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## HOW HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTED CLIENTS OF THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Daniella Loera

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HOW HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTED CLIENTS OF THE EARLY  
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

---

by  
Daniella Loera

May 2023

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Daniella Loera

May 2023

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## ABSTRACT

The research project explored the impact of factors that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and families and children in the early development center, resulting in a decrease of child attendance. This research sought to analyze the impacts in one community to prepare for future national emergencies across different communities. The study was conducted with clients of a non-profit organization that offers services through their early development center for ages six weeks to five years old. Data was obtained through survey responses from participants to analyze their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Responses were analyzed through statistical analysis using SPSS. The findings of this research have the potential to be use to improve policies at a micro and macro level. Examining the outcomes of this study on both levels could assist in preventing impediments of resources for vulnerable communities during national emergencies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to recognize and express my sincere gratitude to my parents for their continuous support during my academic journey. I would like to extend many thanks to my family and friends for their support during this process and for having faith in me. You all push me to be better every day and I hope I make you proud.

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the memory of my Uncle Jose and Grandfather.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ASSESSMENT

#### Introduction

Chapter one describes the focus, research question, and hypothesis. This is followed by the paradigm and a discussion of the rationale for the chosen paradigm. Then, the theoretical orientation outlines the theories that have provided a framework for the research study. In the conclusion of this chapter is a discussion of the research study's potential contribution to micro and macro social work practice.

#### Research Questions

Human lives have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The research study focused on how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted attendance in children enrolled in an early development center, additionally, how the families of the children have been affected and has that played a role in child attendance. The study was conducted in partnership with a non-profit agency who has an early development center serving ages six weeks to approximately five years old. In conjunction with attendance, the assorted reasons for the possible decline in attendance was surveyed. With this research, it is hoped to answer the following questions:

1. How has program attendance been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What factors have contributed to a change in attendance?

The hypothesis the researcher developed for this study was that it was expected that program attendance has declined during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, it was hypothesized that due to unpreparedness for a global outbreak (workforce, social services, early development center) has contributed to the decline in attendance for children at the early development center.

#### Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

The research study was conducted using the positivist research paradigm. This allowed the examined variables to be operationalized into quantitative data for the study. Additionally, was chosen for this research study because it is best suited to analyze if there is a statistically significant relationship between the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts with a decrease in attendance for children enrolled in an early development center and an increase in familial stress during this time. The positivist paradigm makes three assumptions (Morris, 2014). It assumes reality is objective and can be studied empirically. The researcher's role is assumed to be one of neutrality, with no impact on the implementation of the study. Lastly, quantitative data is assumed to be the best type of data.

## Literature Review

The literature review focuses on what the early development center is and its purpose. Additionally, the literature review discusses the importance of early childhood education and the consequences of disruption in education for children and their families.

### Early Development Center

The early development center is an educational childcare center for ages six weeks (about one and half months) to five years old. The department consists of four different programs: infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and families, with approximately 100 children enrolled across these four programs. The first program is aimed for infants from six weeks old to 15 months old. This program focuses on using curriculums to ensure normative development. These curriculums include The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Two's (Teaching Strategies, 2017), and Conscious Discipline. For toddlers aged 12-35 months, the program uses the same base curriculum as infants. For toddlers, in particular, the teachers coordinate and engage to develop the toddler's social-emotional and social connection skills. The infant and toddler programs are Spanish immersive to set a solid foundation in the Spanish language.

The program for preschoolers is facilitated in both English and Spanish. The teachers in these classrooms must hold a bachelor's degree in education and use The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (Teaching Strategies). Most classroom interactions focus on critical thinking. The families of the children who

attend the early development center are also offered services such as parenting curriculum classes, on-site mental health counseling, individual case management, and many more.

There are a variety of ways to enroll in the early development center. Enrollment options primarily depend on family income. This determines how the families will be enrolled in one of the following: Purchase of Care, Private Tuition, Early Head Start, or Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP). Purchase of Care is accessed through the local Health and Social Services office as it is a subsidized childcare funding provided by the state.

The early development center primarily serves minority low-income families and therefore providing an accessible center is essential. Individuals and the community profit from expanding access and opportunities for parents to provide their children with a high-quality, low-cost early childhood education. Nores and Barnett (2014), highlighted in a policy report that just 18% of low-income children attend a high-quality pre-kindergarten. OECD (2017) also indicated that in the United States, only 40% of three-year-old children are participating in early childhood programs. The results from these studies indicate the disparities that are apparent in the early education system and among low-income communities. Investing in children from low-income families and communities is a social and economic program that encourages prosperity and social justice while also rising growth in the community and culture. Early intervention yields much more results for these children than later treatments.

