



The Economic and Academic Experiences of Students during COVID-19

By: Clare Baek and Eduardo Gonzalez

Goals of the study

- Understand challenges to remote learning among students from low-income, minority families
- Examine student engagement and learning outcomes in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis
- Identify factors that determine student motivation and achievement in distance learning
- Identify pedagogical and communication strategies most effective to address remote learning challenges
- Recommend strategies to improve remote learning outcomes in the school year 2020-21 and beyond

Methodology

- Random stratified sampling of families with children enrolled in K-12 schools administered by PLAS and LAUSD
- Stratification by neighborhood (South LA, Watts, Boyle Heights) and grade level (ES, MS, HS)
- Telephone survey (at least two attempts before replacement)
- Administered in English and Spanish to parents or legal guardian (18+)
- Response rate = 38%
- 974 total completed surveys
- Average survey duration: 17 minutes
- Fieldwork dates: July 8, 2020 – July 29, 2020

Research Questions: Challenges

RQ1: What are the challenges that families from low-income families face during distance learning?

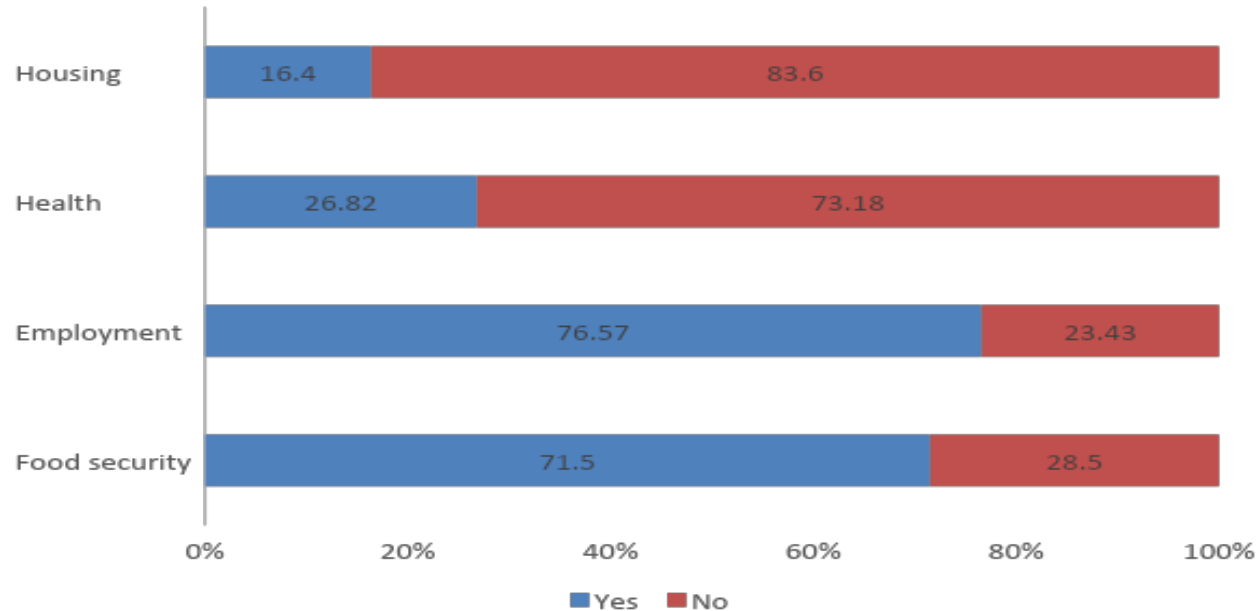
- Internet access and devices
- Digital skills
- Learning space at home

Research Questions: live instructions

RQ2:What is the relationship between students' learning outcomes (math, english, science) and hours of live instructions received from school?

