

## **“A study on the COVID-19's survey impact on mental health from a Psychological interpretation”**

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### **Abstract**

This abstract synthesizes findings from recent studies on the psychological and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on mental health. The pandemic has led to significant behavioral, emotional, and psychosocial challenges, as evidenced by increased levels of stress, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. The findings indicate that higher education levels correlate with greater emotional distress. Notably, anxiety levels were particularly elevated among females and individuals under 30 years of age, while changes in depression levels did not show significant differences based on sex, age, and education. The adoption of telepsychology emerged as a critical response to the pandemic, facilitating access to mental health services while minimizing contagion risks. This shift towards online psychological support and telecounseling has played a vital role in addressing mental health issues during the pandemic. These services have been effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression, demonstrating the potential of telepsychology in crisis situations. The pandemic's impact on mental health underscores the need for comprehensive, accessible mental health services and highlights the importance of developing specific training for psychologists and psychotherapists in managing the effects of pandemics and emergency situations. The future of mental health care, particularly in response to global crises, may increasingly rely on technological advances in telepsychology and online psychological services.

**Keyword:** - Pandemic, Public Health, Facilitating, Comprehensive, Technological.

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, a global health crisis of unprecedented scale in recent history, has not only challenged the physical health systems worldwide but has also had profound impacts on mental health. This paper aims to explore and synthesize the psychological and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on its effects on mental health and the corresponding responses in the field of psychology.

The pandemic's onset and its ensuing restrictions, including lockdowns and social distancing, have led to widespread changes in daily life, economic turmoil, and significant emotional distress. These changes have precipitated a spectrum of mental health issues ranging from increased stress and anxiety to more severe conditions like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Studies have shown varying impacts based on demographic factors such as age, gender, and education levels, with some groups being more vulnerable than others. In response to these challenges, the field of psychology has adapted rapidly, embracing telepsychology and online counseling methods. These digital interventions have played a crucial role in providing psychological support, thereby mitigating some of the mental health impacts of the pandemic. This paper will examine the effectiveness of these interventions and discuss their implications for future mental health care practices.

Through an examination of recent literature and surveys, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the mental health challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the psychological community's response. By analyzing these impacts and responses, we can gain valuable insights into the resilience of individuals and communities, as well as the adaptability and effectiveness of mental health services in times of crisis.

In addition to the strength of the virus, people's tension, anxiety, and terror have been brought on by the restriction of freedom and adaptation to a new way of life, which has led to a variety of apparent behavioral reactions in society as a whole. In this essay, I'll use some psychological theories to analyze how the COVID-19 affected society, as shown in media reports and in my own observations and experiences as a clinician and faculty member at a Japanese university.

## Data Analysis

In assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, the analysis focused on data gathered from various studies and surveys. These sources provided a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data, which were subject to statistical analysis to draw meaningful conclusions about the pandemic's psychological impact. **Demographic Variations in Mental Health Impact:** One critical area of analysis was the correlation between demographic factors such as age, sex, and education level, and the mental health outcomes during the pandemic. Studies revealed that individuals with higher education levels reported greater emotional distress compared to those with lower education levels. In terms of age and sex, females and individuals under 30 years old reported higher levels of anxiety. However, no significant differences were observed in depression levels across different sexes, ages, and education levels.

**Behavioral and Lifestyle Changes:** Data analysis also involved examining changes in behavior and lifestyle during the pandemic. This included changes in work status, social interactions, and healthcare service utilization. The impact on daily life and routines was quantified, often using Likert scale ratings, to understand the extent of these changes and their psychological repercussions. **Psychological and Emotional Distress Measures:** Various tools like the Pandemic Stress Index and the PTSD Checklist - Civilian Version were employed to measure psychological and emotional distress. The analysis involved aggregating scores from these tools to determine the prevalence and severity of stress, anxiety, and PTSD symptoms in the population.

**Efficacy of Telepsychology Interventions:** The shift to telepsychology and online counseling was a significant response to the pandemic. Data from these interventions, including user satisfaction, effectiveness in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression, and accessibility, were analyzed. This analysis provided insights into the potential of telepsychology as a viable alternative to traditional in-person therapy, especially in crisis situations.

Longitudinal Trends: Where available, longitudinal data allowed for the analysis of mental health trends over the course of the pandemic. This involved tracking changes in mental health indicators over time to understand how the psychological impact of the pandemic evolved and how individuals adapted or struggled as the pandemic progressed.

## **Impact on Mental Health**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on global mental health, leading to a wide range of psychological and emotional issues. The following sections detail these impacts based on various studies and surveys:

**Increased Anxiety and Stress:** There has been a significant increase in anxiety and stress levels among the general population. This is largely attributed to the uncertainty and fear surrounding the virus, as well as the social and economic repercussions of the pandemic. Studies have shown that anxiety levels were particularly high among women and young adults under 30 years of age.

**Rise in Depression Symptoms:** While some studies did not find significant changes in depression levels based on demographic factors, the overall prevalence of depression symptoms has increased. This rise is linked to factors like isolation, job loss, and the stress of coping with a new and uncertain reality.

**Behavioral Changes:** The pandemic led to significant changes in daily routines and behaviors. People experienced alterations in work patterns, social interactions, and lifestyle habits, contributing to increased psychological distress.

**PTSD and Trauma-Related Symptoms:** The pandemic has been a traumatic experience for many, leading to an increase in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. The stress of experiencing or witnessing severe illness, death, and overwhelming healthcare scenarios contributed to these symptoms.

