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Quarantine and Isolation Experiences of College Students: A Narrative

Brooke Gibson

Eastern Illinois University

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic was an unanticipated phenomenon, with a lack of information surrounding quarantine and isolation experiences in college students and how this impacts their sense of belonging. This qualitative narrative study utilized semi-structured interviews to understand the participants' experience of isolation at a rural mid-sized university in the Midwest. The research shared the students experiences and showed that participants lacked some sense of belonging whether it was with friends, family, or their institution.

Key Words: COVID-19, Belonging, Quarantine

Dedication

This study would not be possible without the support of my friends, family, future colleagues, my graduate assistantship office, my committee, and my dog. To my family: you all are the real ones. Your love and support throughout this challenging experience of navigating graduate school through a pandemic is something I will always cherish, and your patience with me at my highs and lows throughout this process is something I will always remember. To my mom, dad, Karl, and Melissa: I am so incredibly honored to call you my parents and would not be half the person I am today without you all. Please know that I know how difficult and stressed out I was when I came to you for guidance, and that your patience, laughter, and support is the reason I am able to write this dedication. I love you with all my heart and cannot say thank you enough.

To my sisters, Kennedy and Kambelle: thank you for always finding comedic relief during this process when I needed it the most. I am so honored to call you both my sisters and I am so grateful I had you every step of the way. For all those Jackson Avenue Coffee Saturday study hours with Kennedy (and free drinks), these were the moments that made me realize I was meant to complete a master's degree and pushed me even further to make this research the best it could be.

To my husband, Trevor: I can't even imagine how much different this process would have been if I did not have you by my side. I know how difficult these last two years have been for both of us, and you were ALWAYS willing to put me first and always believed I could do this. On the nights that I came home in tears not thinking I could get to the next day, you always looked at me and said, "you can do this." Your love, support, and always being by my side when it seemed like I had nobody in my corner is something that I can't even put into words for

appreciation. To WyGuy, the best dog a girl could ask for; thank you for always waking me up early to go on walks to destress before the day even started.

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To my office: this experience was not ideal to have a graduate student start in, but I wanted to say thank you to Heather, Brittany, Mackenzie, and Annie. You all were so patient with my questions and if I messed something up, gave me grace on how to fix it and move forward. Please know that this graduate experience was something I never knew I needed.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
DEDICATION	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	5
CHAPTER I	10
Introduction	10
Personal Experience	14
Purpose of the Study	17
Research Questions	18
Significance of the Study	18
Limitations	19
Definition of Terms.....	20
Summary	21
CHAPTER II	22
Review of the Literature	22
Sense of Belonging.....	22
Maslow’s (1943) Hierarchy of Needs	23
Sense of Community Theory.....	25
Impact of college on mental health.....	27
Loneliness and Isolation.....	28
Robert Weiss’ Theory of Social Isolation.	31
Counseling Support.	33
Schlossberg’s Transition Theory.	34

COVID-19 and the college	38
Summary	41
CHAPTER III	43
Methods	43
Design of the Study	43
Participants	43
Research Site	44
Instrumentation.....	45
Data Collection.....	46
Data Analysis	46
Treatment of Data.....	47
Summary	47
CHAPTER IV	48
Narratives	48
Tiffany	48
River	51
Indigo	54
Claire	58
Summary	62
CHAPTER V	63
Analysis	63
The student experiences of isolation and quarantine	63
Situation.....	63

Self.....	68
Support students received during isolation and quarantine.....	71
Support.....	72
Family.....	72
Friends.	74
Institution.....	75
Strategies	78
Managing coursework	78
Coping Strategies.....	80
Sense of Belonging.....	82
Participant Recommendations.....	83
Summary	88
CHAPTER VI.....	89
Discussion.....	89
Discussion	89
Student Experiences of Isolation/Quarantine during the COVID-19 Pandemic.....	89
Support for students during quarantine and isolation.....	93
Implications.....	96
Residential Life Professionals	96
Faculty	99
Academic Advisors.....	100
Mental Health Resources & Health Resources.....	100
Future Research.....	101

Conclusion.....	103
References	104
Appendix A	114
Invitation to Participate.....	114
Appendix B	115
Follow-Up Email.....	115
Appendix C	116
Interview Protocol.....	116
Appendix D	119
Demographic Questionnaire.....	119

CHAPTER I

Introduction

With the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic, every population has been affected-whether it be with finances, physical, or mental health. When it comes to students in education, their academics and social life were also impacted. According to McConnell (2011), “there is an assumption that the destructive capacities of crises can to some degree be prevented, prepared for, managed, recovered from, and learned about” (p. 67). But research would tell us that although we prepare for a variety of crisis on college campuses not all crises can be prevented or managed successfully if individuals have never lived through an experience (McConnell, 2011). Due to recent literature of global crises management, there is an overabundance of good practice on worst-case scenario thinking, that is institutions have planned for and reacted to a variety of crisis situations, but all this planning still can leave institutions ill-prepared to react (McConnell, 2011). Navarro et al. (2020) identified that one of the most important strategies for managing a crisis was communication.

When the virus began to break out rapidly in mid-March of 2020, organizations and different countries around the world began to take action to limit the spread. Local, state, and federal governments began shutting down businesses, travel bans were implemented, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, issued a *stay-at-home* order, which closed schools and institutions to decrease the risk of exposure (Navarro et al., 2020). Changing communication expectations guidance was constantly evolving. Navarro et al.’s (2020) study found that the decision-making to successfully execute information would serve best if an effective communication strategy was in place. One of the most dramatic changes that affected the everyday lives of individuals with the pandemic was college students and higher education

institutions around the world. When the Coronavirus entered the United States for the first time in March of 2020, the University of Washington was the first major U.S. institution to cancel in-person classes and move classes online, setting a trend for other institutions to soon follow (Thomason, 2020). Institutions around the world began to shut their doors and send students home to ensure the safety of students and try to implement an emergency plan to reopen for the remainder of the spring semester. Many governments ordered institutions to “stop face-to-face instruction and required students to switch, almost overnight, to online teaching and virtual education” (Daniel, 2020, p. 91). The following few weeks around the United States had higher education in a whirlwind of information and emergency planning as institutions began to implement strategies to complete the spring semester without endangering students, faculty, staff, and the community at large institutions began to work and teach through online formats with everyone working remotely. Because these lock-down orders were quickly implemented, institutions were caught playing catch up and had little to no time to prepare for remote-teaching (Daniel, 2020).

When institutions transitioned to an online learning format, staff and faculty made arrangements for meetings with other campus partners to remain in touch and communicate as often as possible to ensure that all students could be accounted for. These offices and staff members went through brief and simple training sessions on how to teach asynchronously and make these platforms somewhat familiar (Daniel, 2020). Many institutions around the country had plans to make technology more user friendly and have students make greater use of technology but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, these changes that were supposed to be integrated slowly over time, had to be implemented in just a few days (Daniel, 2020). University officials, such as presidents and vice presidents, communicated with students how their

institution would be moving forward throughout the spring semester in 2020 (Walke et al., 2020). A president from a mid-sized university in the Midwest communicated with students at the beginning of spring break that the university decided to extend spring break another week to ensure that the university would be able to reopen safely. Unfortunately, like many other institutions, the president made the decision to close the university and have everyone work or learn remotely for the safety of all individuals. The president communicated through email that “Eastern Illinois University intensely urges *every* student who can return home for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester to do so” (D. M. Glassman, personal communication, March 19, 2020).

As the summer of 2020 came, institutions began to engage in conversations about how to safely open back in the fall (Walke et al., 2020). Decisions needed to be made about in-person or virtual learning, synchronous or asynchronous, and whether students could move on to college campuses. Each institution had to follow different state and regional guidelines and consider their access to COVID-19 testing of students, faculty, and staff. Most institutions went to a hybrid version of learning, choosing to have a blend of different types of learning opportunities based on faculty comfort, experience, and teaching area (Paltiel et al., 2020). Student Affairs professionals got creative in providing programming, working with student leaders, and helping students with access to much needed resources. Campuses experienced spikes in cases, isolated and quarantined students, and worked to support their students, faculty, and staff through these difficult challenges. For students living on campus, learning that one had tested positive to COVID-19 meant a quarantine period and institutions had different methods of isolating and caring for those students in these situations (Walke et al., 2020).

The fall of 2020 was one of the most memorable starts to an academic year in higher education because every student, faculty member, administrator, who worked on a college campus now had to follow “masking” and “social distancing” guidelines. Vanderbilt University created public health ambassadors to remind students who were not complying with the masking and COVID-19 campus policies and gave them face coverings, gloves, and hand sanitizer (Brown, 2020). The university required that masks were to be worn in all public spaces, including indoors, to limit the spread (Brown, 2020). As college administrators and faculty members were coming off a spring semester that required them to learn new virtual techniques, these administrators did not have the opportunity to take a break during the summer months and come back in August to clean up a few things before the year. These administrators worked through the summer and figured out ways to safely bring back students for the fall, even if that meant everyone had to sit six feet apart with a face covering (Brown, 2020). An administrator on Vanderbilt’s campus stated that he “wished I could tell you I have faith in students to comply with all these rules. But I don’t” (Brown, p. 2, 2020). With universities having issues getting students to comply for other disciplinary violations, such as alcohol on campus, COVID-19 policies were going to be even more challenging to have students comply (Brown, 2020).

Policies for COVID-19 for most institutions in the Spring 2021 semester seemed to stay the same. To get in the mindset of how students experienced quarantine and isolation on their college campus and how he could offer support to these students, Norwich University president Mark Anarumo moved into the residence halls in the spring of 2021 when he saw an all-time high of 64 positive COVID-19 cases and decided to make the decision to quarantine and shut down the campus to bring the numbers down (Barry, 2021). Norwich University is a military serving institution that is primarily residential which means that most of the students reside on

campus. However, he went in with few knowing he was doing so to live like and with the students (Barry, 2021). CNN interviewer Anderson Cooper (2021) sat down with Anarumo after the experience and asked Anarumo what his experience was like and what he learned from the students. The biggest takeaway that Anarumo discussed in the interview was that students would just wait in the stairwells and hallways when Anarumo needed to use the restroom or get the mail so they could talk to someone; and through this he learned that these students just needed that moment to hear someone else's voice and a moment of attention to feel heard (Cooper, 2021). Over and over, he heard "please don't close the school down" expressed. They wanted to stay on campus and continue to have some kind of college experience. President Anarumo talked about how because of these students, they hadn't seen a positive COVID-19 case in 17 days at the time of the interview and said, "I've seen them do everything right and I'm fighting for them to stay here and give them that normalcy" (Cooper, 2021).

Personal Experience

The spring of 2020 is especially significant to me, as the researcher, because this was my final semester of my undergraduate career. I went home for spring break and never came back to finish in person. I remember being in the Orientation Office on campus where I worked, getting ready for spring break, and talking to my supervisors about the President of the Eastern Illinois University's emails we had been receiving and what they thought the next steps were going to be. They said, "he will probably extend spring break, and then we will be back." Not even 24 hours later, the president not only extended spring break, but he announced that the remainder of the spring semester would be online, and events such as graduation would still be up in the air. I remember having a conversation with my father and asking him "what's going to happen?" This was the first time in my life where an adult that I trusted with my entire well-being said, "I don't

know,” and I was truly scared for how the world was going to turn out. Were we going to die? Was this the end of the world? I was living with my now husband and I wondered if I was ever going to see my family again.

On March 17, 2020, there was a Board of Trustees meeting at the university to discuss how housing contracts would be dealt with, how students would be taken care of with grades for credit and no credit, and most importantly, what graduation was going to look like. My entire life, I dreamt of having my name called and walking across the stage. I sat down at my computer and watched the meeting and heard the president say that graduation was cancelled. In that moment, it felt as if my entire world had crashed down on me. All my hard work, the long nights, the endless papers, the exams, and the friendships I had gained could not be celebrated together and my undergraduate time lacked the closure it needed. The next few days were me just taking some time to myself, even though we were already in quarantine, and just trying to make sense of everything. The more I read about the news and COVID-19, the more my anxiety spiked and the more upset I felt that I couldn't control anything. I had been at an all-time high not even two weeks earlier when I found out I had been accepted to my master's program for student affairs and accepted a graduate assistantship, and was getting ready to graduate, and I remember feeling so defeated after finding out about graduation.

The next couple months were interesting because I created a schedule that kept me on my toes in quarantine. I still worked my student schedule hours, I still had classes to complete, the weather was getting warmer, so my dog and I liked to spend time outside and go on walks, and I was cooking a lot of new meals. People from campus kept in contact with me as I was getting ready to transition from undergrad to graduate level. Then May 9, 2020, came, which was graduation day. It was sunny outside, but I couldn't get out of bed; I was supposed to be taking

pictures in my cap and gown with my best friends, saying goodbye to these people who shaped my experience, and thanking my parents together for being there every step of the way. My college graduation day felt like just another day; it quite frankly came and went. Although I had gotten endless numbers of messages and support from individuals, it still did not feel complete.

My new supervisor for my graduate assistant position began to reach out to me because I would be starting in the office soon. That email was weird because I didn't think "I'm starting my graduate assistantship and my graduate program!" I just thought "oh, it's just another position on campus." And it still feels that way sometimes. There has never been that closure between undergraduate and graduate school that has felt like I completed my undergraduate degree.

When the fall semester started my supervisor gave me two days off prior to the start of classes to get into the mindset that graduate school was going to start and I would be embarking on a new adventure. As excited as I was to begin the next chapter of my life, I really couldn't get into that "I'm finally a graduate student" mindset. When classes started, students were very nervous and anxious, and the office that I currently work for saw reports coming through left and right regarding COVID-19 policy violations. Then the meetings with students began to pile up back-to-back about the COVID-19 policies on campus, in the residence halls, in the academic buildings, and even just walking on campus. As the students were returning to campus, there was an increase in cases within the first few weeks, which required the institution to work with the health department to not only provide for those who had been living in the area, but for the students who were now back for the academic year. My supervisor and the Director of Residence Life met with the health department to come up with a plan on how to support students on campus and off campus. The office I work for sat down and chatted about who would be the

liaison for these students. This was a very different “other duties as assigned” task in my job description because my supervisor had never had to deal with having a graduate assistant deal with students in a pandemic. I quickly became a designated liaison to students and made outreach phone calls every day to over 150 quarantined and isolated students. I introduced who I was, the reason I was calling, and checked to see if they needed any necessities. Some students were very brief, but polite, and said they did not need anything, and that was the extent of the call. I learned that each conversation was going to be different. Some students just needed a person to talk to about school, how they felt about being alone, how they were worried about money, and other personal things that were going on. I began to understand that this situation was not just a two-week vacation where these students could take a break and relax and do homework as they please; they were being taken away from their routines, their social lives, people they relied on, and worried about how they were going to get through two weeks of being by themselves.

Therefore, this study is important to me because I wanted to understand and express how it felt to have something that means so much to you taken away at any moment in time. I talked with students often about what they are finding most challenging during this pandemic, and some talked about hopes and dreams they had for the year, missed social involvement, making and being with friends and classmates; and then I told them I understood, and they know I do.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the quarantine and isolation experiences of college students and how these students coped with moving to an isolation location to prevent the spread of COVID-19, what resources were these students being provided and utilized, what kind of support system they had on a mid-sized midwestern collegiate campus.

With the COVID-19 pandemic still being a relatively new phenomenon, there was limited research on the students who were required to quarantine and put into isolation.

This research was important because I wanted to identify what the university did to support students during their isolation period and how the students felt during these unprecedented times. I wanted to gain insight about what I could do as a professional during their isolation period and after their isolation period to support them. Through the continuation of research, I had grown extremely interested in the college student population and their resiliency but also how the institution had been supporting them during and after the isolation period.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to learn more about the quarantine and isolation experiences of students during a health pandemic at a mid-sized midwestern university. The purpose of this study was to also explore how these students coped with being isolated, learning about their social support systems, and what resources are being provided and utilized.