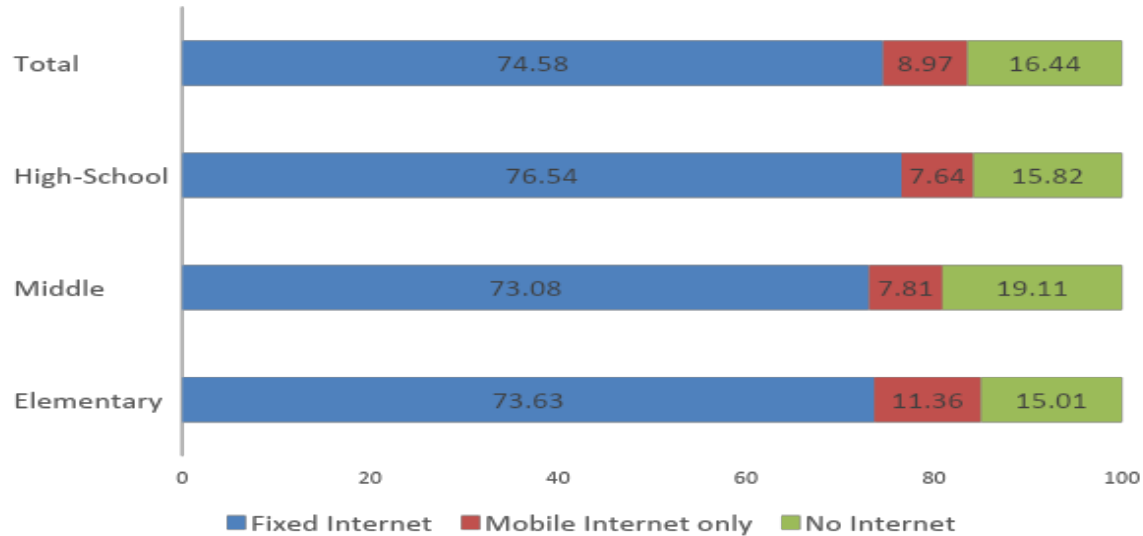
RQ3:What is the relationship between student engagement and hours of live instructions received from school?

Economic challenges experienced in several areas



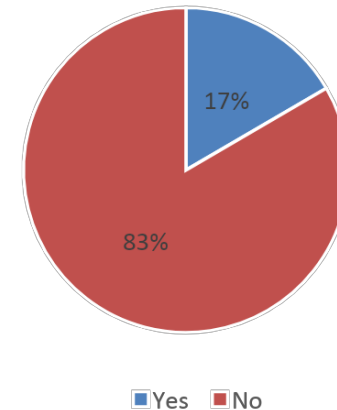
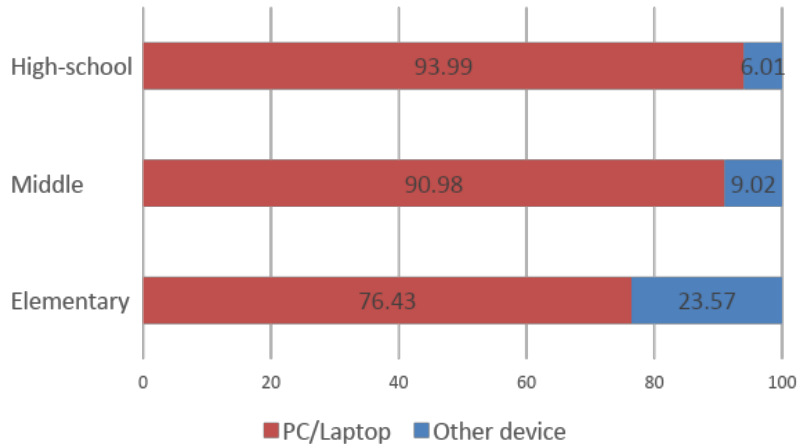
The impact of the COVID-19 crisis is widespread among PLAS families.

Limited internet access and services



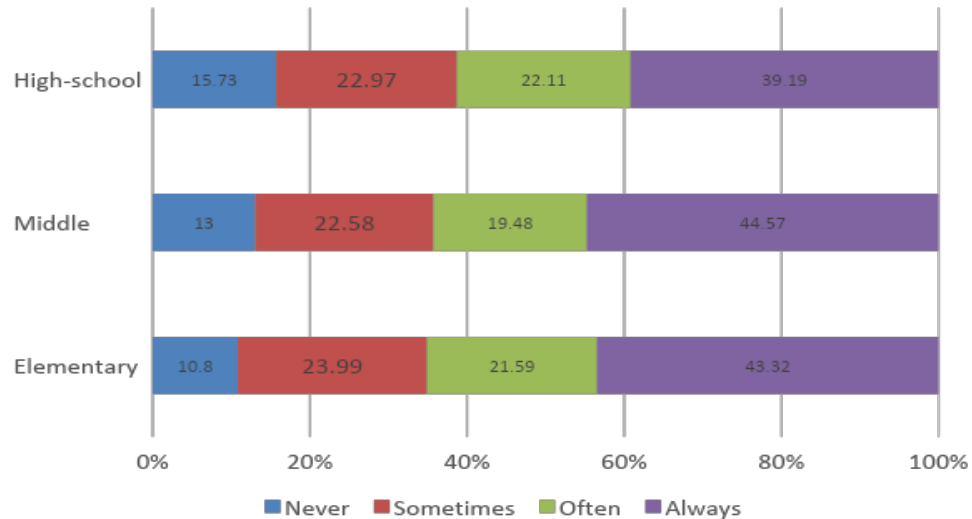
About a quarter of families report having no Internet at home or mobile data only.