## Importance of Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education refers to the era of schooling from birth to the age of eight. During this period of development, early childhood education seeks to meet a child's psychological, mental, cognitive, and physical needs as a means of laying a foundation for lifelong development. Moreover, children in early education programs learn how to communicate with others, such as friends, teachers, and parents, and build relationships and attachments. Crucial foundational values are instilled in children due to early childhood education (Enciso et al., 2010).

Children's socio-emotional, behavioral, and academic functioning are also influenced by positive teacher and child relationships. Any type of interaction between teachers and children in early childhood environments is an opportunity to be exposed to building healthy relationships. The importance of the interaction children has with their teachers, in addition to their peers, can best be explained by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which emphasizes the influence of human behavior by imitation, observation, and modeling. Hanna and Meltzoff (1992) researched peer imitations in infants and found that infants learn socially from their peers during childhood in various contexts. Therefore, early interactions with positive adults, such as teachers at EDC, are important for healthy social development.



## Consequences of a Disruption in Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered detrimental shifts in education, healthcare, and other delays of daily activities, all of which would undoubtedly influence children's health and well-being (Williams & Drake, 2022). In particular, the attendance in an early development center has changed. Before the pandemic, more than half of all children aged 0 to 5 received at least 10 hours of treatment a week from either daycare centers, preschools, or Head Start services (Garfield & Chidambaram, 2020). In addition, parents relied on such centers to provide daily meals for their children and affordable secure childcare for working low-income parents.

Throughout the pandemic, research studies have explored the consequences of children no longer attending educational services. The impact of school closures is particularly harsh for marginalized students in vulnerable communities. UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, describes the adverse consequences of school closures for students (UNESCO, 2021). Some of these consequences include interrupted learning, poor nutrition, gaps in childcare, social isolation, and challenges in measuring and validating learning.

The COVID-19 pandemic not only put a stop to childhood routines like going to school, interactions with peers, and exploring, but it also disrupted the socio-emotional benefits that children receive from these activities ("Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic," 2020). Increased parental stress, cessation of classroom

activities, social isolation, children's exposure to toxic stress, particularly in previously unstructured households, and a lack of physical activities are various results of the COVID-19 pandemic (Araújo et al., 2020). These are risk factors for children's growth and development.

Parents, in particular, face additional challenges. Given the added obstacles in the change of routine such as managing children's at-home schooling, halts to extracurricular activities, and negotiating children's emotions around uncertainty and change, parents in the U.S. are reporting higher levels of stress during COVID-19 than those without children (Adams et al., 2021). A research article studying the patterns of stress among parents during COVID-19 included inquiring about stress-inducing factors influencing parenting. A change in the children's daily structure and routines was the most prevalent source of stress (Adams et al., 2021). Parents' worry and anxiety over COVID-19, as well as demands linked to their children's online learning at home, were also reported to negatively influence their parenting during the pandemic.

### Intervention

Due to COVID-19 being a continuing pandemic in the year 2022, there is no published research on the appropriate interventions for clients of early development centers during national emergencies. The early development center agency, however, provided its own intervention strategies to try to best meet the needs of their clients.

During the mandated quarantine from mid-March 2020 to June 2020, only children from essential workers were permitted to attend the early development center. To best support the families of parents who lost their jobs or children were home, the center would provide aid at the homes. Educational activities, materials, and grocery bags were delivered to the families. In addition, the center purchased Ready Rosie, an online educational platform for parents to access early education tools at home. Additionally, the center was able to receive limited funding to help clients who needed assistance with paying rent or electricity.

### Conclusion

As a society, we have witnessed and experienced the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents and guardians have depended on daycare and early childhood centers to keep their children safe and engaged in their development prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Various accessibility options included, but were not limited to, parents paying for early education centers out of pocket or low-income households using their local social services office to fund the cost of childcare. Employment losses and the closure of social care departments during the COVID-19 pandemic have affected children's access to early education centers. Consequences include a lack of childcare for full-time working parents and/or guardians, as well as a reduction in productive child growth due to failure to attend the early development center.

Early childhood education has been researched as an essential to positive childhood development. This study further researched how and why children at the early development center have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic regarding early education. In addition, the study analyzed how the family, as a unit, have been impacted.

