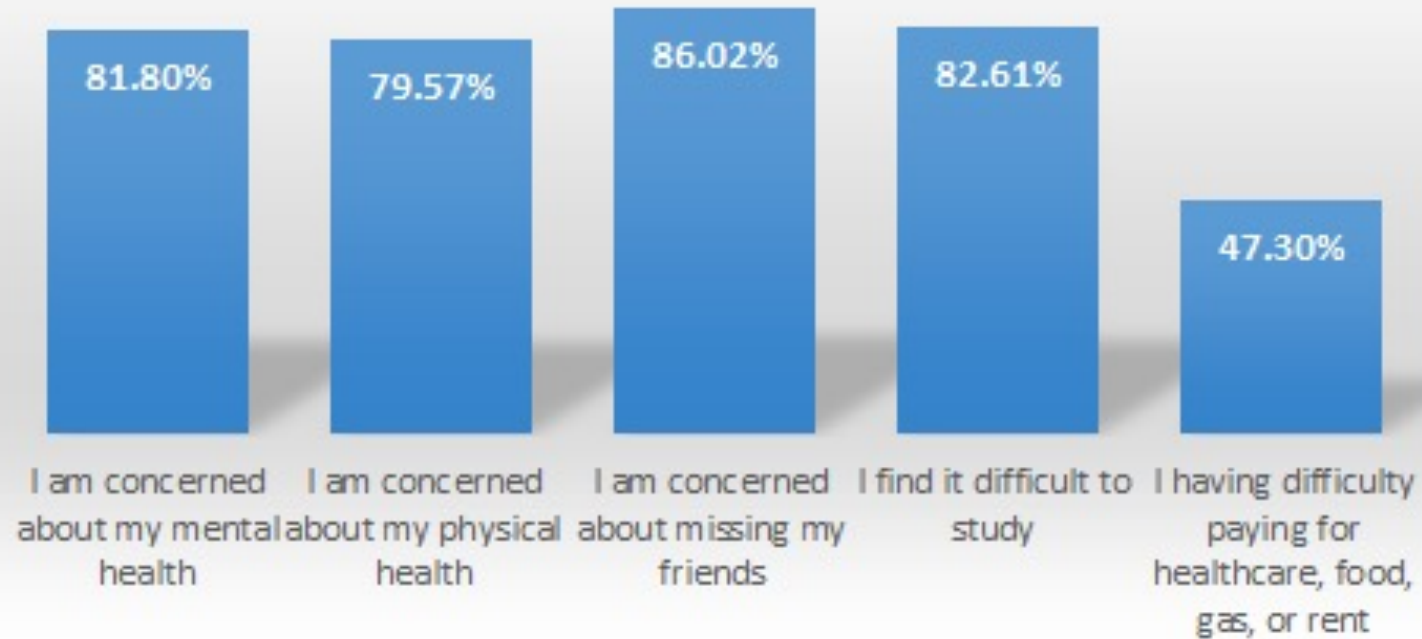
Characteristic	N=102
<b>CHHS School / Program</b>	
Nursing	76.5% (n=72)
Speech, Language, Hearing	12.8% (n=12)
Social Work	5.3% (n=5)
Physical Therapy	2.1% (n=2)
<b>Undergraduate</b>	85.1% (n=80)
<b>Graduate</b>	14.9% (n=14)
<b>Work</b>	69.9% (n=65)
<b>Front line Worker</b>	71.9% (n=46)
Healthcare	55.4% (n=36)
<b>Quarantine for COVID</b>	<b>49.5% (n=46)</b>
1x	60.9% (n=28)
2 x	34.8% (n=16)
≥3	4.4% (n=2)

# Alarming statistics

- **47.3%** of participants state the COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult to pay for food, gas, mortgage or rent, or healthcare (n=44)
- **21.5%** of participants have *difficulty in paying for food* (n=20)
- Of those who have a job, **64.6%** (n=42) feel as though their job *exposes* them to the COVID-19 virus.
- **22%** of participants (n=22) state they should have quarantined from their jobs due to COVID-19 virus exposure or diagnosis, but were *unable to* due to financial concerns