Not having own devices



Most students have a PC at home for remote learning. However, 17% of students shared PC with other family members.

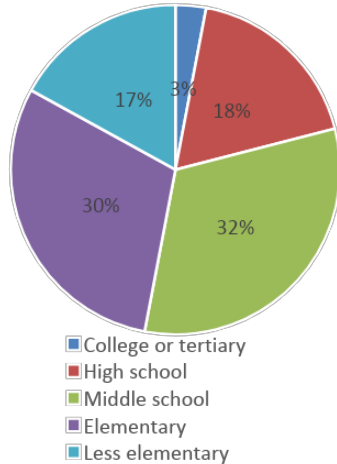
Lack of noise-free space for learning



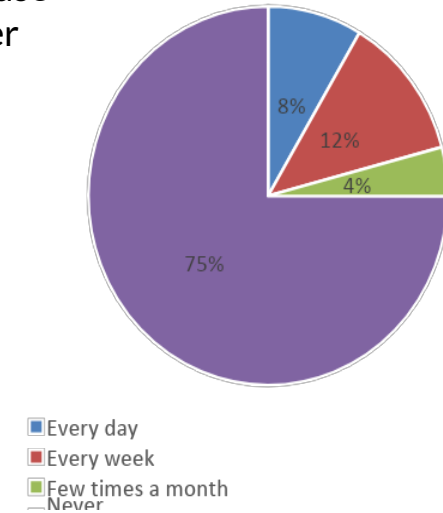
Less than half families report students always have a place free of noise or distraction for distance learning.

Limited digital skills

Parent's highest education level

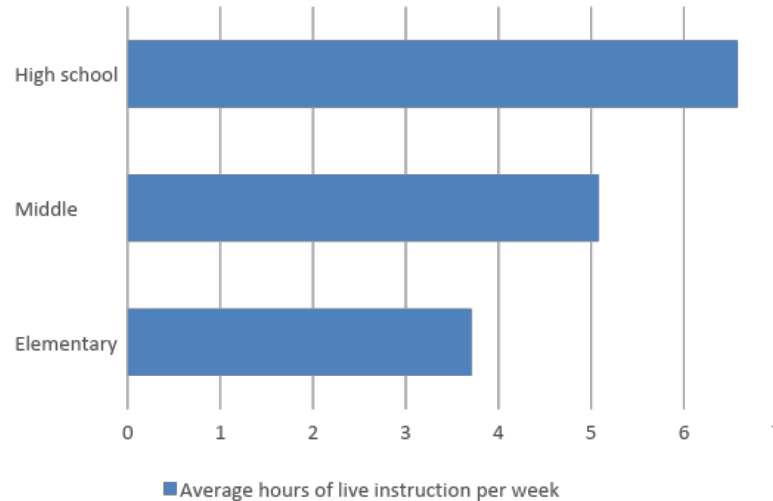


How often parents use computer



Parents have limited educational attainment and digital skills to help with remote learning.

Hours of live instruction



Parents report limited hours of live instruction per week
between March-June 2020

Live instruction: engagement, learning outcomes

- Preliminary analysis shows that:
 - Hours of live instruction predicts engagement, homework completion, and overall satisfaction across subjects.
 - Live instruction is more relevant for elementary and high school.
 - Effect of live instruction is larger for elementary school and high school

Conclusion

- Low income families experience various challenges ranging from food insecurity to unemployment due to COVID-19
- Students from low income families have limited access to technology, devices, quiet work space, and support for digital technology
- Hours of live instruction provided by school is crucial in students' academic performance and engagement

Recommendations

- Community and schools to find ways to provide support for low income families during distance learning
 - Loaning technology (e.g., laptop)
 - Providing funding for internet
 - Creating communal space free of noise
- Increasing live instruction from school
 - Synchronous zoom sessions with teachers
 - Synchronous class chat with classmates to collaborate

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Professors Stephen Aguilar and Hernan Galperin, and the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, Los Angeles Unified School District, and the families involved for making this research possible.

Future Research Questions & Next Steps

Research Question A:What is the relationship between students' learning outcomes and their access to technology?

Research Question B:What is the relationship between student engagement and their access to technology?