Thus, the following research questions are being posed:

- 1) How did students experience isolation/quarantine during the pandemic?
- 2) How were students supported during the quarantine/isolation experience?

Significance of the Study

As more students were entering college with new guidelines being distributed on how to stay safe on campus due to COVID-19, more colleges were quickly making decisions on how to maintain the safety of students to limit the spread of the virus, especially those residing in campus residences (Marsicano, 2020). This study identified the support network process, coping strategies, policies for quarantine and isolation periods that students violated, and how to create a more positive and more comfortable quarantine or isolation experience for students.

Understanding why students were being placed in quarantine or isolation was beneficial when learning how to support these students in quarantine or isolation. Universities were still learning how to respond to and limit the spread of COVID-19 and were able to find action plans that worked for students in quarantine or isolation to create a more positive environment for students.

Limitations

There are a few limitations of the current study. First, the researcher used participants from just one institution, and one where they were part of this process of isolating students. This may be viewed as a limitation because the responses given from the participants were from just one institution instead of multiple. The single institution looked at for this study developed protocols the institution identified to be the best for their current situation, and they may be different than other institutions around the United States and world. The intent was to get the students to share their experiences in as much detail as possible to provide greater insight and sticking with a single institution the researcher created an interview protocol that allowed questions to be open-ended and non-leading that allowed the questions to remain unbiased. Participants in this study were self-selected, which may also be viewed as a limitation. The researcher had tested positive for COVID-19 and experienced being quarantined; however, the researcher was able to be in the comfort of their own space while they were placed into quarantine, which meant they experienced quarantine from a different perspective. This was reflected upon and did not impede the researcher's ability to tell the participant's story. Although the researcher had been working with students who are being placed in quarantine or isolation, the researcher was not able to provide all the answers for students if they had questions specific to their situation. During the process of interviewing, analyzing, and writing the final chapters, journaling allowed the researcher to help express the thoughts they had in a positive way and to

eliminate those thoughts or feelings from becoming part of the research in this study, and reduce bias or personal agendas in this study.

Another limitation of this study was the timing of this study. When this research was first created, there were still a lot of uncertainty of how to navigate through a pandemic, and institutions were having to figure out ways that worked the best for their campus, including the institution researched for this study. As the pandemic has progressed, this study was continuously trying to be up to date with the latest COVID-19 guidelines with quarantine and isolation. As this pandemic goes on, there are differences to when this research started and how it ended.

Definition of Terms

For the current study, the following terms were defined to provide understanding regarding the quarantine and isolation experiences in college students.

Coronavirus (COVID-19). Coronavirus disease is a new variation from SARS that has developed (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Isolation. Separates sick people who tested positive with COVID-19 from people who are not sick (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). In the case of this study, isolation means that the student was moved into special housing and asked to not have in-person contact with classmates, friends, faculty, or others for the period of their isolation because they tested positive for COVID-19. Isolation is known to cause psychosocial problems, and changes to usual routines or ways of life can make individuals feel anxious and unsafe. For individuals with an existing mental health condition, “isolation presents more severe problems and can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and anger” (Usher et al., 2020 p. 2756).

Quarantine. The separation and restriction of movement of people who have potentially been exposed and reducing the risk of infecting others (Brooks et al., 2020). At the institution where this study was conducted, students were placed into quarantine for coming into close contact with individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 to see if they also became positive (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021).

Pandemic. An event that occurs worldwide, or over a large area, crossing international boundaries and affects a significantly large number of people (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).

Summary

This study focused on the experiences of students being placed in quarantine or isolation and how university officials supported students. Recognizing the transition from students who test positive to being placed in a new environment for two weeks was the first step to understand what these students felt and went through due to COVID-19 and what their experience during this time had impacted them. Due to this research being limited, this study also supported the gap that exists due to majority of COVID-19 research focusing on how to return to normal and how campus policies are implemented on college campuses.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Loneliness and isolation can impact an individual's mental health dramatically, especially in college students. These feelings of isolation and loneliness play a factor in academic and student success, and the overall collegiate experience (Ray, 2019). Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, loneliness and isolation increased in individuals during lockdown, especially in college students (Ray, 2019). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, loneliness was a global concern because it was associated with the increase of morbidity and mortality (Luchetti, 2020). According to Case and Deaton (2017), morbidity is another term for illness, and mortality refers to death.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reconnecting and socially interacting with individuals can be difficult due to the restrictions on social gatherings. Restrictions varied from state-to-state, with policies about mask wearing, physical distancing, and space capacity indoors and outdoors. Because of these different policies being implemented, many students' social interaction was reduced, which led to loneliness and could lead to negative unintended consequences (Luchetti, 2020). Understanding the impacts of COVID-19, social isolation and forced quarantine and isolation including a review of sense of belonging, mental health, and the support provided by institutions during this pandemic.

Sense of Belonging

There are a variety of ways to look at sense of belonging for college students. Many researchers have looked at the concept of sense of belonging as well as isolation (Erikson, 1930; Faris, 1934; Maslow, 1943). In this section, sense of belonging is developed from several

different perspectives from Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs to Sarason's (1974) community-level studies of social isolation. Each of these will be utilized in this study.

Social belonging is a central human need, especially in college as students begin their journey into adulthood. For college students this can be with roommates, classmates, team members, and so on. Sense of belonging comprises feelings and beliefs that result in being accepted by a community, having a place or a role in that community, and feeling needed by that community (Çivitci, 2015). When students do not have that feeling of being accepted by their peers, they begin to have more negative reactions like feelings of anxiety, depression, and loneliness (Civitci, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic left many feeling unsafe and isolated. That isolation for college students at the beginning of the pandemic may have resulted from moving home and away from their friends at college or left them alone at college while their peers moved home. For some students they were moving back to living situations that were not optimal for their academic success. In the fall of 2020, as students moved back to college campuses, they faced less opportunities to be with their classmates and may have experienced at least one situation of forced isolation or quarantine, which can compound these feelings. The fall semester on college campuses is a time for students to feel welcomed back to campus and get ready for the exciting year the university has planned for students. Feeling unsafe and isolated impacts a person's self-esteem and can lead to anxiety and depression (De Jong-Gierveld, 1987).

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs focuses on tiers of the pyramid; where once one tier's need is met, then the individual can advance to the next tier. The bottom of the pyramid begins with the physiological needs, such as food and shelter, next is safety and security, third is sense of belonging, and fourth is self-esteem and finally, self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

Beginning at the bottom with physiological needs, Maslow identified that individuals had basic needs of food, water, and shelter. For college students this means having clean, safe spaces to live and access to food. Those living in the residence halls are likely to have these met, however, those living off campus may not have the same level of their needs being met. These students may not have meal plans, they may have to maintain a job to help with finances, and not living in the residence halls already isolates them from social interaction by living on their own or with at least one roommate. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students testing positive for COVID-19 or exposed to COVID-19 were required to isolate and quarantine respectively. For some, they were in isolation, which meant that they may have lost complete access to food while living in less-than-ideal housing off campus; while on campus, they were required to move to a temporary location where food could be provided, and they were away from areas where they could potentially spread COVID-19.

This leads into Maslow's second tier, safety and security. When students are not in a position to access food or make their own meals, they are likely to have reduced security (Gaines et al., 2014). These situations can lead to individuals being less secure, and being moved to a new location away from where one feels most comfortable can be anxiety producing. The isolation space utilized at the institution of this study required fixing up and cleaning since the campus apartments had not been utilized in a few years. The apartment had a bedroom, kitchen, living space, and a bathroom enclosed. When students first entered the isolation space, there was a binder with information about meals, how to reach out to faculty and staff, and support resources that the students could utilize while they were in isolation. Isolation and loneliness are two things that are not mentioned specifically in Maslow's pyramid but are likely to occur when the first two tiers are not met because it can lead to the individual not connecting with others.

The middle tier is focused on sense of belonging and feeling loved. These feelings develop when an individual is in a safe living environment where they have access to food and shelter. Often in the residence halls on college campuses is where students first begin to form their friend groups and develop that sense of belonging. However, if an individual is isolated through quarantine those feelings of security and isolation lead to a sense of fear, anxiety, and loneliness which prevents the individual from feeling like they don't belong (Ellis et al., 2020). This cannot happen if one is in isolation; advancement to the next tier of self-esteem is difficult if they lack a sense of connection to others. Self-esteem and self-actualization come when the individual has the lower tiers met, and unfortunately during the pandemic, many students were almost completely isolated for extended periods of time. This impacted their ability to get involved in ways that would have occurred during a non-pandemic year. The pandemic inhibited students from feeling a sense of belonging, positive self-esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

Sense of Community Theory

In 1986, McMillan and Chavis used the term “sense of community” and expanded on the psychological sense of community theory. Sense of community, as defined by McMillan and Chavis, refers to “a feeling that members have sense of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p. 9). To expand on the definition, McMillan and Chavis identified four key components that are essential to this theory: membership, influence, integration, and fulfillment. Membership provides a space for belonging in college students, where they can relate to others on a more personal level. Influence is about the impact the group has on the individual as well as the impact the individual has on the group (McMillan and Chavis, 1986).

Phipps and colleagues (2015) also determined that influence is the ability to make a difference in the group or feeling a sense of importance. Integration and fulfillment go hand in hand; when members needs are met and receive positive outcomes, the more likely they are to feel accepted by the group and stay in that group than those who do not. This can reflect the student's sense of belonging to different communities on campus and the institution. In other words, the greater the sense of belonging to the various communities within the university, the greater is their commitment to that institution [satisfaction with the university] and the more likely it is that they will remain in college" (Hoffman et al., 2002, p. 228).

Having that connectedness on campus, students feeling cared for is critical and often the decisive factor in whether the student withdraws from the university. If a student builds a relationship with just one key person, "this relationship can significantly impact a students' decision to remain in college" (O'Keeffe, 2013, p. 607-608). This leads students to believe that they are cared for by the institution if they just have that one support person looking out for them. Students who were able to develop relationships with faculty members, other students, or staff were able to create a higher sense of connectedness on campus, or better "fit" (Sriram et al., 2020). Students who live on campus have higher retention rates than students who live off campus and also have a higher opportunity of staying at the institution because "on-campus residents may receive opportunities for social support, resources, and integration into the campus community that give them an advantage over students living off campus" (Schudde, 2011, p. 582). Students who have a steady and normal routine everyday have higher rates of healthy behaviors because they have control of what they can do (O'Connell, 2014). When institutions began to transition to online learning, college students quickly had to adapt to their social

environment, or sense of community, and the in-person connections being taken away, and no longer had that sense of belonging on campus.

Impact of college on mental health.

The transition from high school to college may impact the mental health of college students who begin to experience independence for the first time (Moeller, 2020). Specifically discussing social support systems, as students transition from high school to college, these students can experience a decrease in their social support systems, especially if they are no longer around individuals who used to give them daily in-person support. In high school, students could rely on a parent or guardian for comfort, shelter, food, and other needs that helped with personal development. When students are living on their own for the first time and experience anxiety of the newfound independence, students feel more stress because they do not have someone by their side to rely on (Guan & Fuligni, 2015).

College students may feel lonely because they do not have individuals, they are comfortable being around yet. According to Kouros et al. (2016), students who graduate high school and move into college three months later will encounter a new sense of independence which can cause new levels and types of stress. These students may still be emotionally and socially dependent on their parent or guardians (Kouros et al., 2016). Feelings of loneliness and isolation may tend to increase when parents send their student to college because these students are used to having someone familiar around and leading them in the right direction. Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the uncertainty, fear of infection, moral distress, and experiencing these aspects alone increased the stress, anxiety, and loneliness levels in college students (Peteet, 2020).

Different perceptions between public attitudes and the individual experiences among people with mental health problems can be reasons why students may not access services on college campuses. Students may fear how they are seen by others, particularly in a negative light if they seek mental health treatment. A study conducted by Pedersen and Paves (2014) surveyed over 380 college students to examine the factors why mental health services were declined by students. The study found that there was a difference in personal stigma and public stigma. Public stigma refers to the negative attitudes that influence an individual to refuse, or even fear, access to mental health services because these individuals do not want to be seen as weak or hopeless (Pedersen & Paves, 2014). Although research is limited about the utilization of mental health resources on college campuses, one study did show that utilization on college campuses is increasing, specifically in female college students are more likely to seek mental health support on college campuses (Bourdon et al., 2020). Given that the utilization in these services is increasing, there is also an increase in students utilizing mental health services off campus in the local communities or in the students' hometown (Lipson, Lattie, & Eisenberg, 2019).

Loneliness and Isolation

When talking about isolation in a general sense, isolation means to be or remain alone or apart from others. Social isolation can be seen as living alone, having few social network connections, and having little to no social contact. Social isolation, according to Smith and Victor (2019), can lead to mental health outcomes, “such as depression, poorer cognitive functioning, cardiovascular disease, poorer self-rated health, worsened physical functioning, and lifestyle” (p. 1711). Being socially connected is not only influential for psychological and emotional well-being, but it also has a positive influence on physical well-being (Uchino, 2006). With an increase in technological advances, staying socially connected is easier than ever due to

multiple platforms to communicate with one another (Ellis et al., 2020). Living in unprecedented times, the COVID-19 global pandemic decreased the physical social interaction between individuals, which led to everyone trying to stay up to date with one another on virtual platforms.

When discussing the definition of loneliness, it has been conceptualized in a few different ways. According to Smith and Victor (2019), it is defined as “a persons desired and perceived quality and quantity of social relationships, perceived deprivation in social contact, or lack of people with whom to share emotional and social experiences” (p. 1710). Similar to social isolation, loneliness has an increased mortality rate with serious health implications. There are a few lifestyle and risk factors for early mortality, such as smoking, and poor physical and mental health. To put the reduced life span of loneliness into perspective, one who experiences loneliness may have a similar feeling to that caused by smoking 15 cigarettes in one day (Lee et al., 2019). Loneliness and isolation have strong correlations with increased risk for early mortality (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). However, scientific research has given little attention to social and mental health factors that have a greater influence on mortality risk (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). Persistence of loneliness can lead to negative health consequences, such as poorer sleep, substance abuse, depression, and cognitive impairment (Lee et al., 2019). During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in loneliness and isolation in the college student population, which has increased stress and anxiety in students (Luchetti et al., 2020). Due to the social distancing guidelines and “stay at home” orders that were implemented, feelings of loneliness increased in younger age groups (Luchetti et al., 2020). The institution researched for this study saw that academic uncertainty in students was in the top three concerns for the institution, according to the institution’s vice president.

Labrague and colleagues (2020) identified that isolation and loneliness became more prevalent in the college student population because there was a disruption in their daily interactions and social interactions between peers, faculty, friends, and family. Labrague's study focused on the influence of coping behaviors and examined the overall loneliness in students when they were sent home in the spring 2020 semester because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Labrague used a 6-item loneliness scale, where students answered "yes," "more or less," or "no" (Labruage et al., 2020). Most students surveyed were females and enrolled in a public nursing institution. Of the three hundred participants, "10% were found to be 'not lonely,' 57% were 'moderately lonely,' and the remaining 33% were 'severely lonely'" (Labrague et al., 2020, p. 3). The study identified that loneliness was a prevalent symptom amongst college students during the transition period from being on campus to being sent home for mandatory lockdown (Labrague et al., 2020, p. 4). Loneliness was identified as the negative consequence of the mandatory lockdown to limit the spread of the coronavirus, with an "estimated 38-50% of young people aged 18-24 years old experienced higher levels of loneliness during the mandatory lockdown" (Labrague et al., 2020, p. 1).

