

# An Investigation into The Difficulties Students Faced during Covid - 19 Epidemic

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## ABSTRACT

*The Covid-19 epidemic has been complicated in the past year, until now, the whole country is still joining hands to fight the epidemic. This study aimed to identify the difficulties that students faced, as well as how they could overcome those difficulties. The participants are 30 students from Tay Do University in Vietnam who were stuck in the university or stayed at home with their family in the epidemic. They were interviewed about the difficulties they faced during the time of the pandemic. The results showed that most of the students encountered difficulties during the pandemic including difficulties in study, in finance and in social communication.*

**Keyword:** *Covid-19 epidemic, Difficulties in study, Difficulties in finance, Difficulties in social communication*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 epidemic is still developing very complicatedly in many countries around the world, negatively affecting major economies such as the US, China, Japan, the European Union and Vietnam. The fourth outbreak of Covid-19 has affected many districts, disturbing the production and business methods of many enterprises, enterprises, shops, industrial parks, export processing zones. It has also significantly affected the operation of many agencies, units, schools, commercial centers, markets, shops, making the lives of many people, especially workers, more difficult than before.

Students also face many difficulties and barriers during this pandemic. In just a few weeks when the restrictive measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 acute respiratory infection, many students were unable to attend classes due to the closure of schools. An investigation into how Covid - 19 has changed student life is necessary in now when the covid-19 epidemic is happening. At Tay Do University, most students face difficulties during the time of social distancing. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the difficulties of students during the covid-19 pandemic as well as how students can overcome those difficulties .

### Research question

This research was conducted in order to answer a following question:

What difficulties do the students from Tay Do University face during Covid-19 epidemic?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Covid - 19 epidemic in Vietnam

In the 21st century, the world is facing a dangerous pandemic name Covid-19. This pandemic was cause by a highly contagious virus strain discovered December 2019 in Wuhan, China. According to WHO (World Health Organization), Corona virus disease (Covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered Corona virus. Until September 2021, Vietnam is in the 4th waves of the epidemic. According to the Ministry of Health's covid-19 map, as of September 5, the number of F0 cases was 511,170 people, 215,857 people recovered, 282,516 people recovered and 12,793 died. The number is still very large, but all levels of government, mass organizations and people nationwide are making efforts to clean up the area and expand the "green area"; in which union members and young people continue to engage in epidemic prevention and control.

Vietnam is one of the few countries that has succeeded in controlling the outbreak in previous outbreaks and we are making great efforts.

## 2.2 Students' difficulty in Covid -19 epidemic

The Covid-19 epidemic has caused many difficulties for people, including students. Students have faced a lot of changes. Due to the epidemic, most of the learning has moved online to stay safe from Covid-19 and this is a big challenge for students. Many students still think that online learning will be similar to classroom learning, but there are many differences in schedules, learning methods and more. Online learning will have different timetables and class can be beginning in the morning, afternoon or evening. Students will log into the management system by themselves at any time. At this time, their schedule will become more flexible, but there is a problem that they must be proactive and self-study. Online learning is self-directed learning, so students need to change their previous learning methods to get better grades. Many students still do not know how to study effectively.

Millions of people are under financial pressure because of the Covid -19, including students. This can make us feel exhausted, distracted, and difficult in life. During the epidemic, students could not work part-time, which resulted in them losing some of their income. Students cannot work part-time, which causes them to lose part of their income. For students who will have graduated in this year, the epidemic causes difficulties for them in finding jobs. A few students who adapted in time to change, they switched to online jobs such as selling online on apps Lazada, Shopee..., which helped them improve their income, but during the Covid-19 pandemic, everything seems to be more difficult. Some Students stuck in the city face difficulty when they have to spend too many things from rent, electricity, water, food,...while their families can't support much because their family's income is affected by the Covid-19 epidemic

Besides worrying about finance, having to stay at home for many days is also difficult for students when they have to struggle all day in the four walls of the hostel, causing an uncomfortable mood. However, it is necessary to move all communication to online because of the outbreak of the epidemic. Some students have problem in online communication, their network connection is not stable or network devices such as phones or laptops are damaged, they do not have network devices to connect with people.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Participants

The participants of this research are 30 students who were studying different majors at Tay Do University. They came from both rural and urban areas. Their age ranged from 18 to 22. They were stuck in Can Tho city in covid-19 epidemic or stay at home with family in the epidemic. Participants took part in the interviews in order to provide information about the difficulties they have faced in Covid- 19 epidemic.

### 3.2 Instrument

In order to collect information about the students' problems in Covid-19 epidemic, an interview was used. Six interview questions were designed focusing on students' difficulties and how they overcame such difficulties.

### 3.3 Procedures

The study consisted of five main phases. In the early stages, the researcher went online to find relevant documents. Then, interview questions were designed in phase 2. In phase 3, the researcher went to Tay Do University to interview the students. In phase 4, the data from the interviews were collected and analyzed. Finally, the data were reported at stage 5 and the research was completed.

## 4. RESULTS

The interview data were analyzed and classified into groups according to the detailed information the students provided about their difficulties in Covid – 19. Specifically, the students' difficulties mainly fell into three groups as follows.

### 4.1 Difficulties in study

Almost students gave the answers that they had difficulties in studied online.

*“Online learning depends on social networks, but it seems that during the epidemic the fiber optic cable broke and made my lessons not go smoothly. And one more thing I didn't understand in class, I didn't understand even more online. I can't understand it, and I can't talk directly to the subject teacher”* (female, English translation). Besides, they also complained that the lessons were boring, they could not catch up the lesson. Their connection was not good, they didn't have laptop for study.

*“The most difficult thing when learning online is not being able to grasp all the content of the lesson. The next difficulty is unstable network.”*- (male, English translation)

*“I don't have a laptop to learn online easily like everyone else, my Wi-Fi is often jerky and short-circuited”*- (female, English translation)

### 4.2 Difficulties in finance

When asked about the finance, 100% of the students said that they had problems in finance because the Co vid-19 made their family finance get lower than ever.

“My mom runs a little coffee shop, now we have to close it because of covid-19. Losing one of the incomes makes it quite difficult”- (male, English translation)

“My parents could not work and all sources of income in the family decreased while the cost of food and other living expenses increased”- (female, English translation)

“The economy is unstable because traders stop buying shrimp and crab or buy it at a cheap price without making a profit”- (male, English translation)

“My family is facing many difficulties, my father is unemployed, my mother's business is very difficult” - (female, English translation)

#### **4.3 Difficulties in social communication**

Social communication became a big problem for students. They complained that they got troubles with social communication.

“I cannot go outside, meanwhile I cannot meet anyone, just only see them by social media like Facebook or Zalo. And I feel a bit empty, and I'm not familiar with this.”- (female, English translation)

“You can see that social interaction is very limited, causing relationships to decrease further” - (male, English translation)

“The pandemic made it impossible for me to go to school and also not be able to work part-time” - (female, English translation)

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the difficulties students faced in Covid-19 epidemic. From the research results, it could be concluded that the student faced difficulties in study, finance and social communication. The findings suggest that teachers should pay more attention to the help students overcome the obstacles in studying online. The researcher hopes that the research can make useful contributions to the students of Tay Do University in the process of joining hands in their disease prevention as well as people in the whole society.

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