### Theoretical Orientation

Understanding the impact of theories on children's development aids in comprehending children's abilities and actions, as well as what influences them. Developmental theories try to understand the roots of creativity while also suggesting how to construct environments that allow people to reach their full creative potential (Kozbelt, 2011). The evolution of a person's mental processes is the subject of cognitive theory. Additionally, developmental theories consider how these cognitive processes shape our perceptions and interactions with the environment.

The theoretical orientation for this study is Jean Piaget's theory on cognitive development and Lev Vygotsky's cognitive development theory. Theories based on infant and child development focus on how adaptation and evolvment occur during this developmental stage. These theories concentrate on multiple facets of development, such as social, mental, and cognitive growth. When studying topics related to human development and learning, development theories serve as frameworks for researchers by providing useful insight.

Changes in cognitive functions and skills are part of cognitive development. For purposes of this study, Piaget's first two stages of development, sensorimotor and preoperational will be highlighted. During the sensorimotor stage, which occurs from birth to approximately two years of age, the infant learns about themselves and the environment through motor and reflex behaviors (Bornstein et al., 2011). Additionally, behaviors are limited to basic sensory stimuli-induced motor responses. Teaching should be directed towards the sensorimotor system for a child during this period. The preoperational period begins around the age of two and lasts to about seven years old (Bornstein et al., 2011). The toddler continues to use symbols to represent objects by applying his current understanding of language, such as bottles for indication of hunger. The exposure to sensorimotor behavior leads to mental representations that toddlers mark with words (Bornstein et al., 2011). During this period, instruction should account for lively imaginations and an underdeveloped sense of time.

Vygotsky's theory highlights the importance of social interaction and how a person works within their environment (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2012). Within this theory is a concept known as Zone of Proximal Development. The Proximal Development Zone is seen by Vygotsky as the area where the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given in order to enable the child to develop abilities that they will then use independently (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2012). In toddlers, the Zone of Proximal Development is the difference between what a toddler can accomplish and learn on their own and what they can accomplish

and learn with the assistance of someone who has greater expertise, such as a teacher or peers. According to Vygotsky, communication and interaction with peers is an efficient way to develop skills and strategies.

#### Potential Contribution of the Study to Micro and/or Macro Social Work Practice

This study has the potential to contribute to social work practice at a micro and macro level. At both levels, examining the findings of this study could help prevent obstacles faced not only for a pandemic, but for future national emergencies. Many procedures and routines were not set up to adapt to certain lifestyle changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. On a micro level, social workers from early development centers can identify barriers to services and how to best adjust to the needs of clients during national emergencies. Social workers will be prepared to provide virtual services or deliver essential materials in order to still meet the needs of the client.

Social service offices and policies could be adapted at the macro level to ensure that clients continuously receive the benefits they qualify for, even in national emergencies. Future policies will use this research as a framework for developing effective disaster plans for social service agencies. Agencies will be prepared to provide services for clients who cannot leave their homes or financial situations have changed. Appropriate funding will be available to the non-profit agencies in case of national emergencies.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ENGAGEMENT

#### Introduction

The study site, clients, and gatekeeper engagement are covered in Chapter two, the engagement phase. The chapter also discusses the preparation strategies taken by the researcher. In addition, the chapter covers the ethical, political, and technological roles.

#### Study Site

The study site for the research was at a non-profit community center serving along the east coast of the United States. The community center was initially established in 1969 to serve the local community. Since then, the non-profit has expanded to offer almost 50 programs including 85 employees with a budget of over 5 million dollars. Early development care, before and after school classes, summer camp, and other opportunities are available at the non-profit community center for children and their families. While the target population of the center is the Latino community, services are available to the greater community.

For purposes of the research study, the study site focused on the early development center department of the non-profit community center which

currently serves approximately 100 children. The services from the early development center can be broken down into four sections, each specific to their target population. The early development center offers child-care with early development from qualified teachers which are available to infants, toddlers, and preschool aged children. Families of children enrolled also have access to family-oriented services, including, but not limited to: on-site mental health counseling, individual case management, parent workshops, and family fun activities. Families have access to a variety of enrollment choices based on their household income.

#### Engagement Strategies for Gatekeepers at Research Site

As a former undergraduate intern for the early development center, the researcher utilized an established professional relationship with the early development center gatekeepers. The primary gatekeeper of the research site was the family services coordinator who serves as a liaison between teachers, children, and families in addition to addressing every family's needs. The director of the early development center was also a gatekeeper. An email was submitted to the gatekeepers explaining the purpose of the research project and requesting permission to conduct the research study at the school site. The researcher had an initial meeting with the family services coordinator to discuss the importance of the research study and create a conversation around the research topic before presenting the research to the director. In addition, the meeting addressed any



potential issues, how to maintain client privacy and a reliable partnership between the gatekeeper and researcher. Additionally, gatekeepers had the opportunity to add their own research questions if there is any additional information they would like to analyze.