The general population of individuals who experience loneliness ranges from 17% to 57% and is higher in individuals with physical and mental illnesses (Musich et al., 2015). Loneliness can be experienced in all age populations but has been studied more in older populations due to the functional limitations, poor health, hearing or vision loss, or lower income (Musich et al., 2015). When college students were sent home in the spring of 2020, they were removed from the social in-person interactions they had with their peers on a daily basis. In many cases, that isolation led to increased loneliness. There was an unpleasant experience that

came with the loss of social interaction and the quantity and quality of social relationships when students were forced to go home.

Robert Weiss' Theory of Social Isolation.

Expanding on Maslow's (1943) theory and looking specifically at belongingness, we know that loneliness and isolation can be experienced in any individual. Loneliness is something individuals may feel for a temporary amount of time, but the more time an individual may be alone, the more the individual may experience loneliness (De Jong Gierveld, 2004). Weiss (1973) discussed how feelings of loneliness result in a deficit in one or more relational functions. Individuals who feel loneliness will start to feel socially isolated from interaction with other health and create emotional isolation. At the time this research was presented, there was no real understanding of how to study loneliness because not only was there limited research, "the absence of attention to loneliness was to be explained not by the challenge loneliness presented to understanding but rather by the threat it presented to well-being" (1973, p. 10).

Social isolation can be related to what Weiss (1973) discussed as social loneliness, where individuals feel an absence of networking from friends and other people. By this, Weiss means that "social isolation can be a secondary consequence of a loss that leads to emotional isolation" (p. 143). Examples may include the ending of a marriage, the death of a loved one, or any severe disruption of social role can lead to this social isolation. In terms of this study, the COVID-19 pandemic was the disruption of these social roles. When discussing this theory, it is important to understand that interactive engagement with others is important for the well-being of people.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, college students may be experiencing social isolation as they have to isolate from individuals if they are testing positive with the virus or have come in to contact with someone else who has tested positive. With social isolation came

emotional isolation, as individuals who experience emotional isolation will experience the absence of a reliable figure, such as a partner, or in a situation with a college student, their roommate or suitemate (Van Baarsen, 2001). Emotional isolation is part of emotional loneliness where these experiences have an impact on individuals based on past experiences (Dahlberg, 2014).

Loneliness can be seen in all individuals at any age, and there was a difference between positive loneliness and negative loneliness (Gierveld, 1998). Gierveld (1998) explained that the positive type of loneliness “is perceived to be related to the voluntary withdrawal from the daily hassles of life and oriented towards higher goals, such as reflection, meditation, and communication with God” (p. 73). In other words, individuals who experience positive loneliness choose to remove themselves from the stresses of everyday life so they can focus on themselves and achieve their goals and aspirations. Negative loneliness is the opposite, where individuals experience a lack of communication with other people, and these negative aspects are the most salient feelings individuals will feel (Gierveld, 1998). The connection with other people helps individuals to regulate their emotions, learn to cope with different stress, and remain resilient (Matias, 2020). If an individual is not meeting the need for affection or social interaction, such as belongingness, this increases the burden of stress and social isolation. Not only will it increase the stress of social isolation, but individuals may experience aggressive and hostile behaviors due to being socially isolated and feeling alone. On college campuses, students testing positive for the virus will go into isolation housing and experience a new environment by themselves (Matias, 2020).

Counseling Support.

College students are increasingly becoming a population that is vulnerable to mental health concerns but are not sure what to do when they experience distress (Cohen et al., 2020). Certain concerns that students are facing, such as anxiety, stress, and a rise in academic concerns, are putting students at risk for developing other mental health concerns once they get to campus because they are having difficulty adjusting to their new sense of independence (Cohen et al., 2020). Student affairs professionals are often the first line of defense for supporting students in areas such as residence life, career services, first year programs, and even with counseling support. To promote personal development, student affairs professionals often become “helpers to help others understand, cope, and deal with their problems” (Reynolds, 2017, p. 453). However, because most of these practitioners are not counseling professionals, it is not uncommon for them to feel unsure or unprepared to support students with these types of concerns (Reynolds, 2017). When students express more severe mental health concerns, having experienced professionals that have the skills to support students can be truly valuable. Many colleges and universities in the United States “provide on-campus mental health services to their students that are generally paid for through students’ health fees” (Cohen et al., 2020, p. 1).

Individuals who are struggling with these mental health concerns are either unaware of how they can receive support or choose to reject the help (Pedersen & Paves, 2014). The anxiety of “I worry what others will think of me” has a strong correlation as to why individuals do not receive support for poor mental health (Pedersen & Paves, 2014, p. 144). One study has been linked to the increase in negative mental health symptoms with the use of technology, which included personal computers, the use of social media, and the amount of time spent not only on the device but on the platform as well (Lattie, 2019). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the

increase in access through technology, individuals may feel connected with one another and stay informed on what's going on in their communities, nationally, and even internationally. Through the telecommunication platform Zoom, some individuals around the world were able to utilize this platform to continue settings such as conferences, meetings, and educational purposes virtually.

Although Zoom allowed individuals to stay connected, the amount of time an individual spent on Zoom often led to the term "Zoom fatigue," which means that these "calls are tiring you out, causing a worry of burnout" (Ramachandran, 2021). Individuals use technology as a tool to make up for deficits in social skills, and people who use technology are more interested in the quality of online interaction rather than the quantity of technology use (Jenson et al., 2019). Telecounseling became a widely utilized resource to support those in need when they were unable to meet with counseling professionals in person (Jenson et al., 2019). Telecounseling refers to "any type of psychological service performed over the internet, including emails, chat rooms, and web cameras" (De Luca & Calabro, 2020, p. 17). With the new advances of technology, in 2018 the American Psychology Association (APA) updated its policy on video conferencing and deemed it a valid and effective practice of medicine that increases access to care (De Luca & Calabro, 2020).

Schlossberg's Transition Theory.

When it comes to a sense of belonging, there are different transitions a student goes through as they go through college and life in general. One way to understand this is to use Schlossberg's (1984) transition theory. The biggest question we often think about with students during these transitional stages is how do we make them feel like they matter? Sense of belonging "is the student's perception of affiliation and identification with a college or university

community (Strayhorn, 2012, p. 784). Schlossberg identified that there are four major sets of factors that influence a person's ability to cope with transition (Schlossberg, 1984). These four strategies include situation, self-factors, social support, and strategies (coping responses).

Situation.

Often when students are transitioning to a new stage, the situation is the first characteristic to start the transition. Often there is the question of was the situation anticipated? A student's situation will vary according to what triggered the transition, the new role an individual might be taking on, and the duration of the transition (Goodman & Schlossberg, 2006). With college students, moving away from home for the first time because they decided to go to college might be a new transition. Graduating high school and going to college can be a significant life transition, especially when they go from a style of knowing everyone, they grew up with to meeting new people and learning new styles of professors. A college student might go through a few role changes as they transition from someone's child to a new student on campus. When COVID-19 entered the institutions forcing closures in spring 2020 semester, this would be considered a situation that individuals couldn't control, but also, students weren't aware if transitioning from in-person to online learning would be temporary or permanent. They also found themselves in various forms of transition as they returned for the fall 2020 academic year, the uncertain possibility of being placed into isolated quarantine and then back to their regular living spaces.

Self.

There are self-related factors on how individuals might cope with transition, and these two dimensions include personal characteristics and psychological resources (Evans et al., 2010). There are certain personal characteristics such as gender, age, race, socioeconomic status, that

might shape ways to which individuals adapt to change. As individuals, students think of their self as academics, friends, roommates, to describe themselves; and this can also determine how they reach out for support when they may need it. An individual's psychological resources might include the commitment and values to that individual, and how "the greater perceptions of control and positive assessments of situations are likely to result in positive outcomes" (Griffin & Gilbert, 2015, p. 73). Institutions try to give students resources to be successful whether with their physical or psychological health. Once the COVID-19 pandemic required students to be in more isolated situations with virtual learning and activities, including quarantine, their ability to assimilate or identify with their peers was altered in ways we have yet to understand.

Support.

"Support is largely social, and addresses the ways in which caring, affirmation, and positive feedback can facilitate transitions" (Goodman et al., 2006, p. 74). The biggest transition when a student moves from high school to college, or in this study, transitions from their daily routine to being quarantined or isolated, is the need for various forms of support for student success. When students were on campus, pre-COVID-19, students had in person access writing centers, dining and residence halls, the library for academic structure, counseling centers, and other forms of support to make sure students were feeling supported; and they were able to move through these various environments easily. When they returned to campus in the Fall of 2020, they felt the impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of ways; the need for support increased both in physiological and psychological areas because students either had to transition to go home or transition to stay on campus and learn a new "normal" of a routine (Cohen et al., 2020). When students are stressed or anxious, the key to coping with this stress is support, whether it comes from friends, family, relationships, communities, or even co-workers (Evans et al., 2010).

Understanding how COVID-19 impacted their connections with these different support groups is important. The need for acceptance and comfort is crucial during this transition stage because without the support from these areas, the individual can lack that sense of belonging and social support.

Strategies.

Schlossberg (1984) talks about three different categories of coping responses, and these include modifying the situation, controlling the meaning of the problem, and managing stress after the transition. COVID-19 provided little opportunity for students to modify their situations, other than to isolate and quarantine themselves, and some were not happy about that. When a student goes through a difficult transition or situation, they should remain flexible and implement these strategies to be successful. COVID-19 forced institutions and individuals to create new ways to help students get access and consider the various strategies in front of them and how to implement them into practice. When students aren't utilizing these three strategies, we may see their success on campus and sense of belonging to the campus decrease. The purpose of this study looked into some of those coping strategies from students while they were in quarantine or isolation and consider if those strategies were effective during their period away from other individuals and being forced to stay inside their own space.

With the major disruption COVID-19 presented on college campuses, professionals on these campuses now needed to critically think and act in response. The spring of 2020 was significantly disrupted as universities cancelled in person classes, many institutions extended spring breaks to accommodate for how the semester would move forward, and institutions then decided to send students home for the remainder of the spring semester. As the pandemic continued, institutions began to rebuild their plan of action, discussing what would be the best

option to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and employees. Reopening plans and how to stay open continued to be discussed as universities navigated the uncertainty of this pandemic.

COVID-19 and the college

In the spring of 2020, the coronavirus was quickly entering the United States and coming on to college campuses. One institution announced campus wide on a Tuesday morning that they would be moving to virtual teaching (“When Coronavirus Closes Colleges, 2020”). Strangely, the students in the dining center who were eating when they got the email exploded into cheers and high-fives; but this quickly changed as students began to realize the severity of the situation and soon began to panic. Many students began to wonder how they were going to get home, how were they going to manage finances; some students began to pool money to rent storage lockers to keep their belongings close (“When Coronavirus Closes Colleges, 2020”). Students began to fear the uncertainty and realized that they were really going home and would no longer have that sense of connection with other individuals. Institutions quickly transitioned to an online format to accommodate for the remainder of the semester.

Once the spring semester ended, and universities thought they could breathe, the question of “how do we open in the fall?” came into play. The summer months where faculty and staff members can breathe and take time off was no longer an option as institutions needed to figure out how to reopen for students for the 2020 fall semester. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (2020), out of the 4,000 colleges in the United States, 10% were fully online, 4% were fully in person, and 3% were undetermined (“Here’s our list of colleges’ reopening models”). When those statistics were broken down even further, the three biggest percentages of colleges were primarily in person, had a hybrid model, or were primarily online. Eastern Illinois University followed a “1/3” model, meaning some classes were only virtual, some classes had a

hybrid model of both in person and online, and some classes were only offered in person.

Vanderbilt University created an ambassador program where a public-health ambassador might stop another student to remind them that the institution required face coverings and give the student a pocket hand sanitizer with a mask and gloves to ensure the safety of the students and employees (“When Coronavirus Closes Colleges, 2020”).

COVID-19 testing was soon implemented across college campuses to reduce the spread of the virus, and, with the hybrid or virtual options, universities were hopeful this would limit the spread. Other institutions like Purdue University and Texas A&M University at College Station in the fall of 2020 required students to self-certify that they had not tested positive for COVID-19, that they didn’t have symptoms, and they had not traveled where local guidelines mandate quarantining upon returning home (“When Coronavirus Closes Colleges, 2020”). Incoming students at New York University who were getting ready to embark on a new journey for college were told if they were coming from states with high COVID-19 positive cases, they must quarantine for two weeks (“Life in the Quarantine Dorms, 2020”). One student from Indiana said that the portions they were receiving for meals while quarantined were small, and worried that she wasn’t getting enough caloric intake she needed. Another student at New York University said that she is a social person and being stuck in isolation is “a little lonely, and I’m getting a little tired of it” (“Life in the Quarantine Dorms, 2020, p. 6). These students who were placed in quarantine thought being in the dorms would be exciting and energetic, and since there isn’t much to do, these students find themselves feeling lonely and “looking out the window for a good portion of the day because it’s fun to watch the people walking around” (“Life in the Quarantine Dorms, 2020”).

During the spring 2021 semester, institutions such as Eastern Illinois University maintained the same learning environment with a hybrid option of in-person classes and online. In the early spring semester, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna administrations began releasing the COVID-19 vaccinations to the public, starting with individuals who were most at risk and healthcare professionals (“Full Approval of COVID Vaccine”). Although the vaccines were not yet FDA approved, many individuals were eager to receive the vaccine so they could begin to transition back into normalcy, meaning starting life without masks, social distancing, and for colleges, cutting back on the virtual instruction. The COVID-19 vaccine was extremely new to everyone, with many people again worried how effective it was going to be, and if it was effective at all (“Full Approval of COVID Vaccine”).

The FDA approved 2020 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination announcement came shortly after the start of the academic year for most colleges. COVID-19 testing changes began to shift as the new approval of the Pfizer vaccine changed how testing protocols were going to be implemented on college campuses. Eastern Illinois University implemented a testing process in the spring of 2021 where students, faculty, and administration were chosen at random to test on campus. Over the summer, after the COVID-19 Pfizer and Moderna vaccines came out, Eastern Illinois University required students who would not be fully vaccinated to test weekly, while those who were fully vaccinated, meaning it had been at least two weeks since the second dose of the shot, were not required to test. The University of Colorado-Boulder required both employees and students to be vaccinated, and the institution saw 83 percent of their student population fully vaccinated coming into the fall of 2021 (“There’s No Standard Among Colleges”). Although there are institutions, such as Purdue University and Indiana University, are not requiring students and employees to be vaccinated, Indiana University is “offering students a choice

between vaccination or regular testing and mandatory quarantine if exposed to COVID-19” (“Indiana U.’s Vaccine Mandate, 2021”). Eastern Illinois University stated that any individual who was fully vaccinated (meaning that the individual had received both shots of either Pfizer or Moderna, or one shot of Johnson and Johnson) were not required to test weekly (D. M. Glassman, personal communication, July 27th, 2021). Any individual who did not receive a vaccine or did not disclose their vaccination status to the university were required to register to test weekly.

Summary

Expanding on the foundation of theories to attribute to research, different theorists, such as Maslow (1943), Schlossberg (1984) and Weiss (1973), have contributed to the research. These theories expand on topics such as mental health and led to even further research on mental health in the college student population. The literature review also explores mental health in colleges students before and during the COVID-19 global pandemic. With the COVID-19 pandemic, college students find it more difficult to find their “place” on campus because of the new guidelines and policies enforced to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff members. The factors that play a role in the experience for each student varies between academic success, social support, and physical and emotional health. Not only do students have to cope with the stress of academics and may be experiencing the start of college either for the first time, but they also must cope with how to deal with the stresses of a global pandemic as well. Students going through the college experience are already creating a new journey for themselves, but with the COVID-19 pandemic, experiences for each individual differentiates greatly. The support from the literature and theoretical framework will be appropriate to examine the different experiences

of quarantine and isolation in college students during the COVID-19 pandemic while attending school and living either on or off campus.

