

The Impact of COVID -19 on American Education

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Abstract: The epidemic has had many negative effects on American education. Students quit their studies to look for jobs, the quality of study declines, and their mental and physical health is threatened. All these influences have hindered the development of American education. The impact of the epidemic on education permeates all aspects. Not only their studies, but also students' lives are greatly affected. Great changes have taken place in the whole field of education. Students and teachers have to start a new way of education. The results are undoubtedly disappointing, declining grades, interruption of education and low efficiency. But everyone is doing their best to get back to normal.

Keywords: dropout rate, mental health, online courses

1. The Impact of Epidemic on Educational Development

A sudden epidemic has disrupted people's normal life. Everyone did not make sufficient preparations. People are forced to open another lifestyle and state that they are unfamiliar with. The epidemic has affected all aspects of the United States, including education. Education in the United States began to stagnate and even regressed significantly [1]. Many of the students lost the opportunity of education. The epidemic has also dealt a heavy blow to the American economy. Due to the financial pressure of the family, many students must drop out of school and go out to work to earn money to support their families. The epidemic has prompted great reforms in the field of education. The schools had to close and open online courses. Students' learning quality and mental health have greatly declined. Restricted by online teaching, it is difficult for students to fully understand and absorb knowledge. Students' attitude of attending classes at home will be too loose. Because of these, students' average grades have dropped obviously. The death rate caused by the epidemic is not small. This makes many students' physical and mental health hurt. Students are an important part of America's future. The impact on the next generation is the impact on the future development of the United States. So now the development of the United States is facing a crisis. In this special period, both students and teachers must make great efforts to minimize the impact on education.

2. The Continuous Dropout of Students' Studies

In the context of the epidemic situation, students are under increasing pressure. Many college and university students give up continuing their studies. The epidemic caused serious losses to the global economy. Many people are unemployed or bankrupt, burdened with heavy loans. Students' tuition fees have become a huge obstacle. The financial situation of many students whose families

are not rich has become worse. For some students, living is already very difficult for them. They cannot afford their tuition. Their economic pressure is enormous. They must choose to drop out of school and go to work to make a living. And because of the huge economic problems, students' mental health is also suffering. They are confused and worried about their future. Students' psychology is suppressed under the epidemic situation, and they cannot socialize and release their emotions normally and freely. In such an environment, students are depressed for too long, their mental state gradually deteriorates. According to <the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center>, of the 2.6 million students who started college in fall 2019, 26.1 percent, or roughly 679,000 did not come back the next year. This is an increase of two percentage points compared with the previous year, and it is the highest proportion of sophomores who have not returned to school since 2012. Students consider that working is more important than continuing education. For them, making money is the primary goal at present. This proves that the impact of the epidemic on American higher education is indelible. These dates make us realize that people's education level will decrease in the future. This will lead to the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the United States in the future. The students who choose to drop out of school now will be unable to compete with those students who attend school normally in the future. Their employment prospects are getting narrower and narrower. It will limit the direction of their lives; they do not have many options to choose.

2.1. The Closure of American Schools

Due to the epidemic, many schools in the United States chose to close. This is inevitable and schools have no choice, if they keep schools open could lead to more casualties. This affects approximately sixty million students. Many students rely on schools for food and housing and will have nowhere to go once schools close. Likewise, school closures mean that students and teachers need to adapt quickly and switch to a new model of teaching and learning. Long-term online classes will cause students to lose confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Not going to school can also lead to negative and bad thoughts among young people, because left unchecked, students may commit crimes outside [2]. In order to survive, they must choose to work and earn money.

2.2. The Influences of Online Classes on Students' Study

2.2.1. The Declines of Students' Practical Experiences

Under the epidemic, most schools have started online teaching methods. This will cause a problem that students cannot do experimental projects by themselves [3]. It is not friendly to students who need to rely on experiments to complete reports or study, like physical and chemistry students [4]. In online classes, teachers often cannot give detailed guidance and demonstration to students. Students do not know how to operate correctly, which will lead to operational errors. If the operation is wrong, the content of this study will be transmitted to the students in failure and make ineffective learning. This is a waste of time, and the teacher cannot carry on the next teaching, which will be interrupted. In addition, students do not have professional equipment at home to support their experiments. Some dangerous experiments will lead to serious consequences if the protective measures are not in place. Classes often require students to learn by themselves completely. The overall educational efficiency will be pulled down.

2.2.2. The Reduction of Learning Motivation

The biggest challenge of online courses is students' self-control. Many students cannot control themselves properly. When in the school environment, under the supervision of teachers, students

can stay focused on their studies. On the contrary, at home, no one is staring at the students all the time, and at this time, the students' self-control ability is reflected. Many students choose to secretly play with their mobile phones in the blind area of the camera or browse the content unrelated to the classroom content on the Internet, instead of listening to the class carefully. Sometimes after a class, the students don't even know what the teacher is talking about, and the teacher can't control the students through the screen. Students will not be as serious at home as they are in class [5]. The state of being at home is leisure and relaxation, and they will be brought into this state automatically, instead of studying. They can have class while eating, or they can lie down and have class as they please. When students don't take the classroom seriously, learning is ineffective.

2.2.3. The Significantly Drop of Students' Overall Grades

The online class has led to a reduction of students' study time, and their learning performance during the epidemic has dropped significantly compared with that before. According to the < Test Score Patterns Across Three COVID-19 impacted School Yea>, they compared the math and reading test scores of students in grades three to eight in the United States before and after the epidemic. They found that compared with the students in autumn 2019, the math scores of students in autumn 2021 will be 0.2-0.27 standard deviation lower and their reading scores will be 0.09-0.18 standard deviation lower [6]. This difference is quite large. Long before the epidemic, there was a learning difference between students with good grades and those with poor grades, but now the students whose grades are at the backstage are rapidly regressing, making the gap more obvious. Because the difference in grades is too great, students will lose their motivation to learn. This is also a major cause of dropping out of school.