### Self-Preparation

Utilizing a positivist paradigm, the researcher first identified a research topic and question. Following the research question, the researcher conducted a literature review as means to further educate oneself and the audience on the importance of early development centers for children and families and the consequences it may have if the centers are not accessible. The next step for the researcher was to collaborate with the gatekeepers from the non-profit to develop a survey questionnaire. The researcher created an online mechanism to gather the data while preserving participant confidentiality. The researcher needed to be mindful to participants who want to opt out of the study during this phase and only included participants who chose to take part.

### Diversity Issues

In order to address diversity issues, the researcher was aware of client ethnicities/racial backgrounds and provided accommodations. While the non-profit community center is open to any one of the community, its greater clientele is the Latino community. Due to the researcher finding that it was represented in

greater numbers among the clients, it may be difficult to generalize the findings to the general public. In addition, some clients of the community center are predominantly Spanish speaking. Therefore, all forms were translated into Spanish to guarantee understanding by all the participants.

### Ethical Issues

This research study's ethical issues were thoroughly considered. The study raised ethical issues such as ensuring client privacy and safety. These were ensured by submitting the study for IRB review. Additionally, a data management system was developed for the study. The system was designed in a way the researcher was not aware of the names of the clients, and there was no link between their names and the data. This was done so by assigning a number to each data file rather than names. A second ethical issue for the study was the researcher's access to client data. Data was stored on a password-protected computer where only the researcher had access. An informed consent form in the client's primary language was utilized prior to beginning the survey, as well as, participants were provided with contact information for the opportunity to address any reservations or questions about the informed consent and/or the study project.

## Political Issues

The political issues present in the research study were inconclusive. Since the study is focused on existing evidence rather than new collections, there were no significant political concerns.

## The Role of Technology

Due to the geographic locations, email and Zoom communication was used to maintain communication between the researcher and gatekeepers to coordinate the research study. Online QR codes were formulated to provide access to electronic consent forms and surveys in either English or Spanish. When needed, phone calls were used to provide communication between the researcher and gatekeeper(s). Online password-protected organizational methods were used to maintain data collection and coded client identifiers.

## Summary

The research setting was described in depth in Chapter two as well as the techniques used by the researcher to positively engage the gatekeeper at the site. This chapter also discussed how to prevent possible breaches of confidentiality. Additionally, the chapter addressed how to prepare for any frequent areas of concern for this community and the participants, such as diversity, ethical, and political issues. Finally, the chapter presented the essential role of technology as it aided in the completion of the research study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### Introduction

Chapter three of the research study covers the implementation phase. It discusses who participated in the study and how recruitment occurred. Additionally, the chapter discusses the phases of data collection, data recording, and data analysis are discussed, in addition to, how the results were to be shared, as well as specifics about termination and follow-up.

#### Study Participants

The study participants consisted of guardians, parents, and families who have children, age 0-5, enrolled in the early development center. Individuals from a variety of social backgrounds and ethnicities took part in this research. Additionally, participants reported English as their primary language; Spanish was the second most spoken primary language from the participants.

#### Selection of Participants

All participants were clients of the early development center. This type of sampling was convenience sampling. This is a non-probability sampling method that enrolls participants based on their proximity and convenience of access. By

using this sampling method, it was anticipated to survey 20 clients. Prior to the study it was anticipated that there would be an over-representation of certain groups due to the high population of Hispanic/Latinx families in the community.

To optimize participation, the gatekeeper assisted the researcher in recruiting clients who wished to participate. Each family and/or caretaker of children enrolled were categorized as “one” participant.

### Data Gathering

This study is a descriptive design that addresses the correlation between the COVID-19 pandemic and a decrease in attendance for children enrolled in an early development center and an increase in familial stress. The researcher distributed a survey instrument to the participants with close-ended questions to document how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their lives. Only a restricted number of replies were allowed for closed-ended survey questions. As a result, the participant was unable to make a unique or open-ended response; instead, they provided exact input on each specific issue.

Questions included:

Have you or your family been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Were you and your family impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic positively or negatively?

Did you or another adult in the family have their employment terminated during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Did you or another adult in the family have their hours reduced at their place of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Did school closures impact your day-to-day life?