CHAPTER III

Methods

This narrative qualitative study was conducted to understand the quarantine and isolation experiences of college students and how these students coped with moving to an isolation location to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As a recent global experience, the study was conducted because there is a need to understand and learn from these experiences. The methodological framework was designed to gain insight into quarantine and isolation experiences in college students and how they coped with moving to an isolation location, and what resources these students were provided with and utilized, and what kind of support system they had and have on a mid-sized midwestern college.

Design of the Study

A narrative qualitative design was used for this study. The data was collected through individual interviews from a sample of students who were placed in quarantine or isolation on campus. A narrative qualitative study was chosen because this type allowed the participants to share their unique experiences of being quarantined or isolated (Krefting, 1991). The type of interview that was conducted were semi-structured. The researcher made this decision because semi-structured interview questions use key questions to help guide the interview for basic answers but allowed the researcher to branch off from the original structure of the interview and ask different questions that would probe different ideas from the participant based on what their experience was like (Krefting, 1991).

Participants

There were four participants who had been placed in quarantine or isolation in between fall of 2020 and fall of 2021. A student was given a free university t-shirt for their participation.

A list of over 437 students who were moved into a quarantine space was kept by an office on campus. This office was contacted and provided a recruitment email (Appendix A).

The researcher did not intend for all four participants to be women from underrepresented populations; however, they were the first to respond and the decision was made to move forward and not intentionally recruit additional participants. Claire identified as a black, female sophomore on the track and field and cross-country team. River identified as a Hispanic, female senior who is a resident assistant. Tiffany identified as a black, female sophomore who was majoring in education. Indigo identified as a black, female sophomore who was majoring in psychology.

The researcher's contact information was provided in the email, and it was open to any participant who lived in on-campus housing during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic year. From the initial contact email, the researcher sent a follow-up email (Appendix B) that explained the process of scheduling the interview, along with an informed consent, the interview protocol (Appendix C) was provided to the participants to give them an opportunity to think about their responses, and a brief demographic survey to identify basic information about participants (Appendix D). In the informed consent, it clearly stated that participation was voluntary, and the participant had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Research Site

Research for this study was took place at a four-year public mid-sized institution in the Midwest. In the 2020-2021 academic year most on-campus housing was single rooms to help prevent the spread of the virus. This institution designated housing that was not being utilized on campus to students who tested positive for COVID-19 were moved to until they were cleared to

move back to their regular housing. Students in isolation were provided meals, and routine check-ins by professional staff members. In the fall of 2020, approximately 2,000 students were housed on campus and over 540 were moved into quarantine housing. Additionally, over 50 students who were living off campus requested to move into the campus' quarantine housing space.

This study was conducted at the location of the participants choosing. Three of the interviews were conducted over Zoom where both the researcher and the participant were in quiet, secure locations where they could freely talk. One interview was conducted in-person, and the researcher identified a private location to conduct the interview.

Instrumentation

Demographic Form. A demographic form (Appendix D) was developed and sent to participants once they acknowledged interest in participating. This form asked a few basic questions about their isolation and quarantine experience as well as information about their COVID-19 status. The form also asked the location the participant was from.

Semi-structured interviews. An interview protocol was created (Appendix C) to guide one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with participants. The researcher asked the participant probing or any follow-up questions as needed throughout the interview. There was an interview protocol created to help guide the interview, but the researcher asked questions off-script if more information was needed to help with the results. These questions were designed to learn about the lived experiences of students in quarantine or isolation and how the participant learned to cope with being placed away from people, and what support system these participants had throughout the process. This structure helped provide a way for participants to tell their own story and share their experiences in their own words.

Data Collection

Data was collected by a demographic form (Appendix D) and semi-structured individual interviews (Appendix C) during the fall semester of 2021. The researcher met with each participant virtually over Zoom or in-person. The researcher then provided the participant with a copy of the informed consent (Appendix B), explained the form, reminded them of their rights as a participant, asked them if they have any final questions or concerns, and asked them to sign the form. Each interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. As participants agreed to the interview, they were given the option to create a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality and that pseudonym was used in all paperwork and documentation in place of the participants name. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the interviews from the audio and video recordings into confidential computer files separately, and each interview was categorized by participant pseudonym. Inductive content analysis was used to analyze the data. Inductive content analysis is used due to the limited amount of previous data (Elo & Kyngas, 2014). This type of analysis requires the researcher to keep the research questions in mind and look for important themes to describe the quarantine and isolation experiences of college students. This analysis began with coding, where notes and headings were found within the data and was written off in the margins. Theoretical guides were developed to organize and make sense of the data. From the margins, headings were created and were moved to coding sheets, and this was how categories were generated. In qualitative research, the researcher must focus on certain or more critical points of the data and disregard other parts. Using the categories that were created, the researcher began to create a description of the research topic, and through this process, the data was analyzed.

Treatment of Data

The data was collected and transcribed into a word document, which was kept onto a password protected personal computer, password protected hard drive, a USB password protected hard drive, and a password protected one drive. The original audio and video recordings were kept in the password protected Zoom account of the researcher and a protected flash drive. Only the researcher had access to the data. The researcher assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity and maintain confidentiality. Per Institutional Review Board protocol, all records that pertained to this study were retained for at least three years and then the data will be destroyed.

Summary

This study used a qualitative approach with a semi-structured interview process. This was the best method used because it provided the best opportunity to gain the perspective of the participant about their quarantine or isolation experience. These interviews had the opportunity to help colleges and universities gain insight on how to support students who are placed in quarantine or isolation and learn how their college experience was impacted.

CHAPTER IV

Narratives

This chapter will provide the narratives of each of the study's participants. The purpose for this chapter is to hear the stories of the students. This unpacking of each story will allow for a better understanding of each individual participant. To discover and clarify who these students are, their student persona, social engagement, and college experience will be shared and explored.

Tiffany

Student Persona

Tiffany is a Black female in her second year and majoring in early childhood education at Masking University and home is a couple hours away. Tiffany was interviewed in the fall semester of 2021, during her second year of college. Tiffany spoke about how she knew she wanted to continue her education. "I graduated [high school] in 2020. I knew I wanted to go to school [college]." Tiffany decided that a four-year institution was going to be a better fit for her. "At first I was thinking about community college, but I wanted to be away from home." When talking about her first semester in college, Tiffany shared that it was difficult for her because she was the first person in her family to go to college.

My first semester was really rough, especially this being my first year, and I'm also a first-generation student, so I really didn't have anyone in my family to, you know, experience my experiences. So, I want to say I wasn't on my own, I just didn't know which path to go.

With Tiffany being a new college student in the fall of 2020, she explained what the transition was like when it came to her academics. "I did struggle in my classes, which caused

me to be on academic warning my first semester; I'm not anymore, but yeah, it was a struggle.” Masking University had talked about how classes could be held in-person, online, or through a hybrid format, and Tiffany shared she had a few in person, and then a couple do the online and hybrid format. Tiffany talked about how with her hybrid classes, she would be in class Monday and Wednesday one week, and then online the next. “I did have a few in-person classes. I did have some asynchronous courses, classes that were through Zoom, and some of my classes I did have hybrids.” When talking about her online classes for her fall 2020 semester, Tiffany stated, “I really struggled with my grades, especially with the asynchronous course classes because that was my first time being introduced to those.” The difference between the fall 2020 and the fall 2021 semester was a lot better for Tiffany.

This year, I learned from those mistakes, and I do have some asynchronous course classes now. So now I know what to improve on since I looked back on last semester and can say that my grades [this semester] are better.

Social Engagement. When asked about what she is involved in and what her different friend groups look like, Tiffany was asked to speak about the comparison from fall 2020 to fall 2021, Tiffany did identify that one of the highlights was meeting new people.

I met some cool friends [in the fall 2020]. We formed our own activities as a group. We had a nerf gun fight behind [residence hall] in the field one time, we had study groups with each other, even though we all didn't have the same classes, but you just want the social aspect of it.

Tiffany expressed how these friends impacted all aspects of her life. “My friends were the highlight of the year [2020]. Because like I said I was struggling academically, and my mental health wasn't the best, but my friends were always there.” Although Tiffany found

friends on campus to help her get through some difficult situations, she did experience lack of social belonging as she started college. “I didn’t feel part of [college] at the time, since it was the beginning of the school year.” The COVID-19 policies on campus influenced Tiffany’s experience her first year, “That was a low point [of the year] because I wasn’t really involved at all on campus.” Masking University, in the fall 2021, began to lift restrictions for social gatherings, and Tiffany explained what that experience has been like; “This semester, since things have changed, I’m trying to branch out more and be part of the campus.”

College Experience. After completing part of a semester online in high school, Tiffany talked about what she wanted to do when she got to college. “I wanted to get involved my first year. I was looking at different [registered student organizations].” However, when she spoke about involvement, she talked about her reaction to Zoom activities, “It was hard because everything was on Zoom, and I would try doing the Zoom call but it’s not that feeling of being in person.” Tiffany talked about why she wanted to go to certain events on campus. “Having the online classes is stressful and I go to the events because I enjoy the company.” When talking about being engaged and interacting on campus, Tiffany shared how the fall 2020 semester was a lot different because there weren’t things to help get students involved. “There’s really nothing out on campus for us to get engaged in, especially because you have to make sure we are all safe as well because of COVID [-19].” When talking more about COVID-19 policies on campus, Tiffany discussed how they affected the experience last year to this year.

I knew some of the rules. The number of people that you can have in a classroom, the social distancing policies, the policies of dining and how we had to take our food to go, which I didn’t like. I feel like for every sophomore coming in [this year] it’s like, wow, this is what it’s like because now I’m seeing way more people on campus, way more

people in the dining halls. So, I'm like, wow, this is actually how college is like with all these people around because I didn't have that with COVID [-19].

With COVID-19 still occurring around the world, Tiffany explained how her experience has been while still being in the middle of a pandemic.

It's a different experience. I never had the experience without COVID [-19] being in college. So, I guess this is the new norm now. So, I just have to follow the rules and make sure I get tested and still be able to do my homework and keep up with my mental health, even on top of that. With this whole pandemic going on, who knows when it will end.

River

Student Persona

River is a Hispanic female in her fourth year who is finishing her academics in the spring of 2022 at Masking University and home is several hours away. River is a returning resident assistant (RA) for the 2021-2022 academic year. She is a Spanish and Hispanic studies major. River was interviewed in the fall semester of 2021. River is the only participant that has gone through college where the COVID-19 pandemic was not relevant her first year and part of her second year of college. "It's definitely very different now. My sophomore year, everything was good, and classes were going regularly." River has lived in housing at Masking University all four years of her experience.

Social Engagement. When sharing about her friend groups and who she socializes and engages with she shared several different perspectives. River shared a unique perspective about her engagement with faculty and how it has been during her time in college shifting from in person to virtual and back again. "Last year [fall 2020] it was a lot of meeting with professors on Zoom, but this year we're going back to meeting with professors in person and having

conversations in person.” With the university lifting some of the social restrictions, River talked about the difference last year and this year. “Last fall, I didn’t really hang out with anyone, and then when I did hang out with someone, I was exposed [to COVID-19]. So, after that, it was just like yeah, no more in person hangouts.” With River being used to seeing social engagement on campus, she talked about what her residence hall was like in previous years.

It’s been interesting because before, everybody would hang out on the floor and in previous years, my floor was very social. People would have their doors open and just were very open to be like, hey, you can come hang out in my room. But once the pandemic hit, that was all very different because we have new policies on how many people were allowed to be in a room at once because of the amount of space that you need to properly social distance.

With technology advancing every day, River talked about another way she found social engagement.

I found an app discord, which is a newer form of social media. So, I met people through there. They’re the ones that I communicate with the most. We’re all from different states so usually we’ll do like a virtual movie night, so somebody shares the screen and we’re all there watching the movie but also texting or making little comments about it.

College Experience. For the fall 2020 semester, River had one in-person class and then the rest of her classes were hybrid; she never had a fully online class. When asked about what was different in the classroom, River talked about the quantity and format of the class.

I remember one of my classes; it was a bigger class. So, we had people that would go in person on Tuesdays and then on Thursdays they would be on Zoom. And the people that were on Zoom on Tuesdays were in class on Thursdays. So, it was like alternating so that

everybody got to be in class, but it was different because it was either in-person or online, and that made a little bit of the class activities difficult.

Being an RA, River was used to seeing people interact on the floor; however, when policies were implemented for the safety of students, River described how things changed.

I was aware of the policies because I was in training for that. Last year it was a pretty new thing for everyone, and so it was a lot of posters and meetings to say, hey, this is what's going on, this is how we need to work together, and a lot of that has fallen into this year because it's not the start of the pandemic and most people already know and understand, so it's a lot easier explaining the policies rather than before when everything was brand new.

River talked about how different engagement looked in the fall of 2020 in comparison with her first two years in college.

It was just really weird because there weren't as many events going on campus. And even with the classroom, it's just different because usually the desks are closer to each other and then it [the desks] was just all spread out and we would have alternating days for the bigger classes.

Since River is a fourth-year student at the university, she was able to speak to what her experience in college was like over the last couple years. "Before the pandemic, I was in many organizations. I was in [A Latinx group], I was in [an animal volunteer organization], so I would attend those meetings and I would socialize there. I was also in hall council."

River was also able to share what she saw as differences; "After the pandemic started, those [clubs] just kind of stopped for a while, and then they [administration] slowly started reintroducing them." With River being involved in so many things and then those organizations

not meeting during the fall of 2020, she discussed how certain university events were held virtually, and how the university's annual residence hall competition was altered.

In previous years there would be homecoming and neighborhood week; it used to be [residence hall fest] but last year we had neighborhood week. It was just very different because a lot of the stuff they were doing, like family weekend; family weekend was all virtual and that was kind of weird and it took away from it being family weekend.

River was used to experiencing things that happened on campus because it seemed typical for a college campus and how that was altered last fall. "There were a lot of events that usually occur and are the high points of the semester that didn't take place."

Indigo

Student Persona

Indigo is a Black female in her second-year student at Masking University who is majoring in psychology and home is several hours away. Out of the four participants, Indigo is the furthest away from home. Indigo was interviewed in the fall of 2021. Indigo talked about the format of her classes in the fall of 2020. "The majority were in person. I only had one online and then I had a hybrid." Indigo also shared that she is very close with her family, "I'm very close with my mother as well. She misses me, I'm her only daughter. I'm very, very spoiled." When talking about her first semester in college, Indigo shared about her transition from high school to college.

I was just starting college, so of course I started doing regular things like going to parties, finding new friends that I could open up to but at the same time it was hard, especially further along [in the semester] because it [COVID-19] was getting more serious because they were closing things down; we couldn't even eat in the cafeteria.

Indigo explained that when things started closing, she began to think about potentially changing her classes to online. “I was really scared to come to class; I actually thought about changing into online classes for this semester.” Although Indigo had discussed potentially going home because of some of the things happening on campus, she talked about one of the more positive things that happened in the fall 2020 semester.

I got more in tune with myself. I never got a lot of time with myself before the pandemic; I always felt like I needed to be around somebody and being that I couldn't really be around anybody, it kind of helped me notice that I don't need anybody all the time. I learned a lot more of self-care, watching movies by myself, having a skin care routine, instead of hanging out with people all the time and doing what they want me to do.

She also shared about how she struggled being alone and some of the low points during the academic year.

Well, I really did get unmotivated because it was a lot of time to myself. I had a lot of time to think about the stuff that happened before the pandemic, I thought about my future. I was beginning to be more stressed, being in my room a lot more, and I ended up feeling depressed; it was getting really hard and I started to slack in my classes. It was just really sad.

