

## Transcript of Interview of Sophia Akhter by Mia Fay

**Interviewee:** Sophia Akhter

**Interviewer:** Mia Fay

**Date:** 09/18/2020

**Location (Interviewee):** Unknown

**Location (Interviewer):** Unknown

**Transcriber:** Angelica S Ramos

**Abstract** – University Student, Mia Fay, interviews a fellow student, Sophia Akhter, on her experiences with COVID. In this interview, she discusses the changes she saw as a high school senior when COVID hit and the dynamic of her home that was changed during quarantine.

**Mia Fay 00:01**

This is the COVID-19 archive project. Can you say your name, the date and the time right now?

**Sophia Akhter 00:08**

My name is Sophia Akhter, it is Friday, September 18, at 10:05am.

**MF 00:16**

So, I'm just going to ask you some questions about the COVID 19 pandemic? Um, how did the pandemic affect your life and the lives of the people that, you know?

**SA 00:27**

Well, for me, I felt the pandemic really put my life and like my whole family's life on pause, and my grandma was like living with us at the time. And I have two brothers to my apartment was super crowded all the time. And everyone's since they like couldn't go out anymore. Everyone's working from home and doing school from home. And we were barely allowed to go out because of the quarantine order. So, it was really overwhelming a lot of the time. And it put a strain on the dynamic with my family, because I feel like sometimes you get along with people better when you can, like, take some space. And we weren't able to do that.

**MF 00:58**

Yeah, I definitely agree with. Um, so did the pandemic ever make you worried or anxious?

**SA 01:05**

Yeah, I was worried because my grandma was living with me. So, I was worried about spreading it to my parents and to her and it was annoying that a lot of my friends were like partying all the time. And I was just like, sitting at home. But I also was worried about online school because I couldn't focus and stay away from stay awake for a lot of my classes. And it was also just a mixture, like being depressed about my senior year being cut short.

**MF 01:29**

Um, how do you feel about the national and global response to the pandemic?

**SA 01:35**

I have been frustrated, and I still am frustrated by President Trump's like unresponsiveness to the virus, and his willingness to hide the facts, and literally downplay the danger of what's happening, because I think it's very dishonest and unhelpful to the public, and like, pretty irresponsible, and you literally could have prevented the situation from getting as bad as it did in our country, considering he knew all the information about how dangerous the virus was beforehand.

**MF 01:59**

One hundred percent. Um, so how is your experience of the pandemic changed from the beginning to the present?

**SA 02:06**

Well, first, I was definitely like in shock. And I didn't understand how long the quarantine actually lasts. So, I thought it was just going to be for a couple of weeks, and then die down and go back to school. But then as time went on, and like nothing changed, and it just got worse, I just started like, losing a lot of motivation, like the day seem really monotonous, and that kind of thing.

**MF 02:27**

Um, so how did the pandemic affect your academics.

**SA 02:31**

So, in my high school, they changed all of us to pass fail instead of to getting grades, which was good, because I said, they lost a lot of motivation. And like, it was really, really hard for me to keep up with my classes, and learn things on zoom, because online school was just a hard transition. And I just didn't feel like I was learning anything, I couldn't focus and like, my mind just wasn't on academics at all.

**MF 02:53**

Yeah, that was me too. Um, so did you see any, like, increased use of technology? With the pandemic?

**SA 03:01**

Yes, I think that, like, I was already pretty aware of like, how intertwined my daily life is with technology, but the pandemic definitely amplified that. And like, as a society, we're really heavily dependent on technology. And I think a lot of people could definitely benefit from and trying to lessen their screen time are spending more time outside, and that kind of stuff. But the pandemic took all that to a new level for me. So, like, I found myself getting really stressed out a lot of the times about how often I had to rely on technology for my work and my social connections and other stuff. So, like, instead of watching Netflix, because it's more on-screen time, I had to make a conscious effort to like, go on more walks, and find different ways to de stress and feel less like I was in this bubble of like, being online all the time.

**MF 03:44**

I feel like I did the same thing. Um, lastly, did you find it hard to maintain friendships during the pandemic?

**SA 03:51**

Yes, and no. So, some friendships definitely. We've hard to maintain, but others a little bit strengthened, even so, the pandemic affected my friendships, I think, because there are a lot of people, especially toward the end of high school who don't talk to you outside of school, because you only see them in class or in person and stuff. So, the pandemic sort of revealed, like, who really cared about me and who would reach out even if we aren't seeing each other and I think it was a nice way to end High School honestly, because I knew exactly who I wanted to keep in touch with when I was going off to college.

**MF 04:21**

So, do you give consent to being interviewed for this COVID-19 archive project?

**SA 04:26**

Yeah.