Was your ability to allow your child (child enrolled) to attend the Early Development Center affected?

On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not that useful 10 being very useful) how would you rate the usefulness of educational material that was provided at home, such as *Ready Rosie* or delivered educational material?

Approximately, how many days was your child absent from the early development center from April 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020? (1. 1-5 2. 6-10 3. 11-20 4. 20+)

### Phases of Data Collection

The phases of data collection consisted of two phases. Recruitment began with flyers being posted around the early development center where the potential participants frequent. The flyer included the purpose and goal of the study in addition to a QR code to redirect to the survey and contact information for questions or concerns. There was no designated location for participants to complete the survey as it was to be done at their convenience. The next phase began when participants accessed the survey. The survey began with a consent form to ensure confidentiality and understanding of the study. Participants were not allowed to continue unless signing the consent

form. At the conclusion of the survey, participants were thanked for their time and were informed to contact the researcher of any questions or concerns.

### Data Recording

The data was recorded by assigning an ID number to each participant. That number was used when inputting their data for analysis to ensure confidentiality. Data collected from the participants were uploaded to a secure online database and transferred to an excel sheet to quantify the data.

### Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software, SPSS, with the observation unit being the child's attendance at the early development center and the unit of analysis being the impacts the family has experienced. A bivariate analysis was used to analyze the relationship between being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and multiple familial stress independent variables such as job loss, work-hour reductions, and the impact of the EDC's closure on children's attendance.

### Termination and Follow Up

At the conclusion of the study, the researcher shared the findings with the gatekeepers of the study site in hopes of beginning a discussion on the topic and developing a plan for further use of the research. The discussion will focus on



how to best meet the needs of clients in the case of future national emergencies in a way that does not compromise early development. The dissemination plan included information such as who to present the studies to, such as other early development centers, social service agencies, and non-profits. Additionally, the agency and researcher established a purpose for presenting the plan, in this case, aiming to have client needs met in case of future emergencies. The researcher hopes to spread awareness on one of the many impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in hopes of helping agencies with future preparedness.

### Summary

Chapter three covered the implementation stage of the study. The selection of the study participants, clients of the early development center, was discussed as was the recruitment process. The data collection process, phases of data collection, data recording, and data analysis process by covered. Finally, termination and communication of findings with partners were discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the assessment of the data, such as the analysis of the data gathered. Additionally, the chapter discusses the interpretation of the data and concludes with the implications of the results.

#### Frequency Analysis

The study consisted of a total of 27 participants. All participants had at least one child enrolled in the early development center. Each participant completed a mandatory consent form prior to accessing the survey questionnaire online. The questions in the survey questionnaire included detailing if participants were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and if so, how were they impacted. Participants were asked if they were terminated from their place of employment or had hours reduced, was their day-to-day life impacted, and was their ability to have their child attend the early development center impacted. Additionally, the researcher inquired if they found the take home educational material to be useful and how many days was their child absent from a given time range. Each question has an underlined code word to assist in identifying and differentiating each question as shown below.

TABLE 1.0	
Frequency Distributions of Study Sample (N=27)	
	n (%)
Impacted <sup>1</sup>	
No	2 (7.4%)
Yes	25 (92.6%)
Family Impact <sup>2</sup>	
Negative	17 (63.0%)
Neither negative/positive.	6 (22.2%)
Positive	4 (14.8%)
Terminated <sup>3</sup>	
No	12 (44.4%)
Yes	15 (55.6%)
Reduced <sup>4</sup>	
No	6 (22.2%)
Yes	21 (77.8%)
Day-to-Day <sup>5</sup>	
No	9 (33.3%)
Yes	18 (66.7%)
Attend <sup>6</sup>	
No	15 (55.6%)
Yes	12 (44.4%)
Usefulness <sup>7</sup>	
Very useful	11 (40.7%)
Somewhat useful	12 (44.4%)
Not that useful	4 (14.8%)
Absent <sup>8</sup>	
More than 20 days	10 (37.0%)
11-20 days	2 (7.4%)
6-10 days	5 (18.5%)
1-5 days	10 (37.0%)
<sup>1</sup> Have you or your family been <u>impacted</u> by the COVID-19 pandemic?	
<sup>2</sup> Were you and your <u>family impacted</u> by the COVID-19 pandemic positively or negatively?	
<sup>3</sup> Did you or another adult in the family have their employment <u>terminated</u> during the COVID-19 pandemic?	
<sup>4</sup> Did you or another adult in the family have their hours <u>reduced</u> at their place of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic?	
<sup>5</sup> Did school closures impact your <u>day-to-day</u> life?	
<sup>6</sup> Was your ability to allow your child (child enrolled) to <u>attend</u> the Early Development Center affected?	
<sup>7</sup> On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not that useful 5 being very useful) how would you rate the <u>usefulness</u> of educational material that was provided at home, such as Ready Rosie or the delivered educational material?	
<sup>8</sup> Approximately, how many days was your child <u>absent</u> from the early development center from April 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020?	