Social Engagement. Indigo talked about how her fall semester of 2021 was going and some of the new friends she has found. “So, I've been out on my floor. I actually have a group of friends and I hang out with them more. We hang out and watch movies together.” Indigo also talked about how her social groups have been hanging out and including her in everything they do because she is a little reserved.

I feel like we are a very energetic group; we are definitely a loud group. They're very, very friendly. I on the other hand do not like talking to a lot of people but they always are doing things and saying, no you have to come with us. It's real energetic and it builds character and helps build a friendship.

While also learning how to become more of an extrovert, Indigo shared how she learned some new things through her friends.

They helped teach me things, so they're very knowledgeable, like teaching me to cook. It's crazy because you think you know more than somebody because you are older, but I've actually learned a lot from somebody that just got here a couple months ago.

Although Indigo found some friends for the 2021-2022 academic year, she explained what happened during the 2020 fall semester.

Last year, it was really out of order because I had one friend, and we'd watch movies together, but we weren't even watching the movie because we were just on our phones. And then she would say she had homework to do and leave. I don't really know how to get into detail about last semester because I definitely only had like two friends. I can't elaborate too much because I was always in my room, and anyone that knew me knew I was always in my room.

College Experience. Indigo was a new student in the fall of 2020 and talked about what her experience was like coming into a new institution.

It was kind of confusing because last time I had school [in person], I was a senior [in high school]. I didn't really have to do anything because I was a senior. I had all of my credits, so I was good. And so, coming here, I didn't really know what to do. I was kind of confused. I'm really last minute on a lot of things, and so I would email teachers late

sometimes, especially with online; they just give assignments, and they want us to do them, but I'm a hands-on person and I definitely feel like I need an extra mile to learn. Although Indigo talked about how her college experience was impacted in the fall 2020, she discussed how she was able to find some support outside of her social group of friends. "It helped when I had somebody in an online class, and we did it together. I felt like it helped build up my learning capacity, so I feel like I understand more." Indigo explained that some aspects of her classes were difficult, such as professors not elaborating on assignments.

I would get assignments and I'd want examples of what the teachers wanted and wanted them to elaborate or give examples of what they wanted the class to do and what not to do. Like I would have a million questions, and so it was really hard for me to ask questions because I was confused on what questions were the most important. So, when they were assigning assignments, I don't think I got the best grade I could've gotten because I didn't ask enough questions and the instructions weren't brought up.

Indigo discussed how she felt the entire college process has been all over the place and what she thought about it.

All over the place. It's been very unorganized but I understand why because the pandemic came out of nowhere, so the [university] officials are following rules and being thrown new sets of ideas and what to do. So, I kind of understand the situation at hand, it's very, very confusing for both the people who have to enforce it and then the people who have to be enforced. It's been very hot and cold.

Although the year was very hot and cold for Indigo, she was able to find some friends that help balanced her being introverted. "We open and talk about a lot of things. I have one friend where we just goof around and laugh, and then I have another friend where we do homework together.

So, it's very beneficial." Indigo discussed how there is a balance of introvert and extrovert in her social group. "I feel like we are very energetic but also calm. We're very goofy but we like to talk about anything and everything.

Claire

Student Persona

Claire is a Black female in her second-year student at Masking University where home is several hours away. Out of the four participants, Claire is the only one who participates on an athletic team and is majoring in pre-med. Claire was interviewed in the fall of 2021. When asked about her class format for the fall of 2020, she went into detail about what her classes looked like. "I had one fully in-person class, then one fully online, and I had two hybrid classes." Claire talked about her transition from high school to college.

It was my first year in college and I was still trying to transition, so I was having a hard time already, trying to keep up with the pace. For the majority of my exams, I either failed the first test or got a D, and that had me very unmotivated, and then I couldn't practice, which is one of the main things I was looking forward to when coming to school.

Claire discussed how academics had an impact on her when she first came into college.

The first week was pretty chill but once classes started going, the in-person classes were fine, but the online classes had a little bit of [connection] issues with Zoom. So, the first couple weeks were rough, trying to navigate [the online portal] because none of my professors showed us how to navigate [the online portal], so it was hard to find homework because the instructions of where the work would be was not very clear.

With Claire being a student-athlete on campus, she shared what her process was like navigating life as a division one athlete in a pandemic.

I'm on the [athletic] team and we had to go through a lot of testing in order for us to be able to practice and compete as a team. So instead, they had us working in small groups. In order to be eligible to practice, I had to get tested for COVID [-19] and then I had to do a bunch of screenings.

Claire learning to navigate her athletics was only a minor issue to how she was trying to keep up with her academics.

I think I was expecting the first few classes to go over the expectations of the online class and [the online portal]. Even if your class was online, talking about the things you should know for [the online portal] and to have the professors go over that with their class would have been really beneficial. Even if your in-person class isn't online, I'm pretty sure everyone on campus had at least one online or hybrid class, so just talking about it to make sure everyone knew about the features.

Social Engagement. Coming into college, Claire was already part of a community on campus as a part of an athletic team. "So last year [fall 2020] my social group was mainly just the track team, there wasn't many people around on campus or any on campus activities to meet people. So, it was mainly just the track team." Claire went on to share the following about the fall of 2020, "I knew a few football players because my team and football share the same space for athletic training, so that would really be the only way I would meet new people would be in the training room." Claire also shared how she interacted with people outside of the training room.

Last year, I think I was close with like three or four [teammates] and after practice, we would go to each other's houses and cook after practice and make dinner and things like that. It was kind of hard at the same time because our coach was trying to tell us that there was only a certain amount of people allowed together, so it was hard being able to include the whole team and also trying to stay within the restrictions of safety.

Although Claire still is part of an athletic team on campus, she talked about her social groups and different ways she has gotten involved in the fall of 2021.

Now, I'm able to go to more events. I've been mainly going to fraternity and sorority things, they'll host different events. The [black student organization] would also host different things, so that's how I've made friends so far. So now, my friends are more than just people on the track team. Now, I'm able to be in different groups of people and be friends with people outside of my major.

Claire shared some other ways she has been able to get involved with campus life socially.

Since we have in-person classes now, I found people who have the same major as me that I can study with and make friends that way. And then also, I'm able to go bowling and meet new people there. So just being able to meet new people like in classes, or just any setting outside of Zoom has been the biggest change.

College Experience. Having a roommate is one of the most impactful factors living on campus can have on a student, and Claire expressed how she felt about the institutions policy during the 2020-2021 academic year.

One of the biggest things that I found out first was that there was going to be no roommates, which I was kind of upset about because after I found a roommate, they [the

university] were like, okay we're going to do no roommates, and so that was the biggest difference.

As an athlete Claire was required to participate in COVID-19 testing as well as the rest of the students.

I know they said you have to get tested before you came to campus. I think they wanted everyone to get tested. I know for athletes, we had to get tested before we came to campus, as well as in our first two weeks on campus.

Claire also shared how the classroom experience looked a little different. "We had to wear a mask all around campus as well as in the classrooms. The six feet of distance in the classrooms and making sure every couple of seats were open." During the fall 2020 semester, the university decided to switch to all online classes after the Thanksgiving holiday break because of the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the area. Claire shared how COVID-19 impacted her overall experience.

I couldn't really make any friends because I was always in quarantine or trying to get tested, so it was really hard for me; not being able to succeed academically or really have a social life, and then by the time I was out of quarantine and able to socialize and able to practice, everyone got sent home.

There were some classes that Claire had in the fall semester where she wished she had the opportunity to know more about.

The biggest low point was not being able to drop one of my classes. I wasn't aware of how classes were, so I was taking a sophomore Spanish class and I didn't know that. I wasn't able to fully experience the pace of that class [because I was in quarantine] and once I was able to get out and see how it was, I wasn't able to drop it. So not knowing the

different levels of classes and also not being told when it's the last day to drop a class would be the lowest point.

Summary

In chapter four, each participant's narrative was provided to gain insight into their lived experience. According to Clandinin (2013), the research narrative texts from the participants are the most influential voice. Learning about each participants' background, social engagement, and college experience helps gain insight into how viewed either coming to college or what college was like before the pandemic. Chapter five will provide an analysis of the quarantine and isolation experiences of these college students.

CHAPTER V

Analysis

The purpose of this research was to learn about students' quarantine and isolation experiences and how they felt supported by their peers, family, and from the institution. Chapter five analyzes the findings from the data collected from four students of different backgrounds regarding their experience of quarantine, strategies they utilized while they were in the quarantine space, and recommendations the participants offered after their experience. The following questions were used to guide the study and analysis; (a) How do students experience quarantine/isolation during the pandemic? (b) How were students supported during the quarantine/isolation experience?

The student experiences of isolation and quarantine

Participants were asked to share about their experiences in isolation and quarantine. In analyzing their experiences, it was important to understand the situation and how this impacted the student, including how they found out and the process they went through to what the actual experience was like. It was also important to understand how the student viewed themselves in the situation.

Situation

Each participant confirmed that they had to move to a quarantine space and were isolated by themselves. River and Claire were placed in quarantine in the fall of 2020, and Tiffany and Indigo were placed into quarantine in the fall 2021 semester. Out of the four participants, Claire was the only individual who shared that she had tested positive for COVID-19. For each of them it began with the phone call, then came the arrangements to make the move, and then the participants shared their feelings and emotions during this time.

Finding out about Quarantining. Each of the participants spoke about first finding out that they would have to move into quarantine. For Tiffany and Indigo, it was receiving a phone call, and for River and Claire, it was learning that they had been exposed and now had to make the arrangements to move to quarantine.

When River was exposed to COVID-19 in the fall of 2020, she was working in the residence halls as an RA, and she talked about how she handled the process.

When I found out I was exposed, I texted my boss, and I told my boss, hey, I was exposed. She said I had to contact the clinic so they could do the tracing, but I had to call them in the morning because they were closed. But I just stayed in my room until the next day.

Claire was the only participant that had to quarantine twice in her first year of college. She quarantined at the beginning of the fall 2020 semester, and then had to quarantine again in November of the 2020 fall semester. She discussed what the experience was like having to quarantine twice. The first time she had to isolate was in September of the 2020 fall semester; Claire, a student athlete, explained how she had found out after practice that she had to isolate when her teammate tested positive.

So, when I found out about being in contact with someone that had COVID [-19], it was weird because we were in practice and we were [in groups] working out, and COVID [-19] is supposed to be a respiratory virus. So, it was weird because she [teammate] seemed fine. So, me and my friend were waiting to go to isolation. But we were kind of upset because they didn't tell us how long we were going to be there.

When Claire had to isolate the second time in November of the 2020 fall semester because she tested positive, she talked about the process for what the second time was like, and how the athletic department got involved.

When I get sick, I get really sick, so Thursday night I started getting cold symptoms like really fast, so I texted my coach, and he was like, what's wrong? And then he said I have to get tested, so I think they had sent someone to bring me a test because I don't think they wanted me to leave, so someone sent me a test and dropped it off in front of my door to take to the clinic. But either way, they sent me to isolation because it came back positive.

Tiffany, who was quarantined in fall of 2021 in her second year at the college, described what it was like getting the phone call.

[The person] worked with human services, she had tried to call, and I guess they had an old phone number of mine in the system, and that was kind of weird at first because they tried to contact me on Thursday, and they didn't come get me until Friday. And I was like, if it's such a big thing, why didn't you guys try to put a call to my dorm? To my RA? Because if I did have COVID [-19], I would have been spreading it to my friends and other people.

Indigo, who was also quarantined in the fall of 2021 during her second year of college, was a little confused about the process of the call and how to move over to the space, and shared;

I was actually informed by the person that tells you that you have to quarantine. So that's how I found out. I found out very last minute because I was on my way home and they called and told me, you know, you have to quarantine. So, I had found out and it [the process] seemed very unprofessional to me, and maybe I felt like that because I hadn't

been home in so long, and I was really looking forward to going home. So, I was very sad, like a lot of feelings were going everywhere.

When Indigo received the phone call, she showed frustration. “Oh my gosh, I hated it. I was so upset because it makes you think that people don’t care about taking care of themselves.”

Movement to space. Participants were asked to describe what it was like to move to the quarantine housing spaces and their initial reactions to the new space. Claire, in her first semester, described how she had felt on her way over the quarantine space. “The first time I was really nervous because they took me at midnight; it was dark and over there, there weren’t too many lights, and I still didn’t know my way around campus.”

Each participant had something to say about the cleanliness of the space they were placed in, and what their thoughts were about the space itself. When asked to describe the space, Indigo stated, “It [the space] didn’t meet my standards, my personal standards. Everything looked like it had been slept on.” Tiffany discussed how she really felt about her space. “It was like I was in a jail cell, and my room was really dusty.” Tiffany discussed what she had brought to her room while she was there.

I brought Lysol and disinfectant wipes because my friends told me what I needed to bring. I knew I had to wipe stuff down because you don’t know what they clean because this is where other people who had COVID [-19] stayed and so you don’t know if they actually clean these places.

Tiffany shared how she had friends that were also moved to the spaces and what they thought. “My friend was there last semester and said she had bugs in her room.” Indigo’s friend shared how there had been bugs in her room when she was there, which is what Claire also talked about in her interview. “The first time I went [to quarantine], I had to switch rooms

because there were bugs all over the floor.” Claire talked about the bugs in her room but spoke about how the space was when she was there twice. “The first place was renovated, that was probably the best space I was in, it was very clean. The second one I was in, when I had COVID [-19], it was okay, but it still wasn’t the best.” River described hearing odd sounds and how uncomfortable it all was. Indigo shared this about when she was placed in quarantine, “I was disgusted. I was distraught. It didn’t meet my standards. I expect the best of the best. The couch looked like it had been slept on; everything looked like it had been slept on. It looked horrible.”

Staying in quarantine housing. Each participant described not only the physical space but how they felt during this quarantine experience. Tiffany expressed what some of the first reactions she had in entering quarantine.

I was like why me? I’ve done everything to keep my mask on and social distance; so, it was a really bad phone call. The guy who dropped me off, I had to walk to the door because the guy couldn’t walk with me. So, when I got inside, I was like wow, this is real. I’m really in here.

Two of the participants spoke about their reactions to moving into this new space. River stated “This was kind of creepy. I would hear thumping on the roof, and I’m just like, this kind of seems like a horror movie. It was definitely a different experience.” Tiffany talked about the space in this way, “You’re in this room by yourself and university apartments is creepy; I was in a jail cell. It was really creepy, and it was just empty.”

Claire described her first night. “I couldn’t sleep, and the entire room itself was just weird. I felt like I was in a motel, so I stayed up the entire night.” Indigo shared her experience in quarantine.

I was uncomfortable. Being somewhere that you didn't want to be when you knew you were supposed to be doing something better, you know, and you are hours away from your family. That's very imperative to me to be with family. So, the fact that I was there, it just made me very vulnerable to my emotions.

Each of the participants spoke about the situation they were placed in by having to quarantine after exposure to COVID-19. They shared what it was like to get the call that they had to move, moving to the space, and their experience in the space. This all impacted how the students viewed themselves through the experience which will be talked about in the next section.

Self

In chapter four, each participant's story was shared to understand who they were as an individual before being placed into quarantine. Each participant shared what they felt while they were in the quarantine space and how being in the space impacted their daily routines prior to being in quarantine.

Emotional Impact. Each participant at one point in their interview spoke about how the quarantine space impacted them from an emotional perspective. The four participants had different ranges of emotions while they were in quarantine. They reacted to their experiences of having to be in quarantine and then what the experience was like once they were in the quarantine space and how they reacted during their time there.

Indigo was quarantined at the start of her second year on campus. During her first year, Indigo discussed how she was introverted and was in her room a lot and it wasn't until the fall 2021 semester where she really began to meet new people and make friends. In the beginning days of her quarantine, Indigo stated, "I hated it so much because it was so last minute. I was so

angry. I was looking forward to so many things and my plans got cancelled all because somebody didn't take it [COVID-19 protocols] seriously." Although Indigo stated she was angry about being placed in quarantine, she also discussed how she related to other people in her life during this time. "I felt like I was bothering other people [asking for things] because I knew my friends were busier than I was."

