



The pain of every day: student health before and during the Covid-19 pandemic

Ana Lúcia Basilio Carneiro¹, Lindair Alves da Silva², Lincoln Basilio Alves³,
Semírames Cartonilho de Souza Ramos¹

¹Federal University of Paraíba, Health Sciences Centre, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil

²Senador Humberto Lucena Emergency and Trauma Hospital, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil

³Deméter Research, São Paulo, Brazil



Ana Lúcia Basilio Carneiro
analucarneiro@gmail.com

For 4 years, our team has been monitoring the physical and mental complaints of Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB) students, mainly those from the healthcare field. We have verified oscillations in headache complaints and other psycho-emotional symptoms during this period. In 2022, perhaps as a result of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, complaints of headache and anxiety were above 70%. This public, today, demands integral care appropriate to their socio-cultural reality. We warn about the importance of local diagnosis and respective offer of appropriate social support to each reality to foster, care and accompany these communities.

Edited by:
Marcelo Moraes Valença

Covid-19 has made, is making and will make biopsychosocial crossings and interweaving with significant changes in the daily life and also the physical and mental health of the world's population. The virus invaded physical and mental spaces and had repercussions on the individual and collective being and performance of people and institutions. So, as a result, new challenges in the teaching-learning process without a holistic view of those involved in the process emerged in the universities. Rather, the university was considered a plural space where a (re)adjustment of the entrants to the new challenges was necessary. During the pandemic, this environment was replaced, and new teaching-learning strategies and adaptations were required.¹ Not surprisingly, in these transitional scenarios, added to the individual reality of the students, the unpleasant physical and mental reactions triggered or exacerbated in the pandemic period.

Our team monitored the health conditions of the students of the UFPB and verified the prevalence of self-reported psycho-emotional and neurological disorders before² and during the COVID-19^{3,4} pandemic to obtain a diagnosis of the local reality. This is a serial cross-sectional survey with data collection in the same population at different times. The research is part of the project "Students' Health Status: perception, self-report and clinical trial with integrative and complementary health practices" approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the CCS/UFPB (protocol No. 2,784,383; CAAE 92087118.6.0000.5188). All volunteers received information regarding the objectives of the research and signed a Free and Informed Consent Form. The collection instrument was designed on Google Forms and recruitment of active students aged ≥ 18 years was via Instagram®, e-mail and WhatsApp®.

Over the years 2018-2022, 1,097 students participated in the surveys. The students were mostly young, single and female. It was observed, in the serial data, an increase in pain complaints, mainly headache, migraine, anxiety, insomnia, tinnitus and bruxism among the participants (Table 1). In four years, the prevalence of headache and anxiety complaints exceeded 70%. Thus, in this sample, the prevalence of headache accompanied the participants' psycho-emotional and psychiatric changes.

Keywords:
Headache
Migraine
Anxiety
Tinnitus
Covid-19

Submitted: October 17, 2022

Accepted: November 29, 2022

Published online: December 28, 2022



Table 1. Self-report of physical and mental symptoms in students, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil (2018-2022)

Collection period	n	Sex		Hdch*	Mgrn*	Anxiety*	T	C-19	NT
		F	M						
		%	%						
2018-2019	302	79.7	20.2	68.9	36.8	40.7	0.33	-	8.9
June/2020³	56	82.1	17.9	51.8	35.7	76.8	25.0	-	14.3
June/2020	119	81.5	18.5	60.5	29.4	78.2	11.8	0.0	6.7
Jan-Mar/2021⁴	128	87.5	12.6	58.6	28.9	84.4	12.5	10.9	12.5
Jan./2021	279	74.9	25.1	48.4	23.3	78.9	12.2	5.0	8.6
June-July2022	119	72.3	27.7	80.7	44.5	87.4	31.1	26.1	8.4
May-July/2022	94	73.4	26.6	74.5	44.7	85.1	29.8	29.8	10.6

n = sample; Hdch=Headache; Mgrn = Migraine *One-month data recording period; T = Tinnitus; C-19 = Covid-19 diagnosis; NT = has already undergone neurological treatment.

Table 1 shows the prevalence of headache, migraine, anxiety and tinnitus fluctuation over the last four years, with higher figures in 2022. In this synthesis is evidenced dysynchrony between the prevalence of headache complaints and consultations with the neurologist, the qualified professional to diagnose and prescribe the appropriate treatment for this complaint. Headache is a common neurological symptom of Covid-19, but its persistence demands neurologist follow-up.

After the outbreak is over, it is necessary to know the immediate and delayed impacts on the daily life and health of the population. At this point a dialogue between administrators, science, ethics, health and politics is needed to mobilise resources and provide the necessary social support to foster, care for and monitor the individual and collective health of the academic community. On the other hand, to raise awareness, clarify and make professionals available to meet the needs already perceived.

Ana Lúcia Basilio Carneiro
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2035-8328>
 Lindair Alves da Silva
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8380-3877>
 Lincoln Basilio Alves
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8937-6546>
 Semirames Cartonilho de Souza Ramos
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8370-5994>

Authors contribution: ALBC, LAS, LBA, conceptualization, original draft, project administration, supervision, final approval of the version to be published; ALBC, LAS analysis and interpretation of data for the work; ALBC, SCSR, LBA, acquisition of data for the work; ALBC, SCSR, supervision and critical review.

Conflict of interest: There is no conflict of interest to declare.

Financial support: This work was financially supported by the Public Call n. 03/2020, Research Productivity PROPESQ/PRPG/UFPB. Research project code in SIGAA PVG13497-2020.

References

1. Ramos SCS, Brochin LF, Carneiro ALB, Ribeiro OCJ, Albarado KVP and Martins TM. **Teaching, monitoring and promoting health in times of COVID-19 pandemic.** *Res Soc Dev* 2021;10(8):e45410817544 Doi:10.33448/rsd-v10i8.17544
2. Alves LB, Carneiro ALB, Ramos SCS, Melo MNA, Silva LA. **Perceptions, Physical and Psycho-Emotional Complaints Among Students: a cross-sectional study before the pandemic.** *Intern J Health Sci* 2021;2(21):1-14 Doi:10.22533/at.ed.1592212220047
3. Carneiro ALB, Ramos SCS, Brasil AWL, Silva LA, Lima GG, Alves LB, . . . Melo CMB. **COVID-19 - The invisible enemy: impacts on students' mental health and coping strategies.** *Res Soc Dev* 2021;10(1):e59110112144 Doi:10.33448/rsd-v10i1.12144
4. Carneiro ALB, Ramos SCS, Santos JN, Alves LB, Silva LA, Costa CBA and Ribeiro OCJ. **Impacts of the second wave of Covid-19 in Brazil: a cross-sectional study with nursing students.** *Res Soc Dev* 2022;11(9):e30311931713 Doi:10.33448/rsd-v11i9.31713
5. Neto ARS, Carvalho ARB, Oliveira EMN, Magalhães RLB, Moura MEB and Freitas DRJ. **Symptomatic manifestations of the disease caused by coronavirus (COVID-19) in adults: systematic review.** *Rev Gaúcha Enferm* 2020;42(esp):e20200205 Doi:10.1590/scielopreprints.1436