

Mental Health Challenges in the Post Pandemic Era

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Abstract

The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on mental health has been well documented. But in the latter stages of the epidemic and after its formal conclusion, very few research looked into mental health. Furthermore, not much is known about the psychological toll that the pandemic and various post-pandemic global issues have had on individuals. This article reviews the many research that have been conducted on mental health concerns in the post-pandemic era. It came to the conclusion that a worldwide mental health crisis has been brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, placing additional burden on already brittle support networks, especially in low- and middle-income (LMIC) nations. More stress is experienced by mental health professionals (MHPs), and treatment efforts are hampered by pervasive misinformation. People and families have been profoundly impacted by the loss of organised settings like businesses and schools, particularly women and young people. There are many people who have persistent symptoms of depression, anxiety, and panic. Psychological anguish is higher in vulnerable populations, such as individuals with metabolic diseases. Long-term mental health risks must be reduced, and post-pandemic psychological resilience must be promoted, by ensuring continuity of treatment via telepsychiatry, focused therapies, and comprehensive legislative changes.

Keywords: Mental Health, COVID-19, Post-Pandemic Era, Anxiety, Panic, Psychological Impact, World Health Organization (WHO).

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1 Introduction

"The COVID-19 pandemic" had a significant worldwide effect and has several implications in many facets of society. In December 2019, Wuhan, China, reported many instances of atypical pneumonia brought on by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, which generates COVID-19 [1]. Due to the alarming increase of infections in many countries and continents, "the World Health Organisation (WHO)" decided to designate COVID-19 a pandemic in March 2020. The ramifications of this choice in several spheres of life, such as health, the economic, social, cultural, and educational, had a profound effect on society [2], [3].

People's mental health has been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and the stringent measures put in place to stop its spread. Pathological emotional reactions have often resulted from adverse psychosocial impacts that have been noted during and after the epidemic. According to reports, the frequency of a number of mental illnesses has increased as a consequence; however, these conditions are still often overlooked illnesses around the world [4]. Stress, sleeplessness, anxiety, despair, and post-traumatic stress disorders are among the most prevalent mental illnesses during the epidemic. Emotional problems have also been described, including apathy, irritation, wrath, and emotional tiredness. Substance misuse is intimately linked to certain mental illnesses, and suicidal thoughts have been noted in some instances [5], [6].

Instead of only being the absence of sickness or illness, "the World Health Organisation (WHO)" describes health as a condition that includes mental, social, and physical health. Mental health is a basic aspect of overall health, according to this conceptualisation [7]. People who are in excellent mental health are thus able to deal with challenging circumstances in life, work efficiently, and reach their full potential by making substantial contributions to society. Even if public health is interested in mental health, there are large gaps in treatment implementation, which prevent those with serious mental illness from getting care. These gaps are as high as 73.5% in adults and 82.2% in children and adolescents [8], [9].

A. Mental health challenges in adolescents, Children, and the young population in post-covid-19 pandemic era

According to research, this pandemic may continue to have more detrimental long-term impacts on children and adolescents than on adults. While in quarantine, several kids have reported significant behavioural and emotional changes. As well, children, including adolescents, are particularly susceptible to neglect and maltreatment during the pandemic [10]. During the continuing pandemic, one of the first studies found that children aged 3–6 were more likely than older children aged 6–18 to display indications of clinginess and concern over family members being sick. The older children, on the other hand, were more likely to be distracted and to constantly enquire about COVID-19. Regardless of age group, all children had severe psychological issues, such as elevated irritation, inattention, and clinging behaviour [11]. The findings indicate that children nowadays feel unsure, afraid, and alone. It was also shown that children who were separated had worry, agitation, inattentiveness, anorexia, nightmares, and difficulty sleeping. The present crisis also puts teenagers and young adults at risk, since these groups are

the ones that experience the bulk of mental health illnesses. Many young people's futures have been impacted. For example, there have been fewer job openings, no school closings, and no tests. Children and children who are exposed to restriction strategies, including extended closures of schools and recreation centres, may experience loneliness, anxiety, and uncertainty. These emotions may negatively affect their academic, psychological, and developmental results. They are vulnerable as a result of their compulsive use of online gaming and social media [12].

B. Challenges for mental health services in post-covid-19 pandemic era

1. Mental health professionals' (MHPs') burnout, lack of infrastructure, and lack of human resources

Many nations have repurposed "medical health professionals (MHPs)" to offer medical services at COVID-19 care facilities. Mental health issues are more prevalent among MHPs and physicians who work in COVID-19 services due to the stress of their occupations and the loss of patients and loved ones. MHPs may not be able to provide effective mental health therapy in the postpandemic period if their mental health is neglected. "In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where Mental health professionals" are few, this might further worsen the inequality in mental health treatment [13].