River described how she had a friend who was placed into quarantine around the same time made a joke out of the situation. "It was definitely a learning experience for both of us. I remember the first night we compared rooms, so while we FaceTimed, we walked around and showed each other what the room was like." River, an RA in one of the residence halls talked about her range of emotions stating:

I was mainly worried about the side effects; I know people have side effects differently. Another big thing I was worried about was my floor and how they were going to be because I was gone for two weeks. That's me being off my floor for two weeks and out of the building completely.

Tiffany expressed her emotions while she was in her quarantine space; "I literally cried, like I was just really upset because I know I didn't have it [COVID-19]. It was so depressing because I'm just in here [quarantine space]." Tiffany shared this about her experience in quarantine.

I don't wish this on anyone, I do not want to go through that again. You don't know [what it's like] until you're there by yourself. It may not seem like a big deal, but it is because it's like no social interaction and not being able to see people physically. I was thinking am I going to talk to them on the phone? But I was in there like a prisoner.

Once students settled into the space, they spoke about their emotional reactions to being in this space. As they spoke about the experience, they identified people and how they influenced the way they felt. Tiffany shared what her first couple days were like in quarantine.

I was just in total shock. I was thinking this is how I'm spending my Friday night because I wanted to be out, and I was just looking at my friends snapchats while they were having fun and I'm here by myself. I was so upset.

While Tiffany talked about how she saw her friends having fun through social media, she talked about a conversation she had with her mother.

I was on the phone with my mom for like two hours to calm down. I was getting a headache and she believed that I was crying a lot. She thought I would start developing symptoms of COVID [-19]. So, I was like okay, I'm going to calm down, but it was hard.

Claire also stated that she contacted her mom the first time she had to be placed in quarantine.

The first person I contacted was my mom and she was crying because she thought I had COVID [-19], and I was like no, it's just a precaution. And she was saying that I should have stayed home and done online classes.

Tiffany shared that she did have some friends come check on her while she was in quarantine.

They did check up on me, but they have to do their own stuff to do and still have their own social life. It was fun when they came but it was also a reminder that I was still there.

Out of the four participants, Claire was the only one who had to be placed into quarantine twice. "The first time I was really nervous because I didn't know where I was going, and it was dark when they took me." When she got off the phone with her mom, that's when Claire began to realize that she was in quarantine.

It was crazy because, to me, just the thought of being in isolation was kind of like well, we already don't have roommates, so I was thinking it was just going to be the same thing, just add a bathroom. But it wasn't, it wasn't at all. It was worse. It was just you and your thoughts.

Testing positive required Claire to quarantine for a second time and made the experience for her different.

When I got out [the first time], I could finally practice [for athletics]. And then I got a tonsil infection and then I also got COVID [-19] like two weeks later. So, I was back in quarantine. I was just trying to eat the food they [the institution] gave me instead of ordering out as much because I didn't want anyone to get it [COVID-19], even though they would drop it off and then walk away. I didn't want anyone to get it and have it been my fault.

Claire also talked about how she felt during this second time in the quarantine housing.

I was having anxiety about my grades and being behind and not having the experience that I wanted. I got out of quarantine the first time and then put right back into quarantine and it just made everything ten times worse. I had people to talk to but at the same time, there's only so much time for someone to talk to you while you're in quarantine because they have things to do. It was a very lonely experience.

Support students received during isolation and quarantine

When participants were asked to speak about their time in isolation and quarantine they were encouraged to share where they sought support and from whom. This helped to understand how they were able to cope during this experience. This is broken in to two sections the support

they received and who they received it from, and the strategies they used to cope during this experience.

Support

When asked to talk about their experiences in quarantine each of the participants shared the support they received. They identified receiving support from family, friends, social media, or through the institution.

Family. All four participants stated that they had a family member they turned to for support when they were placed in their quarantine space. Claire and Indigo said that the first person they called when they were placed into the space were their mothers; and Indigo shared “My mom and I are really close, so I was crying when I called her because it just didn’t feel right.” When Claire was placed into quarantine, she talked about her mother and her brother. Her brother also goes to the same institution and was dealing with grief at the same time with her.

My great grandfather passed away while I was in quarantine. And it was two days before I got out of quarantine and my mom called me, wanting me to come home and visit and I couldn’t. They had the funeral [for the family member] right before I was supposed to get out of quarantine. My mom had to convince the whole family to push back the funerals so I could attend. It was really hard because I was in isolation with no one to talk to, except my mom, and I didn’t want to talk to [my brother] because it’s hard to talk to someone when you’re both going through the same thing.

River and Tiffany spoke about talking with their parents during their experience and the interactions they had. River stated,

I contacted my parents because it was getting close to fall break and that was the weekend I was going to go home. I remember calling them saying I couldn’t go home. I

remember my mom asking me a lot of questions, and then my dad has a very “it is what it is” attitude so he was like there’s nothing you can do except start packing.

Tiffany stated that she called both of her parents. “I called my mom and dad [when I had to quarantine] because I didn’t know how to process it [the situation]”.

Indigo described her mom’s initial reaction to her being placed in quarantine and then how they supported her,

I called my mom and told her. I definitely feel like she blamed me for the situation, and she assumed that I didn’t take it seriously but, you know, it’s not really one person’s fault, and she just assumed that I wasn’t wearing my mask, I wasn’t taking precautions or disinfecting things; she assumed I was out doing whatever I wanted and that was definitely not the case. But I think she was more upset at the fact that I couldn’t come home when we had already paid for me to go home.

Although Indigo and her mother had a moment where they argued, Indigo went on to share, “My mother and my friend actually helped but definitely my mother. She brought me food and paid for it but also my sister was always there for me when I needed someone to talk to.” Indigo was another participant that was experiencing grief when she was placed into quarantine.

I really wanted to stay in contact with my mom because my cousin had passed away like a month before I went into quarantine. So, I had a lot of time on my hands to think about that, and I kind of pushed my friends away for a while, so I was only talking to my mother.

These participants turned to family first to receive support as they entered and stayed in their quarantine housing.

Friends. All four participants shared that they had a great support system of friends or peers to help get them through their quarantine period. They described how they stayed in touch with their friends, how these people brought them things, and overall, how they provided the morale boost they needed.

The support looked somewhat different for each participant. Out of the four participants, River was the only participant who was the oldest and had an established support group from her friends. Indigo talked about how she was very introverted her first year on campus because the pandemic was still a very new phenomenon. “I definitely only had like two friends but anyone who knows me knew that I was definitely in my room a lot.” Indigo, who was now in her second year on campus, stated that she still needs to apply herself but shared that she had a friend who supported her during that time. “My friend brought me things and made the most time for me out of my other friends, so I felt like I connected with her a lot and even a lot after I got out of quarantine.” Indigo also described what she learned about her friends during her time in quarantine.

I definitely saw people that were actually there for me and the people that didn’t have time for me. So, it was like, I definitely wanted to be with the people that were mentally and emotionally trying to keep me from being down, so I gravitated towards them a lot more than I did before quarantine. My friend is actually the reason I am more social now, and she would stop whatever she was doing just to talk to me, so that was really nice.

Tiffany, a sophomore, gave special recognition to her support system during the interview.

Shout out to my friends because when I didn’t have water, my friends gave me water, and it was just the little things. My friends picked up McDonald’s for me so I could eat

because I wasn't really eating during the day, and I was really only talking to them through the door [when they dropped things off] because my parents couldn't be there.

River, an RA on campus, had support from co-workers because she had known them before the start of the academic year and discussed how the staff she was on supported her while she was in quarantine.

My bosses were just checking in and the same thing with my co-workers. And then I remember I got a card sent to me, like they had filled out a little get-well card and it was delivered to me.

With Claire being an athlete, and being quarantined twice, she had some teammates who reached out to her.

There were six of us who were all working out together, so we had a group chat and would always check up on each other. If someone needed food, we would all pitch in or send them food to their space. We were able to help each other with that. Me and another girl were both in the same major, so we were able to help each other on the days we missed class and went through the notes the professor sent us.

The participants described how the friends really helped ease the time they had in quarantine. For some they identified how this changed the relationships, some growing stronger and others weakening.

Institution. Each participant shared that they received support from the institution. All four participants shared that their professors reached out in one way or another and were accommodating to their academic needs. All participants stated that they reached out to their professors to make them aware they would not be in class.

Each participant described how they reached out to let their instructors know they would not be in person. Tiffany shared how she let her professors know she would be missing classes. “My professors were real understanding. One of my professors contacted me before I could contact her because human services told her I was in quarantine.” Tiffany did state that she contacted her professors just in case there was miscommunication. “I didn’t want them to think I wasn’t showing up to class on purpose.” Indigo talked about her process when it came to her academics when she had to quarantine. “I emailed them [professors] actually, like as soon as they [the health clinic] called me and told me.” River described her experience in letting her instructors know what was happening, “I emailed them [my professors] because I wasn’t sure exactly how long the process took because I knew the university would email professors.” She discussed how her professors handled her being out of class for a couple weeks.

They told me they hoped I felt okay, to update them if I needed anything. They said to let them know if I needed any extensions for any of the assignments or if I had any extra questions about the assignments and to just reach out to them. In addition to reaching out to let their instructors know they were in quarantine; the participants also spoke about the support these instructors offered. Indigo discussed how she imagined her professors would react when she was in quarantine. “I was scared my teachers thought I was just playing around when I told them I wouldn’t be in class, and so I really tried to communicate with them that I wasn’t faking.” She went on to describe a gesture one of her professors did for her. “My teacher gave me their number so I could call them about the assignments or the study guides, or to talk about the homework assignments.” Tiffany also expressed how some professors went the extra mile to ensure she was still getting the education she needed. “My professors were understanding, and they would set up Zoom links for me to join, even though I wasn’t there in person so I could

listen to lectures.” Claire stated that her professors checked in with her. “My professors checked up on me. I think one of my professors checked in with me and made sure everything was okay outside of my classes.”

Claire expressed that she was worried about some of her professors not being as accommodating as others, and in some instances, that was the case.

I had an English professor who was a little more understanding than my other professors but with my other professors, I would have an exam each time I got out of quarantine and would tell them I just got out of quarantine, can I have a couple days to review with you because I wasn't in class? But they would say it's in the syllabus and then have someone administer my test.

Although Claire struggled with some professors not being as accommodating, she did have a couple who checked in with her.

For some of my classes, they [the professors] emailed me every day with what we went over in class. Some professors I would just email, and they would respond with check [the online portal] because everything we are talking about is on there.

While Indigo had the support from her faculty, she described her frustrations with the institution.

I don't feel like they [the institution] did the best that they could do to support me.

Whenever someone did reach out, it was only one person checking up on me. We're supposed to be like an [institutional] family, and I did not feel like family. They were only supportive in the fact that I wasn't leaving my room and staying put. That's why I feel like they kept in contact with me.

Although Tiffany had some of her professors reach out to her, she stated that was the only support she felt like she received. “As far as checking in, nobody [else from the institution] reached out to me, like at all. It felt like they just placed me in there, and that was it.”

Strategies

The participants were asked to share how they managed their time in quarantine, and they spoke about the strategies they utilized to help them during that time. Each participant shared that the first couple days were more about adjusting to the reality they were placed in a quarantine space. During their time, they found ways to cope with their emotions and stressors while they were there. Along with this they spoke about how they kept up with their academics.

Managing coursework. As the participants spoke about their time in isolation and quarantine, they identified how important their studies were. They had to continue to make progress and manage their coursework. Indigo, a second-year psychology major, discussed in this chapter how she reached out to her faculty to stay updated on her course work. While she was in quarantine, after comprehending that she would be there for a while, she discussed what she did to keep herself calm and collected. “I tried to keep myself on a schedule, which wasn’t really working because it was repetitive, but I still tried to stick to it.” Indigo also talked about her course work being done online. “A lot of my assignments were online, so I was definitely tempted to look stuff up online rather than learn by myself, but I wanted to get a guaranteed ‘A,’ knowing I could do it myself.”

River, a fourth year Spanish and Hispanic studies major, talked about although she can be introverted, she did reach out to her faculty, and multiple professors were understanding and asked if she needed extensions. Although River was able to reach out to faculty, she talked about some other things she had to manage. “For the most part, I was just bored. I remember trying to

ask faculty to zoom me in so I could watch lectures.” River also talked about how her professors reached out to her when she was placed into quarantine. “I had a class in person, part of it was online but most of it was in person. When I reached out, my professor was just like well, here’s the assignments and just send them in when you can.” While in quarantine, River stated that she found a place in the space that caused the least number of distractions. “There wasn’t a lot of furniture, but I just sat at the table that was there and did everything there because it was the easiest.”

Claire, a pre-med major was quarantined twice in her first semester of college. Being a student-athlete and being around her teammates all the time, she had a built-in group for support. However, Claire had the experience of being quarantined twice in the same semester and talked about how she fell so far behind in one of her classes that she didn’t know she had the option to drop the class. Claire talked about how she felt nervous about missing one of her classes.

My biggest worry would be missing classes because I’m already bad at online classes and so trying to stay focused for that long and being able to stay in front of a computer for so long stressed me out. I was worried about my in-person classes so I would have to teach myself all the stuff I was missing in class. I’m trying to learn without getting distracted. Well, there was nothing to do but homework [while I was in quarantine] so that’s what I did.

Claire missed a lot of her first semester because she was in quarantine twice and talked about how the second time she was in quarantine, she was sick, and trying to navigate classes while she was sick was difficult.

I had a bad tonsil infection, so I was missing a lot of my in-person classes because if you were feeling sick, you weren’t supposed to come to class. Then finals came around and it

was a little rough because I spent a lot of time in quarantine, and my classes were moving at a faster pace, so I tried checking [the online portal] for help every day.

Tiffany, a second-year education major talked about how she stayed engaged with her academics while she was in quarantine, and had a professor give her their number so she could call with questions.

Even though I was in quarantine, I read a lot because the assignments didn't stop. When I got the call, I grabbed my textbooks because I knew I was going to be doing homework, but it happened so fast when I was grabbing stuff [to go to my space].

Although Tiffany said she had a plan, she did find some difficulty with her routine.

I didn't really feel like getting up to do homework. You know how people have routines? I would wake up to just sit. So, I had to try and get up and be productive and still do my homework because all this schoolwork was flowing. We weren't in syllabus week anymore. I had all this time [to do homework], but I wasn't in the right headspace to do it.

Coping Strategies. The participants talked about their strategies and things they did while they were in quarantine that was unrelated to doing their academic work. They shared examples of things they did to pass the time like learning new hobbies, trying out new activities, developing new skills, and engaging on various social media platforms as well as watching movies and TV. Tiffany talked about how she did catch up on shows and what she did to make the time go by. "I maintained contact with people and chatted with them. I was on social media a lot because I had nothing else to do." Tiffany did talk about how she talked to her friends a lot and talked to her mom while she was in quarantine.

River maintained contact with people while in quarantine, and she tried to pick up a new hobby.

I tried to learn how to knit, not crochet. Every time I said crochet to my grandmother, she would say with needles or hooks? I laughed about it because I really didn't know.

Anyway, I failed terribly. And I also just caught up on shows and did homework, because there was nothing else to do.

River wasn't the only one who caught up on shows and homework. Claire also had some routines she did while she was in quarantine.

One of my friends was friends with my brother and they live together, so they would

FaceTime me and call me to check up on me every day, even two or three times a day.

They called just to make sure I had someone to talk to. I would watch Netflix or watch a movie, and then of course, do my homework, because there wasn't much else I could do.