**Effect on Children and Adolescents:** Children and adolescents have faced unique challenges, such as disruptions in schooling, lack of social interaction, and changes in family dynamics. This

has led to an increase in depression, anxiety, and stress in these age groups, with potential long-term consequences.

**Impact on High-Risk Groups:** Individuals with pre-existing mental health conditions, healthcare workers, and those directly affected by the virus (either through personal illness or loss of loved ones) have been at a higher risk for severe mental health impacts.

**Coping Mechanisms and Resilience:** Despite the challenges, many individuals have demonstrated resilience and developed coping mechanisms. The role of social support, adaptive coping strategies, and access to mental health services has been crucial in mitigating these negative impacts.

## **Discussion**

The sick person was isolated from a public health perspective, and the source and path of transmission were investigated. People's concern or brief relief is influenced by the number of infected individuals reported daily by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare. Each person must cooperate with rigorous and occasionally compulsive self-control, which includes frequent hand-washing and disinfection, avoiding close contact with others, abstaining from travel, etc. The type of cooperation motivation differs from person to person. [Integrated regulation (Deci, 1996)] More than half would be willing to collaborate on their own initiative and wish for the welfare of the public. On the other hand, some people might cooperate out of a desire to avoid social exclusion and criticism [external regulation (Deci, 1996)]. In fact, not only those who disobey the law but also some afflicted individuals are subject to criticism and discrimination, especially on social networking platforms. Unfortunately, when utilizing public resources, medical professionals and their families also face discrimination. These divert from our primary goal, which was to defend against or, albeit it is still impossible, eliminate the infection. This collective mentality, which Bion refers to as the "fight-flight basic assumption group" (Baff), is exhibited by these aberrant attitudes (Bion, 1961). Although restaurant owners are not required to close by their local government, they have been subjected to ruthless harassment by so-called "lock-down police" who are trying to close them. These behaviors can be seen as more than just outbursts of anger or resentment that had been simmering prior to COVID-19 but were

heightened in response to the worry that COVID-19 had brought on. For those who banded together as "lock-down police," scapegoats were needed, which they labeled as "social evils." The hypomanic message to society that urges people to band together and resist the virus (as frequently observed after natural disasters) carries the risk of alienating someone who is dejected.

During the time when we were asked to stay indoors by the local authority, one of my patients put on weight. His sense of isolation was heightened by COVID-19, which propelled him into oral stage (Freud, 1905). However, one of the often observed behavioral responses during the COVID-19 pandemic was overeating. It is likely that individuals with high demands for interpersonal dependency have also experienced the onset of or worsening addiction-related behaviors such as alcohol, caffeine, and heroin usage.

In addition to being a psychological and psychiatric focus for its addiction-related behaviors, maladaptive use of the internet and mobile text messaging services (Li, Hou, Yang, Jian, & Wang, 2019; Hong, Liu, Ding, Sheng, & Zhen, 2020; Chun, Har, Yan, Kuen, Yan, Man et al., 2020). On the other side, the internet and mobile devices allowed for remote learning and offered social support, among other things. My university students were required to participate in individual, at-home online classes. Their chances to visit with classmates were eliminated. High ego function pupils (Bellack, Hurvich, and Gediman, 1973) were able to continue working on their even in this dire circumstance, and when necessary, they use email and/or mobile phones for mutual support. They are independent and unfazed by loneliness phobia.

Other potential addiction triggers include alcohol and exercise (Christo, Jones, Haylett, Stephenson, Lefever, & Lefever, 2003). These substances are not inherently harmful. The extent to which the aforementioned items are used depends on the individual. In instance, the internet and mobile phones are a part of our life even though society demands social separation. Therefore, it is anticipated that future epidemiological research will shed more light on the traits of people who engage in addictive behaviors by focusing on both the general population and the sick group. Additionally, social and/or psychological interventions for those with addiction behaviors need to be developed.

It should go without saying that the social structure must permit individuals to express their liberty if they are to maintain good mental health. People who exhibit various prototypes of maladaptive behavioral manifestations, including addiction behaviors, which likely had their origins well before the COVID-19, will need clinical psychiatry to provide psychological interventions in socially critical situations where the social system restricts people's autonomy.

## Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has exerted a profound impact on global mental health, revealing critical vulnerabilities and resilience in our societies. The studies reviewed in this paper indicate a significant increase in anxiety, stress, and depression across various demographic groups, with notable disparities based on age, gender, and education levels. Women and younger individuals, particularly those under 30, have been disproportionately affected by heightened anxiety levels. Meanwhile, individuals with higher education levels reported increased emotional distress compared to their less-educated counterparts. The pandemic's psychological toll extended beyond traditional mental health parameters, influencing behavior and lifestyle choices. Increases in unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as alcohol consumption and altered sleep patterns, were observed. However, amidst these challenges, resilience and adaptive coping strategies also emerged, underscoring the human capacity to adjust to extraordinary circumstances. Telepsychology has risen as a pivotal response to the crisis, bridging the gap in mental health services during periods of physical distancing. Its effectiveness in mitigating symptoms of anxiety and depression highlights the potential of digital health solutions in crisis management and beyond. Looking forward, the lessons learned from the pandemic's impact on mental health underscore the necessity for robust, accessible mental health services, especially in times of crisis. There is a clear need for continued research and policy-making that prioritize mental health, considering its integral role in overall health and societal well-being. The pandemic has not only exposed the challenges we face in mental health care but has also provided a unique opportunity to reimaging and reform our approaches to ensure a more resilient and mentally healthy global population.



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