## Because of the Covid 19 Pandemic...

N=102

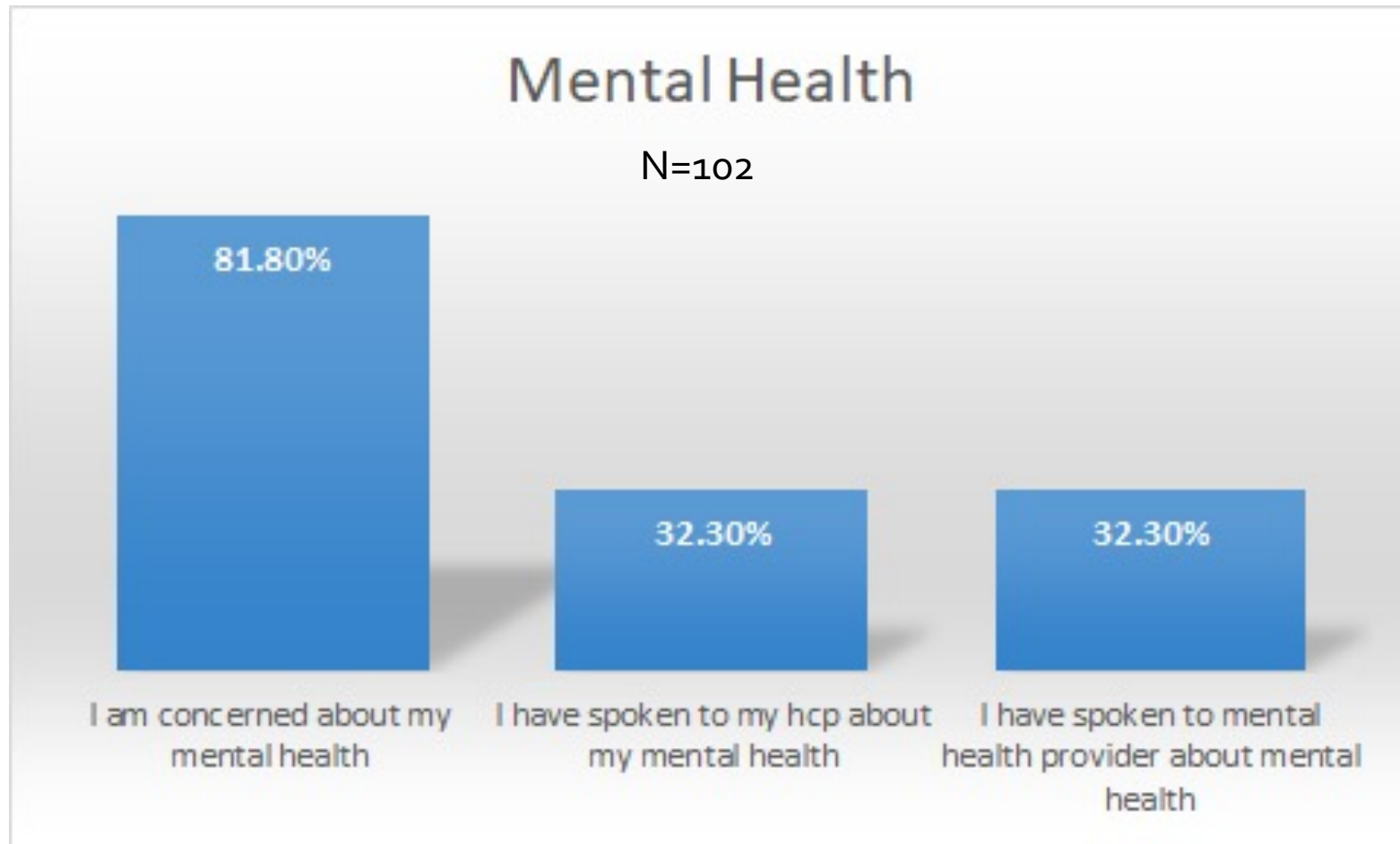


# TOP STUDENT CONCERNS

Narrative:

Financial concerns

- "Staying in the nursing program and being able to pay for it"
- "GPA, money. I'm worried about school and I'm not able to work as much so money is tight"
- "Having enough money to afford necessities while still in school"
- "I had to quit my job due to the stress of online school, so I don't have an income and I got denied unemployment"



# MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

## Narrative:

## Barriers to seeking help for mental health

- Doesn't seem as important as school. (I know it is, but I feel I neglect my health while in school due to the overwhelming stress and workload)
- I know a lot of people aren't taking new clients and I am too overwhelmed to even think about trying to find someone especially when I am more concerned about finding a job
- I feel like I don't have time... and I'm a little afraid of what it might look for me to seek help.
- I think both time and the mental effort of reaching out make me not seek any professional care. I am honestly burnt out and need to focus my energy on school.

"If you could tell your faculty at WMU something that would help you, what would it be?"

- Students are burnt out. We need a break and professors have increased the workload because we're home and they think that means we have more time to do schoolwork, often at the expense of our mental health. My mental health has decreased significantly since March and especially since September.
- "The professors think because we have been transitioned to online learning that we are not doing enough when relating to schoolwork, and I highly disagree. I have never struggled more in school than this semester and the number of assignments has me severely stressed and having feelings of being a failure"
- "I wish I could have interacted with my professors instead of just listening to them talk on recorded videos. I also felt like I couldn't connect with any peers because I am at home"

- Too many assignments given with not enough time to complete
- Lack of Communication from professors (not answering emails)
- Feeling guilty or feeling punished for quarantine
- Physical health compromised
- Worry of getting the virus or giving the virus to people
- Worry of graduating with inadequate experience
- Lack of social interaction with people or family

## Stressors of being a student during COVID-19



# Results

- The data resulted in showing many student concerns in different areas
- The anonymous results and statistics were distributed to several different individuals and groups to make faculty aware of the hardships students were expressing
- PowerPoint presentations representing the data were used as a visual while the data was presented

# Recommendations

- Collaboration with public health to improve COVID efforts on campus
- Public health student's projects involving normalizing the burden
- Distributing helpful information via text-messages and emails
- Actively promoting the importance of overall health and wellbeing

# Potential Future Plans

- Lack of awareness of local programs that could improve student lives
- Creation of a CHHS committee built of students and professors that would communicate and gain knowledge of Kalamazoo outreach programs.
- Committee would not only guide students to these programs when they are contacted by also promote and connect these programs to be presented throughout the building.
- Creation of a universal webpage accessible through Western Michigan University that accumulates the local resources in Kalamazoo.

# Discussion- Limitations

- Not directly asking about school clinical exposure
- Convenience sample
  - Potential selection bias
- Low sample number compared to overall number of CHHS students (1702 total, 5.9% of students)

# Discussion- Population size and Future Assessments

- Regular longitudinal assessment
- Survey that includes more students
- Share the data with other students
- Sharing the data with faculty

# ALSO ANOTHER THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE WHO HAVE LISTENED AND HELP CONTRIBUTE IDEAS AND PROMOTE CHANGE FROM OUR RESEARCH

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Dr. Robert Bensley

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Dr. Betty Dennis

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Dr. Yvonne Ford

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Professor Susan Houtrouw

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Dr. Michael Famiano

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Professor Dawn Smith

The background features a green gradient that transitions from a lighter shade on the left to a darker shade on the right. On the right side, there is a cluster of 3D question marks in various shades of green, creating a textured, layered effect.

# QUESTIONS?

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