With Claire being a student-athlete, she is used to a routine and doing workouts with her teammates. She talked about how she had to learn to adjust to that temporary change of using her quarantine space as a workout space. "I didn't want to fall behind on my workouts so I would try and do what I could to stay in shape because I was worried I would be out of shape when I returned."

Each participant talked about how they had different activities to keep them busy. Indigo had a few different coping strategies that she used while she was in quarantine.

TikTok. I did not know how to do those videos or had even had it downloaded on my phone but now I definitely slay some TikTok videos. I learned a lot of the dances, whether they were short or long.

Indigo went on to talk about other things she learned while she was in quarantine to help in taking her mind off being there. “I downloaded a lot of games on my phone. You know how you are playing a game and an ad pops up? I downloaded a bunch of those, but they were boring after a while.” Indigo also stated that her social media use increased while she was in quarantine as well. When asked if there was anything else she did to keep herself busy, she stated:

I used my computer, I watched a lot of Disney Plus and Netflix, definitely TikTok. I played a lot of Call of Duty on my phone. I also watched a lot of movies. I tend to watch movies based on how I’m feeling. If I’m feeling anxious, I would watch a movie related to that. I also stayed in contact with my mother and other people through social media.

Sense of Belonging. People close to the students that helped them shape their sense of belonging were identified by participants as helping them develop strategies for coping in this new and temporary environment. All participants shared that their sense of belonging with the institution was altered when they were in quarantine. Participants were asked to define what sense of belonging meant and then how it was impacted while they were in isolation and quarantine.

Tiffany shared this definition: “To me it means campus community.” River, having the most time on campus and working in the residence halls defined it as: “I think it’s more of do you feel accepted? Not necessarily do you fit in but are you accepted, are you able to be part of the community? Are you able to make connections with others?” When asked again what sense of belonging meant to her, Claire couldn’t give an answer. “I didn’t feel part of anything [last year], so I think I’m still figuring that out. I have friends now, and people outside of athletics, so I think that is helping.” Indigo defined it in this way; “Being comfortable, being secure, and

having someone to talk to; feeling as if I belong is really feeling like a community and having a community that interacts.”

Participants were then asked to talk about the impact this experience had on their personal sense of belonging. Tiffany as a first-year student in isolation shared what it was like while she was in quarantine. “I didn’t feel like I was part of [the institution] at that time because I was away from everything. It was the beginning of the year, so all of the activities were happening, and I was missing them.” Claire shared how her sense of belonging was impacted during her first year on campus. “I was in quarantine basically all of my first semester here, so I didn’t really have any friends besides a few people on my team.” Indigo shared,

I wasn’t doing a lot before I had to quarantine that made me feel involved. I just felt like I was just going here. While I was in quarantine, I definitely didn’t feel like I belonged. I didn’t want to go here, and sometimes I still feel like I don’t belong.

When asked what sense of belonging meant to Indigo, she had some insight on what that statement meant to her. With River being on campus the longest and before the pandemic started, she shared how she felt before the pandemic and after. “I had a solid friend group, and I was involved in a lot of things. I could go to the dining hall and be able to just sit down and eat with people.” When asked how the pandemic has affected her sense of belonging, River shared, “When I had to quarantine, I just felt like I was doing my part for the community instead of being part of it.”

Participant Recommendations

In conducting this study about the student experience, it was important to give them space to share recommendations for improving this process for future students. It is a new phenomenon for campuses and taking time to understand the student’s individual reality was

necessary in building trust. And, while this section does not fit under the research questions that guided this study it was crucial to hear their recommendations as part of the analysis of this research. Although they were able to receive support from friends and family, there were some recommendations they had for the institution to improve the experience. These recommendations included ways to improve the living situation, the academic experience, mental health, and sense of belonging while in isolation and quarantine.

Living Situations

When asked to talk about improvements the participants spoke about the living situation, they were placed in. Participants addressed the condition of the space as well as food. In transitioning in and out of the spaces, participants talked about improvements that would help with this experience. Claire stated:

Just making sure the room is cleaned before and after each use. They should have Lysol or wipes in the space because even though I brought my own, I don't know if I would trust the university to do it because I didn't see any cleaning products.

Tiffany shared this in reference to transitioning out quarantine housing:

The necessities that they provided were not up to par. They gave me a little bar of soap and a towel and thank goodness I brought my own things to use. The transportation was all over the place. My release day was a mess because I waited two hours for someone to pick me up and take me back. There was someone who said they would send someone shortly and I think they forgot about me. I finally called one of my friends and asked if they could come get me and take me back to my room. Not everyone has someone they can call to pick them up.

Those placed in quarantine in quarantine were provided meals by the Housing Department. River, in talking about her experience, addressed the issue of food and water:

I think one of the main things [the institution could have done better] was with the food delivery. We were limited on how many beverages you could get for the day and I'm someone who drinks a lot of water. So being limited to just three or four water bottles a day was a little weird to me.

Claire talked about how the institution did better with the meal delivery service. "I like how they had different options for food, especially for people with dietary restrictions because that was one of the first things I was worried about." River did share she appreciated how trash was managed in quarantine. "The institution had trash cans and gave you multiple bags so you could leave it outside for them [the staff] to pick up."

Personal Well-Being

As the students spent time in quarantine it is natural to feel isolated and alone. This can have an impact on students. As students shared these experiences they were asked to talk about the impact as well as share their recommendations. Indigo, who had to go into quarantine in the fall of her second year shared her perspective and how they could have handled students who were placed in quarantine.

I don't think they handled it [the situation] well at all. They could do Zoom calls to check in with people every day because there are a lot of people in isolation who could have negative thoughts or anything of that nature and I feel like they [the institution] didn't take that into consideration. I know we have to quarantine but at the same time, make sure we are okay mentally. Not just a phone call but face to face because you know how someone's feeling just by looking in their eyes.

This was a year into the process of quarantining at the institution, and a year into the student experience being very different in terms of masking, social distancing, and other social conditions impacting the way individuals engage. Indigo also shared a personal epiphany she had while she was in the space.

It was a great learning experience. I don't want anyone to go through that, but I felt like before that time, I took life for granted. Now, I get out more, socialize more, and just get a better sense of what I want to do with my time.

Academics

Participants spoke about their communication with faculty regarding academics and the recommendations they had that helped them would help improve the experience for others while in the quarantine space. Indigo was grateful that some of their communication was taken care of and stated,

Well, actually, they informed my teachers, and my teachers just said if I miss any assignments, then to let them know and to work with them.

Claire had a couple suggestions because she was the only one that had to quarantine twice during her first year.

I felt like the professors should have a Zoom open as well while the class is going on. Have the professor on Zoom so that the people who are in isolation or quarantine have the ability to hear the professor. I feel like it's not that hard to email a Zoom link. And while the professor is lecturing, for the people who have to Zoom in, have the professor reach out to the online people and make sure they understand. I feel like that should have been an option, but it wasn't.

Claire also shared that she had some issues with virtual connection while trying to do classes. “The Wi-Fi was not good at all. I had to use my hot spot the entire time.”

Mental Health

The participants identified mental health as an area that was overlooked or not considered from their perspective and emphasized how important that was to their experience. They identified that giving students access to mental health services while in quarantine would have helped them during the experience. River stated that she was never informed about a mental health service or told to reach out in case she started to feel overwhelmed by the experience.

The institution these participants attended provided students with mental health days throughout the semester. These were designed to be a break for everyone with no classes or meetings scheduled for the students. Tiffany spoke of these mental health days stating,

The mental health days that we had should stay. We’re in college, we have all this schoolwork, some students have to work, and some students play sports. When the wellness days were implemented, we had everyone telling us to take time for ourselves, which having classes off in the middle of the week was nice, but we still had all this homework to do and some of us still had to work our days off from class. It’s like, should I do schoolwork first or put my mental health first? How do we choose between the two if we try to stay afloat?

The participants in this study identified the need to make improvements to the process and experience sharing recommendations to improve the experience of quarantining from various perspectives including the housing, food, academic support, and attention to mental health.

Summary

Chapter five was the analysis of the research questions guiding this study. One can see how the participants coped with the situation they were placed in and what strategies and support they utilized while in quarantine. One can also see the recommendations each participant provided and how their sense of belonging to the institution was impacted. This aids in understanding these unique experiences and provides insight into ways we can manage future situations like this. In chapter six, a discussion of the narratives and analysis will be discussed along with recommendations for dealing with similar situations in the future.

CHAPTER VI

Discussion

Chapter six presents the discussion of the findings from the study on college students' quarantine and isolation experiences. Suggestions for faculty, staff, student affairs professionals, and fellow and future students will be provided to make meaning of the participants' experiences while being quarantined in college during a global pandemic. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the quarantine and isolation experiences of college students and how these students coped with moving to an isolation location to prevent the spread of COVID-19, what resources were these students being provided and utilized, and what kind of support system they had on a mid-sized midwestern collegiate campus. With these stories, we can better understand what other students experience during quarantine and isolation during a pandemic. The chapter includes implications and suggestions for future research.

Discussion

This discussion is broken up into two sections, talking about the student experience of quarantine and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, and support for students in quarantine and isolation.

Student Experiences of Isolation/Quarantine during the COVID-19 Pandemic

This study looked at the quarantine and isolation experiences of four participants. Even though only one of the four participants tested positive for COVID-19, all four participants were required to quarantine because they had come into close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. This study looked at how participants described their experiences. They spoke about having a difficult time adjusting to the new space, being taken away from their daily routines, and having support but not from individuals at the institution.

The research related to students' quarantine and isolation experiences is limited but shows that they all lacked some sense of belonging. Examining these quarantine and isolation experiences through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) along with Schlossberg's (1984) theory of transition provides a more in-depth understanding of the participants reactions to these quarantine experiences.

Adjusting to New Space. Masking University, in the summer of 2020 had to make difficult decisions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It began with the announcement that the 2020-2021 academic year would not allow roommates, and only offered single rooms in the residence halls, most events would take place online, and a lot of classes were transitioning online as well. According to Schlossberg (1984) transitions can be anticipated or unanticipated. For most of the participants in this study starting college during the pandemic was unanticipated and going to quarantine was even more of an unanticipated event. This event is better understood by looking at Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs which works toward self-actualization. His theory provides information about how there are certain needs individuals need to have to progress toward that highest level and when they are not met it makes it difficult to move up the pyramid.

These participants were living in single rooms on their college campus in an effort by the institution to prevent the spread of the virus. Although they were in college during the COVID-19 pandemic, many students likely never imagined being so isolated and then having to quarantine as part of the experience. The participants in this study shared these experiences and described how they handled being moved to a new space on campus away from the comfort of their own rooms. Maslow (1943) identified in tier one that the basic need must be addressed first and those include food, water, and shelter. Often, college students living in the residence halls

have these needs met, with housing that they had input in to selecting and access to dining centers throughout the day at their convenience. The participants in this study had those basic needs met, even in moving to quarantine but to the participants in this study they were different and new and the transition to them impacted their identity, where they received support and how to manage through the experience. The participants settled into these spaces with different ranges of emotions and commented that the space they were provided was not what they had anticipated it would be like. Thus, in their perception their basic foundational needs were not met. This impacts their ability to move up this hierarchy to safety and then sense of belonging.

The other part of Maslow's (1943) base is food and water. Participants received three meals that were delivered at the beginning of the day from a menu they could select from. A couple of the participants had additional food delivered to their spaces from their friends because the food from the institution was either cold or not what they wanted to eat from the menu. This part of their experience for the most part was not pleasant. On top of not being satisfied with the food they were also left to eat alone, without the benefit of sharing a meal with a friend. Being isolated and not having the basics provided from their perspective was a situation they saw themselves having no control over. This impacted their transition to the space and how they adapted while in it. This had an effect on how they functioned in other areas.

As each participant described the new space they were moved to, the reactions were about the location of the space, the cleanliness of the space, and just the fact that they had to move. This all contributed to the participants feeling a lack of security, which relates to the second tier of Maslow's (1943) theory that relates to safety and security. For a couple of participants their quarantine came early in the semester where they were still finding their way on campus and then they are put in what many considered a remote or secluded building away

from all their comforts, and for others it was the lack of control and ability to come and go as they pleased. El Zein et al. (2019) described how individuals who experience situations like this can lead to an increase in anxiety. Isolation and loneliness can create a sense of insecurity, and this coupled with their questioning the physical environment and the quality of the food they are receiving means they have almost no chance of hitting Maslow's third tier which is sense of belonging. The third tier can only be met with the first two tiers are adequately met, and this led the individuals in this study to feeling disconnected from others. McMillan and Chavis' (1986) sense of community theory discusses "how members matter to one another, and how their needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). There are two key components that go together for this theory, integration, and fulfillment, meaning that when members needs are met, they are more likely to feel accepted by the group (McMillan & Chavis, 1896). With these four participants, some of their basic needs were not met by the institution, such as not being provided cleaning supplies to sanitize the space or provided towels and linens when they took a shower or wanted to sleep on the bed. They also experienced not receiving enough bottled water for the day, only being provided three to four water bottles each day. These experiences left the participants feeling that they were less important to the institution, for example the one student who waited for a while for someone to pick her up at the end of her quarantine experience and finally she called a friend to come help her move back to her permanent space. These types of experiences impact how they feel the institution viewed them.

Being placed in quarantine takes away that connectedness that students are trying to maintain while being on campus. These situations described: moving to an unknown space, not having more food options, feeling the space was unclean or unsafe, being disconnected from

their friends, not having someone reaching out to them from the institution left the participants feeling as if they were not part of the campus community.

According to Kouros et al., (2016) individuals who come to college may show an increase in loneliness or isolation because they don't have someone they are familiar with around them constantly anymore. The participants in this study experienced nights where they were unable to sleep and struggled with cognitive functioning because they were in spaces they were not familiar with. This study showed that the participants experienced an increase in loneliness while being in the quarantine spaces, because they were isolated from new friends or teammates, forced to have no contact other than through technology, they were removed from in-person learning environments, and overall removed from the college experience they wanted. A study conducted by Lee et al. found that increased loneliness can lead to negative health consequences, such as poorer sleep and cognitive impairment (2019); all things the participants in this study identified as having happened to them during quarantine.

Support for students during quarantine and isolation

This study found that what the participants needed was more direct communication when they were being moved to the space. Navarro et al.'s (2020) study identified that one of the most important strategies for managing a crisis was communication. Although the communication for each participant was different on how they had to move to their quarantine space, the content discussed that communication could have been clearer and more direct on how the process of moving to the space, and the expectations of being in quarantine.

The participants in this study stated that communication should have been handled better when being placed in quarantine, the cleanliness of the spaces needed to be improved, and having someone check in with these students would have helped their mental health. Students

were able to keep in contact with their friends and family. They also spoke about wanting others at the institution to reach out and check on them, identifying that if felt like they were not being cared for by anyone at their college. These participants shared that the only reason that staff checked in with them was to make sure they weren't leaving their quarantine spaces. Pre-COVID-19 pandemic, these students had access to different resources on campus to receive support, whether it be with counseling centers, career services, dining, residence halls, tutoring services or writing centers; and these services are provided to make sure students feel supported. When a student was placed in quarantine their perception was that they no longer had access to these resources. The participants in this study stated that they received support from individuals outside of the institution to help them get through this transitional and difficult time. From the literature, the key to coping with this type of stress is support, whether it comes from friends, relationships, or even communities (Evans et al., 2010). One example of limited support from the institution is all four of these participants reached out to their faculty members alerting them they were going to be missing class because they were in quarantine, and the responses from the faculty mainly directed the students to the online portals for information. This led to the students becoming somewhat apathetic during their quarantine because they did not feel like anyone was checking in on them including faculty checking on course work and course content items.