Table 2.0 demonstrates the impact profile of the study profile. Ninety-three percent ( $n=25$ ) of participants responded they were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and seven percent were not ( $n=2$ ). Of those who were impacted, sixty-four percent ( $n=16$ ) were impacted negatively, 56% ( $n=14$ ) were terminated from their place of employment, and 76% ( $n=19$ ) had their work hours reduced. Furthermore, of those impacted, sixty-eight percent ( $n=17$ ) of participants were impacted daily by school closures and 48% ( $n=12$ ) were impacted on their ability to have their child attend the early development center. Forty percent ( $n=10$ ) of participants impacted found the educational material very useful. Additionally, being absent 1-5 days had a greater number of impacted participants at forty percent ( $n=10$ ), following by 36% ( $n=9$ ) being absent more than 20 days.

TABLE 2.0	
Impact Profile (N=25)	
	n (%)
Impacted	
Family Impact	
Negative	16 (64%)
Terminated	
Yes	14 (56%)
Reduced	
Yes	19 (76%)
Day-to-Day	
Yes	17 (68%)
Attend	
Yes	12 (48%)
Usefulness	
Very useful	10 (40%)
Absent	
More than 20 days	9 (36%)
1-5 days	10 (40%)

With IBM SPSS, a bivariate statistical analysis was carried out to identify the variables that had a significant relationship with attendance. Table 3.0 shows how a Spearman's rho correlation with various factors and attendance was conducted to ascertain whether there was a relationship. The analysis focused on the significant relationships each above mentioned variable had with being absent. Based on the statistical analysis the only factor with a significant relationship was <day to day>. There was a statistically significant positive correlation between <day to day> and <attend>,  $r(df)=.632$ ,  $p<.001$ , meaning school closure changing the day to day life caused more kids to be absent. The other variables did not have a statistically significant relationship with attendance.

**TABLE 3.0**  
**Significant Analysis**

			Impacted	Family_impac t	Terminated	Reduced	Day_to_day	Attend
Spearman's rho	Impacted	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.032	.032	-.151	.100	.253
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.438	.438	.226	.310	.101
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27
	Family_impact	Correlation Coefficient	-.032	1.000	-.340*	.027	-.129	-.045
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.438	.	.041	.448	.260	.413
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27
	Terminated	Correlation Coefficient	.032	-.340*	1.000	.239	.000	.200
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.438	.041	.	.115	.500	.159
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27
	Reduced	Correlation Coefficient	-.151	.027	.239	1.000	.189	.120
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.226	.448	.115	.	.173	.276
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27
	Day_to_day	Correlation Coefficient	.100	-.129	.000	.189	1.000	.632**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.310	.260	.500	.173	.	<.001
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27
	Attend	Correlation Coefficient	.253	-.045	.200	.120	.632**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.101	.413	.159	.276	<.001	.
		N	27	27	27	27	27	27

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

## Interpretation

This study aimed to document the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families who have children enrolled in an early development center. The research questions that guided the surveys were, how has program attendance been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and what factors have contributed to a change in attendance.

Table 1.0 analyzed the frequency analysis of each question by the 27 participants. Out of 27 participants, 25 reported being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and 17 negatively impacted, both demonstrating a result greater than fifty percent. Similarly, there was a high percentage of participants documenting their hours had been reduced and/or terminated from their place of employment and their day-to-day life was impacted. These findings highlight the effects of the pandemic on the participants, probably because of how suddenly the national emergency occurred. It was hypothesized that due to the different factors contributing to familial impacts and stress, there would be a decline in attendance. The analysis in Table 3.0 demonstrated that not all factors had a significant relationship with attendance. In fact, the only factor was day to day with a significant positive correlation to attendance.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### TERMINATION AND FOLLOW UP

#### Introduction

Chapter five discusses termination of the study. The chapter describes how findings were communicated to participants. Plans were also discussed for the relationship with the study site and study participants. The chapter will conclude with the dissemination plan for the study findings.

