

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic caused medical education to shift in unprecedented ways, leading medical schools to switch to virtual platforms and modify student-patient interactions. On top of educational changes, medical students adapted to changes in their support network, finances, and health - both mental and physical.

Previous studies have demonstrated the specific effect of online learning on medical students as a result of the pandemic, with as many as 13% experiencing health difficulties and 15% experiencing psychological effects.¹ This study documents the holistic impact of the pandemic on medical students at a single United States institution.

Methods

- An anonymous online survey was distributed to medical students at Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University in February 2021.

Has this pandemic affected your study in the medical school?

Yes

No

If you answered "yes" to the previous question, how would you grade the severity that the pandemic has affected your study?

Mild

Moderate

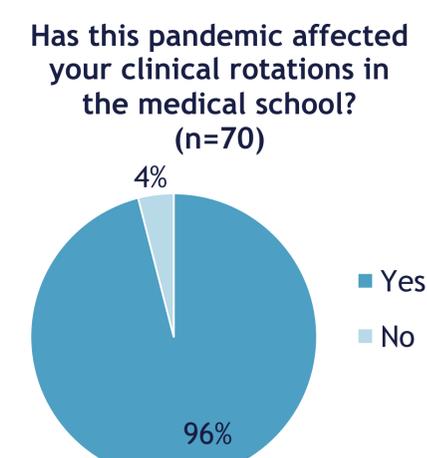
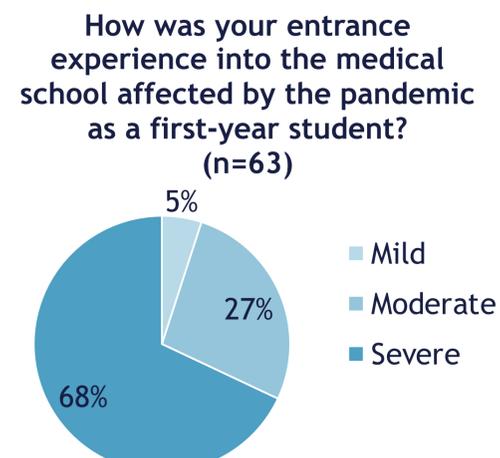
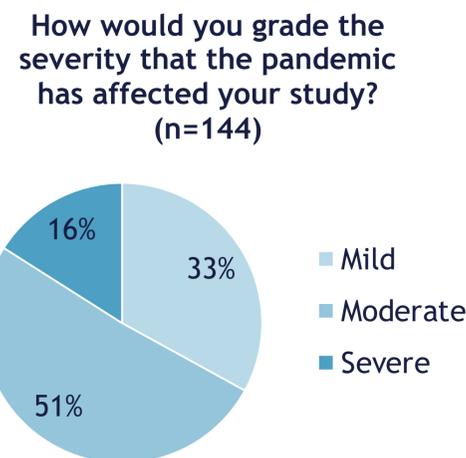
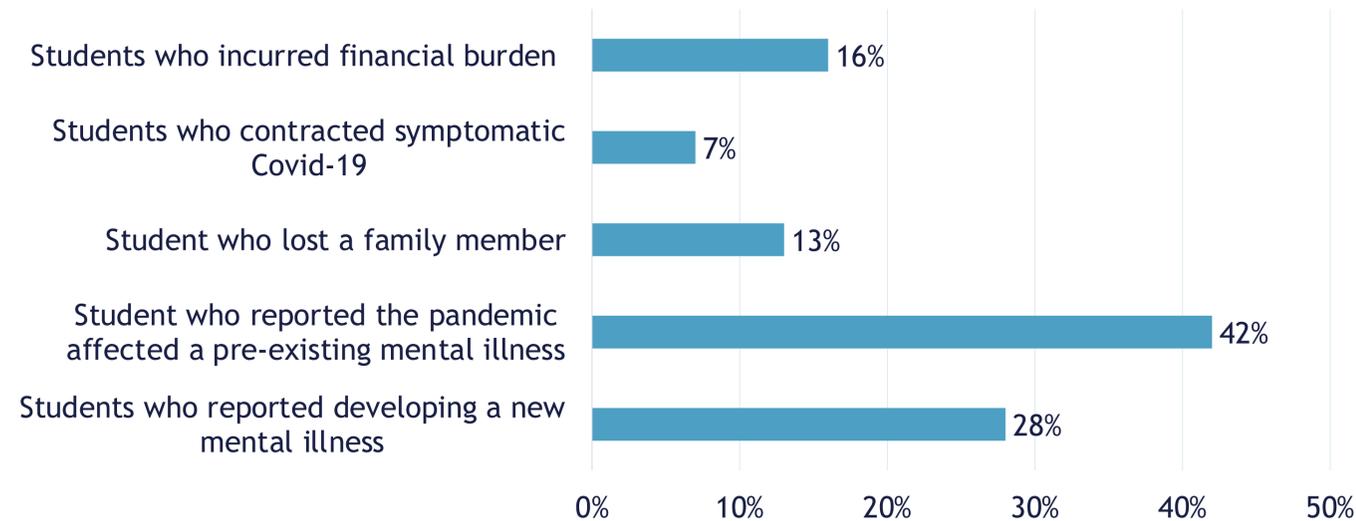
Severe

Example Questions from Survey

Results

Response Rate: 168 out of 1,088 students at Sidney Kimmel Medical College

- 58% (98/168) of responders identifying as female
- Class breakdown : 38% (63/168) first years, 18% (31/168) second years, 21% (36/168) third years, 20% (34/168) fourth years, 2% (4/168) were considered "other" (including research year, Master's program).
- 86% (144/168) of students reported the pandemic affected their study in medical school



Conclusion

Through the results of this study, it was found that 86% of students perceived that the pandemic affected their study in medical school, with the majority, 51%, reporting it was moderately affected.

- Medical students' mental health and financial burden were most affected.
- Second year students reported the highest incidence of new mental illness.
- Importantly, those with previous mental health conditions were severely impacted by the pandemic.
- Students reported that their entrance to medical school was severely affected/
- 96% of third and fourth year student responders had their clinical rotations affected.

Future studies should explore the effectiveness of different modalities of mental health and financial support offered to students during this time.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include:

- The self-reported nature of this survey
- Environment during time of distribution of the survey, regarding public health and educational restrictions at the time

References

- Alsoufi A, Alsuyihili A, Msherghi A, et al. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on medical education: Medical students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding electronic learning. *PLoS One*. 2020;15(11):e0242905. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0242905