Schlossberg's (1984) theory discusses how the need for acceptance and comfort is crucial during transitional stages because without the support from all areas, the individual may struggle during that change. Being in quarantine took away being physically connected on campus for these participants and the lack of support they received from the institution also shifted. However, these students were able to maintain contact with their friends and family who they identified as being most supportive of them through this difficult time. These participants shared

that they would call or facetime their families each day, so they had someone to talk to. Some of them shared that their families sent them food to their rooms, so they didn't have to worry about these basic needs,

Each of the participants could speak about people who were offering support, such as teammates, classmates, and friends at the institution. While this was happening, they also explained that they were experiencing challenges with zooming in to classes and not having many people at the institution check in on them as they would have expected. Schlossberg (1984) explained that it only takes one person for an individual to feel accepted and find support. The participants in this study had people, but they did not include university officials. They did hear from faculty, but it was student initiated and typically through email. What the participants identified missing was having someone from the institution continuously try to reach out and check in with them.

Schlossberg (1984) provided that coping strategies in individuals in the transition were helpful in managing the transition. All four participants shared that they tried to find ways to distract them from being in these less-than-ideal spaces. Social media was a huge influence on these participants and how they were able to keep themselves distracted. TikTok, an increasingly popular social media platform, was amongst one of the most used platforms these participants turned to. One participant had not even had TikTok downloaded on her phone until she was placed into quarantine, and stated she learned many dances from being on the app so much during her time. According to Jenson et al. (2019), technology is a popular way that individuals use to make up for deficits in social skills, and they are becoming more interested in the online interaction. Although these participants stated they used technology to keep up with schoolwork and find ways to distract themselves, they all needed that social interaction, even if it was from

social media while being isolated from others for so long. One participant identified as being an introverted person; however, after being in quarantine, she had this self-realization that she needed to be around people and needed to put herself out there to be around other individuals.

Social media and streaming platforms were heavily used while these participants were in quarantine, however, was not the sole distraction, as one shared that she tried to learn how to knit during her time there. Schlossberg (1984) identifies how individuals can modify their situations after transition, however, these participants had almost no control over their situation when told to quarantine. This study showed that they were placed in a space that everyone who either tested positive or was exposed to COVID-19 and were just put there until their end date arrived to leave. The transition to these spaces was difficult for these participants, and the COVID-19 pandemic forced institutions and individuals to find new ways to cope with their situations.

Implications

As faculty, administration, and fellow students in colleges continue to navigate through this COVID-19 pandemic, it is crucial that they continue to assess their processes for supporting students, especially those requiring isolation. Because this is a new experience it is important to note that some processes changed each semester as information was gained about the spread and means of protection for the student body. That being said, as recommendations are made based on this research for institutions, they may be less applicable the further from the time of the study one gets. These recommendations are broken down for professionals in various units across the college campus.

Residential Life Professionals

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is still a relatively new phenomenon with research continuing to grow, one of the areas that will continue to be the most affected are those in

housing and dining. When the participants from this study were required to move, they shared that they felt unprepared for this experience. Residential life staff need to provide more in-depth and direct communication to students on how they will be moved to their quarantine space. This should begin before the student even needs to move to quarantine. Students could be provided with updates and information about what will happen if they test positive for COVID-19 and need to be isolated because of direct contact and they are not vaccinated. Once a student finds out they must move to quarantine, they should be contacted by phone, if possible; then instructed on what need to happen. This should be followed up with an email that details what is provided in the quarantine space, a packing list of items for the student to take with them during that time, as well as tips for a smooth transition. The more specific the communication for the student the better. A follow-up phone call or email would also be helpful pre-move to again provide an opportunity for questions to get answered.

This research also provided evidence of the lack of resources students were provided with while they were in quarantine. Although participants stated they received kits with hand sanitizer and a thermometer before they were told to move, care packages to help the students through this difficult transition need to be considered. Residential life staff can create and provide care packages for students that includes more than just a thermometer. While budgets remain tight at most institutions developing a care package type welcome basket in the room could boost the spirit of the individual. These packages could include things like snacks, stress balls, and a stuffed mascot of the institution. It would also be nice to include a set of cleaning supplies in the care package in case the student wanted to do a little extra wiping down of services as they move in, while they are there, or as they prepare to exit. Things like dish soap, disinfecting wipes, soap, dust cloths, and so on would be useful. The care packages could also have notes written

by residence life staff or students working with residence life to let them know they are supported, and they matter.

Staffing of this community also needs to be taken into consideration. When the pandemic began, it was considered a temporary situation but over time it has become a more permanent function of the department. In an ideal world, a housing and dining office would designate one to two people who would solely be responsible for this entire process, so the student has a consistent contact person throughout the process. Perhaps a professional staff member as well as a student resident assistant type person. These could be people who help with the preparation, move, and check on the student while they are in quarantine, as well as the follow-up post quarantine. They could make referrals as needed. For example, if a student is struggling with their mental health in quarantine, the staff member could quickly work to get them connected with a virtual counselor. If they are struggling with a course, the staff member could connect them with faculty or other academic supports during the time. They could also develop weekly virtual activities to keep students engaged. Activities like trivia, watch parties, or so on. It was evident that having someone check on them from the institution would have made a huge difference to the participants of this study.

This research showed that students need face-to-face interaction, even if it is through Zoom or another online platform, and providing an individual designated for these concerns should be considered so these students do not feel disconnected. This research stated that check-ins and daily interaction would have made participants feel better about the situation. This research has shown that these student's sense of belonging was impacted while they were in quarantine and providing online events to allow for face-to-face interaction is imperative to keep these students engaged through campus departments. Residence life staff could work with other

offices and departments on campus including different student leaders to coordinate activities or support for these students, as well as others on campus through Zoom or other online platforms. Consent and confidentiality may be a concern with students and administrators about keeping those in quarantine confidential but opening events up to anyone on campus would allow them to feel like they are more a part of the community.

Faculty

Faculty members on college campuses during the pandemic are in a unique position to balance teaching to students that go in quarantine and students that are in-person for classes. While technology makes it easier to make learning more accessible, it also has its challenges. What this research has shed light on is the importance of communication. Training for faculty on how to develop hybrid classrooms would be useful so they could easily incorporate those that are not there in person. Additionally, they should be checking in on those who are not present in person to see if questions about the material or work required need to be addressed.

Providing a more intentional check-in on students who are not present in class may be intimidating to faculty who are used to students coming to them for assistance rather than being the one to make the contact. However, from this research it was evident that the students may need this additional assistance. Developing some strategies within different academic departments may be helpful. Along with this, it would be helpful to guide faculty in why this is necessary along with strategies for reaching out and conducting a check-in. The benefits of this are that both the student and faculty are left with a stronger connection, the student may not fall behind during their quarantine, and the instructors have a good idea of the progress being made by the student.

Academic Advisors

Across all institutions, students are assigned or able to pick academic advisors to help guide them through their academic journey. Academic advisors meet with these students at least once a semester, however, it may be more beneficial for these professionals to have more interaction with these students outside of assisting them with their class schedules. Having academic advisors stay up to date about their student advisees who are placed in quarantine and isolation would be a great way to keep these professionals in the loop. These professionals can reach out to students who are in quarantine and check-in with them to assist with any questions they may have about their classes for next semester, or, if they have any questions about their classes in general. This study found that academics were a major concern for the participants, and one of the top three concerns at the institution. It would be helpful to guide academic advisors in these strategies, and the benefit would be building a stronger connection with these students.

Mental Health Resources & Health Resources

It's no secret that research has shown mental health concerns are increasing specifically in college students (Cohen et al., 2020). Telecounseling became an online resource that grew widely popular to those who were unable to meet with individuals in person (Jenson et al., 2019). Due to COVID-19, mental health concerns in college students grew exponentially, and placing students into quarantine spaces showed that these students experienced stress and anxiety during their time, and even after they left the space. The students in this study were provided a packet with resources but were never talked to about a mental health resource they could utilize if needed. Staff and faculty at colleges need to be aware that these students were being taken away

from their daily routines, and this was not a two-week vacation for them: this was like prison for them and having someone to talk to could have made their situation better.

The participants in this study felt lonely and isolated while they were in these spaces and felt an absence of networking with other people because they were by themselves. The institution these participants were studied had a counseling center that was severely understaffed ever since COVID-19 entered the United States because of the rise in mental health concerns. The waitlist to be seen by a counselor on this campus is constantly evolving. Telecounseling became increasingly popular when COVID-19 hit, and universities need to use these virtual resources for their students to feel supported. Those working in this area of the campus may need to take time to find the appropriate virtual resources they can work with to make sure they can accommodate the institution's needs. This study did not find any financial implications; however, the university offers student insurance, and looking into these virtual mental health resources can be a steppingstone into how students can meet with counselors virtually.

Most institutions have a reporting system that allows for professionals to be notified if a student is struggling in classes or outside of the classroom. The institution studied had an early alert reporting system. These early alert systems allow professionals to look up the student they have concerns about, categorize the type of concern, if the professional has conducted any outreach, and if someone could follow-up with the student. With these reporting systems, it may take student affairs professionals, faculty, advisors, and other administration to follow through with this type of support and find ways to work collaboratively.

Future Research

This research sought out to understand the quarantine and isolation experiences in college students and how these students' experienced college in a global pandemic and how they feel

supported through a pandemic while in college. To build upon this study, future research is still needed to expand our understanding of the impact of quarantine experiences in college students.

The following are recommendations for future research.

One limitation of this study was that all the participants were female. Although this was not the researcher's intent, conducting research with male participants could allow for better understanding of any differences between males' and females' quarantine experience. This study was also conducted at one institution in the United States, so looking at multiple institutions will help gain better insight and understanding for quarantine procedures, experience in quarantine, and how the institution supported students.

This study was only conducted through the perspectives of the students and their experiences of quarantine and isolation. The individuals who were involved in moving these individuals to their quarantine spaces were student affairs professionals. Although the researcher wanted to gain insight on the student experience of quarantine and isolation for students, it would be beneficial to study student affairs professionals from their perspective of quarantine and isolation and listen to what their experience was like communicating with students in quarantine. Some student affairs professionals were also part of the quarantine process for these students, so talking to these individuals and learning about their experiences would be impactful to future research.

This study was done only with residential students at a campus where students are only required to live on campus for one year. It may be worth looking at students who were required to quarantine off campus and how their experience may have been impacted. Along with this, looking at larger institutions that do not have a residential requirement would also provide an interesting study. Finally, this study looked at the quarantine experience but not the impact of

virtual learning environments not chosen by the students. Talking with students who entered college in the fall of 2020 to Spring of 2021 and hearing about their experiences of isolated learning environments, or non-anticipated virtual learning classrooms would be another area for needed research.

Conclusion

This qualitative research study utilized a narrative approach to understand quarantine and isolation experiences in college students and how these students felt supported while they were in quarantine and isolation. This research found that these quarantine and isolation experiences while going to college was less than ideal but understood the procedure for doing so. It found that students experienced a wide range of emotions while they were in quarantine and adjusting to these new and unfamiliar spaces created stressful situations to function and carry out their day-to-day activities. Specifically, students being pulled away from their normal routines to stay inside during their quarantine time period revealed to have a lasting impact even after they leave these spaces. This study also found that students need social interaction with others to create a sense of belonging on campus, and to feel like they matter to the campus community, even if they are in these spaces. This research found that students need and desire different and all forms of support to make these quarantine experiences more comfortable. Different campus partners can collaborate to ensure that all students who are in quarantine are receiving the most support while they are in these spaces but also to ensure that students feel like they matter to the campus community.

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Appendix A

Invitation to Participate

Dear Eastern Illinois University Student,

My name is Brooke Gibson, and I am conducting research on college students who were placed in quarantine or isolation. Because you either tested positive for COVID-19 or you came into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 I am looking to interview about your experiences. I am currently a graduate student pursuing a master's degree in College Student Affairs at Eastern Illinois University. This research topic is the subject of the thesis I am writing under the director of Dr. Dianne Timm. If you were placed in quarantine or isolation during the 2020-2021 academic year and during the 2021-2022 academic year and lived on - campus you are invited to participate in this research. You will be asked to complete an interview that will take roughly an hour in length. If you are interested in participating in this research project, please contact me via email (bmtoger@eiu.edu).

Thank you,

Brooke Gibson

(bmtoger@eiu.edu)

Appendix B

Follow-Up Email

Dear (Insert name here),

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research. In order to collect the necessary data, I am looking to complete an interview with you. The interview will be held according to your level of comfortability. You can choose to have an interview through Zoom or in-person. There is a demographics survey you will need to complete at this link (XYZ), and the interview questions are also attached. With your permission, these interviews will be audio recorded and after the interviews are completed and transcribed, they will be sent back to you for your review. Finally, if you are still interested in participating, an informed consent form is attached and will need to be completed before the interview takes places. All necessary documentation can be submitted via email to bmtazer@eiu.edu. I will be holding interviews on XYZ dates from X-Y times. Please let me know as soon as possible which date and time works best for you.

Best,

Brooke Gibson

bmtazer@eiu.edu

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

1. Tell me about your fall semester of 2020.
 - a. What year in school are you?
 - b. What is your major?
 - c. What was the format for each of your classes (online, in person, hybrid)?
 - d. How far from home are you?
 - e. What were the high points during the academic year?
 - i. What were the high points during quarantine/isolation?
 - f. What were the low points during the academic year?
 - i. What were the low points during quarantine/isolation?
 - g. What was your academic experience like?
 - h. Describe your social group or groups to me?
 - i. How do you spend time together?
 - ii. How was this altered last fall?
2. What did you know about the COVID-19 policies and protocols here prior to the start of the school year?
 - a. Did you know about the isolation and quarantining processes? Who informed you?
 - b. What were your thoughts about these prior to returning?
 - c. Did you know the terms “quarantine” or “isolation” before the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - i. What do you think when you hear those words now?

3. Can you tell me how your experience has been in college while being in the middle of a pandemic?
4. Tell me about finding out that you had tested positive for COVID-19 or that you had come in to contact with someone who had.
5. Tell me about how you felt when you were first placed in quarantine or isolation?

Describe that experience for me.

- a. Who was the first person you contacted when you were informed that you had to quarantine?
 - b. Who was there to offer you support and help?
 - c. Who did you inform about being placed in quarantine?
 - i. How were your instructors made aware of your quarantine?
 - d. Can you tell me what worried about when you were placed in quarantine/isolation?
 - e. Did you have to isolate or quarantine alone or with anyone else?
 - f. In college, often times we all have a group or niche that we connect with. When you were in quarantine/isolation, how did this impact your connection to them?
 - i. Did you maintain contact with them? Tell me about that.
6. How did EIU support you when you were in quarantine or isolation?
 - a. What were your meals like?
 - b. Did anyone check in with you?
 - c. How were your professors when you reached out to them about being placed in quarantine/isolation?
 - d. What kind of contact did you maintain with your faculty?

- e. Did you feel as if you belonged at EIU during this time, before or after?
 - i. What does sense of belonging mean to you?
- 7. What activities or things did you do when you were in quarantine/isolation?
- 8. Tell me about your range of emotions during your time in quarantine/isolation?
 - a. How did these emotions impact your ability to function day to day?
 - b. At any point did you experience feelings of loneliness? Describe your feelings?
 - i. If yes: what did you do to cope? Who did you reach out to? What resources were available to help you?
 - c. What could the university do to better support you?
- 9. Were you ever told about any mental health service to support you while you were in quarantine/isolation?
- 10. What are some things EIU did well when you were placed in quarantine or isolation?
 - a. What were some things that EIU struggled to do while you were in quarantine/isolation?

Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Name:
2. Year in school?
3. Where did you live on campus during the fall of 2020?
4. Were you required to quarantine/isolate because of exposure to or diagnosis of COVID-19?

Yes	No
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5. How long was your isolation? (1 week, 2 weeks, more than 2 full weeks)
6. Where are you currently living (on/off campus)