#### Termination of Study

The termination with study participants was concluded at the end of their survey. The participants were thanked for their time in participating in the study. Additionally, participants were asked if they had any questions or concerns in regard to the study. Contact information and link to the University Scholar Works website for California State University, San Bernardino was given to participants in the original flyers posted.

#### Communication of Findings to Study Site and Study Participants

The study site was given an approximation date of viewing the study on the University Scholar Works website for California State University, San

Bernardino to view the findings of the study. The study site acknowledged to provide participants of the research to the link if inquired.

### Ongoing Relationship with Study Participants

Due to the nature of the pre-existing relationship between the researcher and the stakeholders of the study site there will continue to be a relationship. No future engagement intended between the researcher and participants.

### Dissemination Plan

At the conclusion of the academic year, the study will be disseminated at the School of Social Work Research Symposium and published on the University ScholarWorks website. The MSW Research Symposium will allow attendees to examine a poster that the researcher developed containing research findings. Participants will be instructed to view the research paper via ScholarWorks and/or get in touch with the study's primary investigator if they have any specific queries about it.

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that impacted families with children enrolled in an early development center and analyze if there were statistically significant relationships between the factors impacting parents and child attendance. This chapter described the process of the study's termination



with participants. The chapter described how findings were communicated to participants. In addition, this chapter describes the 44 ongoing relationships between participants and the researcher. The chapter concludes with the dissemination plan for the study findings.

APPENDIX A  
IRB APPROVAL

**IRB #:** IRB-FY2022-184

**Title:** How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted clients of the early development center?

**Creation Date:** 1-20-2022

**End Date:**

**Status:** Approved

**Principal Investigator:** Brooklyn Sapozhnikov

**Review Board:** Main IRB Designated Reviewers for School of Social Work

**Sponsor:**

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### Study History

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<b>Submission Type</b> Initial	<b>Review Type</b> Exempt	<b>Decision</b> <span style="color: red;">Exempt</span>
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### Key Study Contacts

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<b>Member</b> Daniella Loera	<b>Role</b> Co-Principal Investigator	<b>Contact</b> 007423813@coyote.csusb.edu
<b>Member</b> Brooklyn Sapozhnikov	<b>Role</b> Principal Investigator	<b>Contact</b> brooklyn.sapozhnikov@csusb.edu
<b>Member</b> Brooklyn Sapozhnikov	<b>Role</b> Primary Contact	<b>Contact</b> brooklyn.sapozhnikov@csusb.edu

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APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**PURPOSE:** My name is Daniella Loera. I am a student at the California State University, San Bernardino in the School of Social Work. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study. I am conducting this study to see how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced attendance at the early development center, as well as how the families of the children have been affected, and whether this has resulted in a change in attendance records.

**DESCRIPTION:** If you agree to participate, a paper survey will be handed to you for you to complete. Each survey should take between 15-20 minutes to complete. Included in the survey are questions concerning you and your family during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there is no direct advantage to you from participating in this survey, I am hoping that the results will give insight on the effects of national emergencies.

**PARTICIPATION:** Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You have the option of declining to participate in the project. You have the option to refuse to answer or skip any questions, as well as to withdraw from the research at any moment. Whether or not you choose to participate, answer any specific questions, or continue engaging in the study, your participation in the early development center will not be affected.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** The information you submit will be confidential. Please do not write your name on the survey if you choose to participate. There is a possibility of confidentially being violated in any research; however, efforts are being taken to reduce this risk. The surveys will be kept in a secured cabinet. The data will be kept in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer.

**DURATION:** This survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. You can stop participating at any time without penalty.

**RISKS:** Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering questions as they are personal in nature. You have the right to decline to answer any questions or to withdraw your participation at any moment.

**BENEFITS:** Although the information gathered will not immediately benefit you, it will assist me in better understanding how to create policies to fulfill the needs of families and children's early development in the event of national emergencies.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions or concerns about completing the survey or about being in this study, you may contact Dr. Brooklyn Sapozhnikov-Levine at [brooklyn.Sapozhnikov@csusb.edu](mailto:brooklyn.Sapozhnikov@csusb.edu).

**RESULTS:** Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after June 2023.

**CONFIRMATION STATEMENT:**

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

**SIGNATURE:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

**OBJETIVO:** Mi nombre es Daniella Loera. Soy estudiante de la California State University, San Bernardino en la Escuela de Trabajo Social. Me gustaría invitarlo a participar en mi estudio de investigación. Estoy realizando este estudio para ver cómo la pandemia de COVID-19 ha influido en la asistencia al centro de desarrollo temprano, así como también cómo las familias de los niños se han visto afectadas y si esto ha resultado en un cambio en los registros de asistencia.

