Preservice teachers' distance learning: Comparing experiences from the first and the second COVID-19 wave

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, academic staff and students are adjusting to distance learning. In coping with the change in study conditions, cognitive emotion regulation and self-regulated learning skills are particularly important as they influence the success of adaptation to new situations and students' academic performance. Therefore, the main purpose of the present study was to investigate preservice teachers' perceptions and reactions to distance learning during the pandemic. Using the mix-method research design, we compared their perceptions of distance education, self-regulated learning, and coping strategies at the beginning of the pandemic in the spring semester and after the second wave in the fall semester. Results showed that during the spring semester, students reported using environment structuring and goal setting strategies frequently, and task-based learning strategies less frequently. They also used more adaptive (i.e., positive reappraisal, acceptance, refocus on planning) and fewer maladaptive (i.e., blaming others, catastrophizing) coping strategies. The findings suggest the importance of considering self-regulated learning and cognitive emotion regulation strategies when preservice teachers are coping with the challenges of distance education. The presentation will discuss the findings within the framework of research findings and contemporary theories of learning and teaching. Within the given framework, guidelines for more effective coping with exceptional situations in higher education will be presented.

Keywords: distance education, preservice teachers, self-regulated learning, cognitive emotion regulation.