2. Assessing mental health issues

Due to the absence of particular diagnostic or screening methods, it may be challenging to identify mental disorders that are "aetiologically related to COVID-19" in the postpandemic era (e.g., anxiety caused by a cytokine storm). The underlying disorders may be over-reported or underreported in diagnostic interviews based on "the Statistical and Diagnostic Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, or the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision/Eleventh Revision".

3. The impact of misinformation ('the infodemic')

There will continue to be waves of false information concerning COVID-19 in certain countries, especially LMICs, for a variety of reasons (e.g. religious and/or political convictions). The majority of nations are surprisingly ill-equipped to handle this infodemic. In addition to putting stress on the person's mental health, the inability to get reliable information might increase polarisation and the likelihood of hate crimes [14].

4. Access to mental healthcare services

Access to mental healthcare services will be restricted in the postpandemic period, especially in LMICs, due to increased mental health difficulties, overcrowded mental health services, "a lack of preparation, and interrupted mental health services". In order to administer COVID-19, several outpatient departments and mental hospitals are now being modified. Because they are afraid of being infected, persons with mental illnesses may not use these programs to get treatment [15]. It may be more difficult to produce psycho-pharmacological treatments now that many pharmaceutical companies are concentrating on creating COVID-19-related medications, vaccinations, and preventative kits

(sanitisers). Financial difficulties, unemployment, and perceived job uncertainty substantially impede access to mental healthcare, thereby elevating the risk of developing psychiatric diseases [16].

5. Psychotherapy

The COVID-19 pandemic's intricate and constantly shifting dynamics will make psychotherapy services difficult because of the absence of social and physical connections. Psychotherapy will be less accessible in LMICs due to a lack of telepsychiatric services [17].

6. Support systems

Families, kids, teens, and adults are all impacted when the structured assistance that is provided in physical businesses, daycare centres, and schools is lost. It'll be difficult to rebuild this extrafamilial structure.

7. Public health paradox and injustice

According to a substantial corpus of research, individuals who require mental health services particularly frequently have the least access to them. It will be intensified in the post-COVID-19 era as a result of economic recession, resource constraints, and unemployment [18].

2 Literature Review

(Cho et al., 2025) [19] Following the COVID-19 epidemic, little is known about newly diagnosed mental illnesses in individuals with metabolic issues. The objectives of our investigation were to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and the factors that contributed to the emergence of new mental disorders. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, alterations in mental health scores, as well as new-onset anxiety, depressive disorders, and alcohol use disorder, were evaluated. They were also compared to exposures linked to sociodemographics, clinical conditions, and self-perceived emotional states. Preexisting metabolic disorders were associated with the substantial increase in "PHQ-9 and GAD-7 scores" that occurred subsequent to the pandemic. The prevalence of new-onset anxiety, melancholy, and alcohol use issues among adults with metabolic disorders has increased following the COVID-19 pandemic.

(Zrnić Novaković et al., 2025) [20] The initial goal of the study was to evaluate the general population's mental health results throughout the epidemic and ten months after it ended. The second goal was to investigate the psychological toll that the pandemic had on individuals in the post-pandemic period in contrast to "contemporary conflicts, climate issues, inflation, and ineffective government administration and/or corruption". The post-pandemic evaluation revealed some cross-country variances, with inflation and current conflicts being the biggest causes of psychological strain. Psychosocial care remains necessary after the pandemic, despite the fact that the general population's mental health disparities were not as severe as they were during the acute period. This is probably a result of other worldwide issues that negatively impact people's mental health.

(Badinlou et al., 2024) [21] A worldwide mental health catastrophe has been triggered by the COVID-19 epidemic. The long-term effects of a COVID-19 infection on mental health, however, are unknown. Investigating the paths of mental health changes in COVID-19-infected persons and identifying possible variables that could impact these changes were the goals of this prospective longitudinal research. Our study's results indicate that there is a dynamic pattern in the mental health consequences that accompany COVID-19 infection over time. The study provides valuable "information on the mental health trajectory after COVID-19 infection" and emphasises the need for ongoing assessment, support, and treatments tailored to this group's evolving mental health needs.

(Farfán-Latorre et al., 2023) [8] The current study examined stress, anxiety, and melancholy among university students in Peru after they resumed in-person educational sessions. The findings show that the kids' anxiety and despair levels were low. They did, however, exhibit moderate stress levels. The pupils were found to exhibit signs of tension, anxiety, and sadness. In order to improve future professionals' mental health and overall well-being, university administrators must put policies in place for the assessment and prevention of these symptoms as well as for the improvement of their quality of life.