**DESCRIPCIÓN:** Si acepta participar, se le entregará una encuesta impresa para que la complete. Cada encuesta debería tardar entre 15 y 20 minutos en completarse. En la encuesta se incluyen preguntas sobre usted y su familia durante la pandemia de COVID-19. Si bien no existe una ventaja directa para usted al participar en esta encuesta, espero que los resultados den una idea de los efectos de las emergencias nacionales.

**PARTICIPACIÓN:** La participación en esta investigación es completamente voluntaria. Tiene la opción de negarse a participar en el proyecto. Tiene la opción de negarse a responder u omitir cualquier pregunta, así como de retirarse de la investigación en cualquier momento. Ya sea que elija participar o no, responda preguntas específicas o continúe participando en el estudio, su participación en el centro de desarrollo temprano no se verá afectada.

**CONFIDENCIALIDAD:** La información que envíe será confidencial. No escriba su nombre en la encuesta si decide participar. Existe la posibilidad de que se viole la confidencialidad en cualquier investigación; sin embargo, se están realizando esfuerzos para reducir este riesgo. Las encuestas se guardarán en un armario seguro. Los datos se guardarán en un archivo cifrado en una computadora protegida con contraseña.

**DURACIÓN:** Esta encuesta tomará aproximadamente de 15 a 20 minutos en completarse. Puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin penalización.

**RIESGOS:** Aunque no se anticipó, puede haber cierta incomodidad al responder las preguntas ya que son personal por naturaleza. Tiene derecho a negarse a responder a cualquier pregunta o retirar su participación en cualquier momento.

**BENEFICIOS:** Aunque la información recopilada no lo beneficiará de inmediato, me ayudará a comprender mejor cómo crear políticas para cumplir con los requisitos del desarrollo temprano de las familias y los niños en caso de emergencias nacionales.

**CONTACTO:** Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud acerca de cómo completar la encuesta o acerca de participar en este estudio, puede comunicarse con el Dr. Brooklyn Sapozhnikov-Levine al [brooklyn.Sapozhnikov@csusb.edu](mailto:brooklyn.Sapozhnikov@csusb.edu).

**RESULTADOS:** Los resultados del estudio se pueden obtener de la base de datos ScholarWorks de la biblioteca de Pfau (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) en California State University, San Bernardino, después de junio de 2023.

### DECLARACIÓN DE CONFIRMACIÓN:

Entiendo que debo tener 18 años o más para participar en su estudio, haber leído y comprendido el documento de consentimiento y estar de acuerdo en participar en su estudio.

### FIRMA:

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha de firma: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C  
DATA COLLECTION: SURVEY

1. Have you or your family been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Were you and your family impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic positively or negatively?
3. Did you or another adult in the family have their employment terminated during the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. Did you or another adult in the family have their hours reduced at their place of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic?
5. Did school closures impact your day-to-day life?
6. Was your ability to allow your child (child enrolled) to attend the Early Development Center affected?
7. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not that useful 5 being very useful) how would you rate the usefulness of educational material that was provided at home, such as Ready Rosie or the delivered educational material?
8. Approximately, how many days was your child absent from the early development center from April 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020? (1. 1-5 2. 6-10 3. 11-20 4. 20+)

Survey questions were developed by researcher to best fit data collection.



1. ¿Usted o su familia se han visto afectados por la pandemia de COVID-19?
2. ¿Usted y su familia se vieron afectados por la pandemia de COVID-19 de manera positiva o negativa?
3. ¿Usted u otro adulto de la familia terminaron su empleo durante la pandemia de COVID-19?
4. ¿Se redujeron las horas de trabajo de usted u otro adulto de la familia en su lugar de trabajo durante la pandemia de COVID-19?
5. ¿El cierre de escuelas afectó su vida cotidiana?
6. ¿Se vio afectada su capacidad para permitir que su hijo (niño inscrito) asista al Centro de Desarrollo Temprano?
7. En una escala del 1 al 5 (siendo 1 nada útil y 5 muy útil), cómo calificaría la utilidad del material educativo que se proporcionó en casa, como Ready Rosie o el material educativo entregado?
8. Aproximadamente, cuántos días estuvo su hijo ausente del centro de desarrollo temprano desde el 1 de abril de 2020 hasta el 31 de diciembre de 2020? (1. 1-5 2. 6-10 3. 11-20 4. 20+)

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