2.2.4. The Attracting of Network Resources

There are abundant resources on the Internet. Students can find any information they want on the internet. Since they can get the answers effortlessly, students won't spend much time studying knowledge and preparing for the exam. Students' failure to study hard will lead to the decline of education quality. Even if their grades are good, it is not true. Cheating in exams has become the norm. They can use other devices behind the screen to search for answers. In this way, the teacher won't know the real situation of students' study. The knowledge is not stored at all. When they return to the normal campus, they will find that they have not absorbed their knowledge. This will make their future study more difficult, because they have not laid a good foundation. Students' knowledge level is reduced.

2.2.5. Necessary Equipment and Operation Requirements

Online classes are the product of network information. According to the research <COVID-19 and student performance, equity, and U.S. education policy> written by Emma García and Elaine Weiss, courses will only be effective if both students and teachers have access to specific online instruction. Because of the online classes, students and teachers must use some websites they have never used before. So, before class begins, the teacher must take the time to make sure that each student completes the registration and understands the usage of the websites. And students must have the devices that can support their online courses. This is also a big difficulty for students from less affluent families. Maybe their devices are old or breaking down, they need to get a new one for the online classes. They may not be able to afford to pay for a new computer, so they are not qualified to take online courses, which means that her study progress will be far behind others. And if they don't have a computer to help them in class, they will probably choose to drop out of school directly. This will lead to a backward education level. For some older teachers who are not familiar with how

to use online teaching correctly, the course will become more complicated. They can't transfer knowledge to students well through the network.

2.3. The Threat of Students' Physical and Mental Health

2.3.1. The Affect of Family Factors

The death of family members is undoubtedly the biggest blow to students. Some of the students' family members are likely to be sent to work on the front lines. About 15 million people died because of COVID-19. If a student's family member unfortunately dies, it can be very traumatic. They need to receive effective psychological help. These questions revolve around students from families of color. If family members die because of COVID-19, and students can't vent their pent-up emotions, it will lead to problems in their mental health. Once students' psychological problems arise, their study state will also deteriorate, and students will not be motivated to study, and they will be anxious. Under such circumstances, people can't settle down to study. When students can't study hard, their grades will drop, which will lead to more resistance to learning. This vicious circle will only get worse, and many students will choose to drop out of school and recuperate at home [7]. A bad state of mind is likely to lead to depression, school weariness and even suicidal tendencies. Similarly, if something happens in the family, causing parents to be depressed or out of control, such as quarreling, it will put a burden on students' psychology. Family atmosphere is one of the important factors for students' healthy growth.

2.3.2. The Pressure of Economic Problems

Students' physical and mental health is threatened under the epidemic, particularly students of color. They usually worry about their food and clothing. When they are sick, most of these students rely on basic health clinics provided by the schools. When they get sick, they don't have enough financial ability to treat the disease and get the right treatment, which leads to the deterioration of their condition. For some students from poor families, making money is their primary goal, especially in such a special environment, everyone's economy is affected greatly, which makes their life more restrained. Their incomes are shrinking too [8]. Under this huge economic pressure, students' psychological quality needs to be strong, otherwise they will be easily crushed. Because they have to bear the financial pressure of their families, many students choose not to continue their studies in order to save money. However, when they see other peers in normal school, they will inevitably feel jealous and envious. They need to go out to school early, and this psychological imbalance is one of the psychological problems.

2.3.3. The Reduction of Contact with the Outside World

The arrival of the epidemic has disrupted students' normal social life. They can't go out to play with their good friends, so they can only stay at home. They all need to wear masks when going out, and their social freedom is deprived. However, students are unprepared, and long-term living at home will lead to children's nervousness. For students, now is the age when they need to communicate with the outside world [9]. They need to learn and grow through some interpersonal communication. They have been banned at home all the time, and they will feel anxious, bored and depressed. When they begin to have this impetuous mood, their study will also be impetuous, and they can't enter the state of study. They only think of when they can go out to play every day, and their attitude is inevitably sloppy and lazy.

2.4. The Amount of Economic Pressure

The impact of the epidemic on the economy is the biggest. This not only exerts huge pressure on the current US economy, but also has a huge impact on long-term economic development. The United States economy suffers severe damage, the schools have also had an indelible impact, especially private schools. Unlike public schools, private schools are run on tuition and donations. Due to the epidemic, the school's financial resources have been limited. They don't have enough money to keep the school going and pay the teachers. In this case they had to fire some employees to make them face less financially stressed. According to the reports, more than one hundred private schools in the United States have closed permanently and more than a million employees have been laid off. School closures and teacher changes could lead to. Stalled learning progress means putting in more effort to make up for what they missed when they go back to school, it is not easy. Similarly, there are also students whose families are unemployed or bankrupt due to the epidemic and cannot continue to bear the tuition fees for school and interrupt their studies [10]. All of this will lead to a decline in the quality of education students receive, and it will be more difficult to find jobs in the future, and the money earned will not be as good as before, which is very harmful to the future economic development of the United States.

3. Conclusion

COVID-19's influence on American education is enormous, mostly negative. However, people's lives have gradually gone on the right track and returned to normal. After three years of living with an epidemic situation, everyone is getting used to it. The impact of the education sector will be made up slowly, and everyone is trying their best to minimize the loss. This epidemic is a big test for all of us, and it's not all bad. At least the next time we face a sudden challenge, we will be more experienced and able to deal with this situation calmly. At the same time, this epidemic situation has also made us see many problems in the education sector. It also gives people the opportunity to improve, to make the American education system more perfect, and to work together for the future of America.

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