(Jamshaid et al., 2023) [22] The likelihood of overseas students' mental health declining before and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic is high. The mental health of overseas students both before and after the COVID-19 epidemic was examined in this research. Data were gathered online for this longitudinal research both before and after the epidemic (N = 470 and N = 420). Prior to the pandemic, the data showed that foreign students' mental health was good. In the interim, it was determined that overseas pupils were more anxious and depressed during the epidemic. This research found that students' mental health issues are concerning, and as a result, the institution need to provide psychological assistance. It will need further research to address the long-term psychological impacts of the post-pandemic.

(Ladole & Takalkar, 2023) [23] It is a universal responsibility to provide long-term care for COVID-19 survivors, given that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted millions of individuals worldwide. Since the systemic and local pathophysiological results of other coronavirus-related diseases (like "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2, and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS") have been well documented, it is imperative to investigate the short-term (post-COVID) and long-term effects of COVID-19. To measure mental health, four psychological measuring measures were used: post-traumatic stress disorder, sadness, general anxiety, and dread of COVID-19. The globe is experiencing its "worst recession since the Great Depression" as a consequence of social and economic upheaval. "The Stress, Depression, and Anxiety Scale and the Event Scale-Revised" may be used to evaluate the psychological impact and mental health condition. Stress biology and infection's impact on the brain are among the major topics. Adversity can induce functional and anatomical modifications in the brain.

(Xiong et al., 2020) [24] One of the largest viral epidemics of the 21st century, "the COVID-19 pandemic", has put mental health at previously unheard-of danger worldwide. The general public's mental health also need a lot of attention, even while patients and medical professionals are getting

psychological assistance. The objective of this systematic review is to compile the literature regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the health outcomes and risk factors of individuals. Psychological distress levels linked to the COVID-19 pandemic are quite considerable and often would qualify as clinically relevant. Priority one for global public health is reducing the harmful impacts of COVID-19 on mental health.

3 Research Gap

In spite of the expanding body of research on the psychological consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are substantial voids in our comprehension of "the long-term mental health outcomes" that have emerged in the post-pandemic era. Because existing research sometimes lacks longitudinal data, the pandemic's long-term effects on different demographic groups are not fully understood. There is limited focus on vulnerable populations, such as individuals with pre-existing mental and metabolic conditions, or those in low-income and rural settings. Additionally, research on the effectiveness of telepsychiatry and digital interventions across diverse regions remains inconclusive. More interdisciplinary and culturally contextual studies are needed to develop sustainable, inclusive, and adaptive mental health frameworks for future crises.

4 Research Objective

- In this article study the mental health challenges in children, adolescents, and the young population in post-covid-19 pandemic era.
- Study the Challenges for mental health services in post-covid-19 pandemic era.
- Study the various literature study in mental health Challenges in post-covid-19 pandemic era.

5 Research Methodology

This review paper employs a qualitative research methodology, utilizing secondary data and an extensive literature review to investigate the mental health challenges in the post-pandemic era. The study analyzes academic journals, scholarly articles, official reports, and case studies published between 2020 and 2025 to offer a comprehensive and current understanding of the evolving mental health landscape. By synthesizing findings from interdisciplinary sources, the research identifies emerging psychological trends, systemic healthcare gaps, and potential interventions. This methodological approach allows for a critical examination of the pandemic's long-term psychological impact across diverse populations and regions, particularly within "low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)".

6 Conclusion

Global mental health systems are very vulnerable, as the COVID-19 epidemic has shown, particularly in "low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)". Mental health professionals (MHPs) have been redeployed to COVID-19 care, increasing their stress and emotional burden. The widespread emotional impact—especially grief, anxiety, and trauma from the loss of loved ones—has significantly raised

mental health concerns globally. In LMICs, misinformation and inadequate preparedness have exacerbated the crisis. Many psychiatric and outpatient services have been disrupted or repurposed, limiting access to care. Children, teenagers, and families have been most negatively impacted by the breakdown of conventional support networks like schools and workplaces. The psychological impact is particularly pronounced among women, individuals aged 16–25, and those with pre-existing metabolic disorders, who exhibited heightened levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. Common symptoms include persistent sadness, panic, and difficulty relaxing. The sustained psychological toll—driven by ongoing socioeconomic crises such as inflation and conflict—highlights the urgency for long-term solutions. Interventions must include telepsychiatry, digital psychosocial therapies, and policy reforms to ensure continuity of care. Addressing major depressive disorder, PTSD, and suicidal ideation must be central to post-pandemic strategies. In the post-pandemic era, it is essential to establish "psychological resilience and mental health recovery" through a well-funded, coordinated, and inclusive approach.

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