

## Mental Health in the Covid-19 Pandemic: Impact and Global Recovery Strategy Literature Review

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### KEYWORDS

Mental health; COVID-19;  
Global Recovery;  
Depression; Stress;  
Literature Review

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### ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the mental health of people worldwide, including in Indonesia. The surge in mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, stress, and trauma highlights that this crisis impacts both physical and psychological well-being. This study aims to examine the mental health impact and global recovery strategies through a literature review approach. The method used involved reviewing literature from reputable databases such as PubMed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar, resulting in 10 selected articles that met the inclusion criteria. Findings reveal that vulnerable groups, including healthcare workers, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing mental disorders, were more severely impacted. The study emphasizes the need for responsive mental health systems, long-term investment, and social stigma reduction. Recovery efforts include raising awareness, expanding access to services, and community-based support. These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of mental health challenges during the pandemic and underscore the importance of a holistic and sustainable response.

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic that began to spread in Wuhan, China has become a global problem that has a wide impact and significantly disrupts mental health. Mental health according to the WHO definition is: "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her potential can cope with the normal stresses of life can work productively and fruitfully and can make a contribution to her or his community" (WHO, 2014)". Prevention measures for transmission are in the form of strict control of activities in the community, including large-scale social restrictions (lockdowns), maintaining social distancing, isolation and quarantine; the cancellation of sports, religious, entertainment and cultural events, as well as disinformation and misinformation (e.g. conspiracy theories about COVID-19) about the pandemic can have an impact on human mental health (Mehrsafar et al., 2020; Mukhtar, 2020).

Mental Health: The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted the mental health of people around the world. Many people are experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression due to this pandemic. This can worsen their mental health conditions and affect the overall well-being of society (World Health Organization, 2020a).

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health are not only temporary, but also have long-term impacts. These conditions include an increased risk of mental health disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress, as well as an overall decline in quality of life (Arjana, 2024). These things have short-term and long-term impacts on mental health, including increased feelings of vulnerability, loneliness, fear and anxiety, stress, sleep

disturbances, anger, denial, symptoms of trauma, depression, insomnia, and increased psychosocial stressors caused by environmental changes such as stigma (especially for sufferers) and suspicion and prejudice due to disinformation (Mukhtar, 2020; Torales et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020).

Health workers in particular have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are exposed to more stressful situations than many other professional groups. This is due to several factors, including the increased risk of infection, the fear of infecting others and being isolated from family, working overtime, demanding working conditions with long shifts, witnessing firsthand the suffering and death of patients, and witnessing crowded and challenging situations in hospitals. Therefore, it is not surprising that much of the research on stress resilience and mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic has specifically focused on healthcare workers (Manchia et al., 2022)

Although much has been written about the mental health implications of COVID-19, greater attention has been paid to high-income countries (HICs) than low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), where 83% of the global population lives. LMICs have historically received a fraction of global health resources for mental health.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, COVID-19 is now spreading rapidly in many of these places. The relationship between mental health and COVID-19 among the large population of LMICs is the focus of this Review. The sensitivity and completeness of mental health responses in some LMICs can serve as a model for other countries, which suffer from fragmented mental health responses, minimal financial investment, and limited reach to the most vulnerable populations.<sup>9</sup> In this Review, we examine the global mental health implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in four parts: first, the pandemic's impact on mental health (Ramanathan et al., 2020)

Additional challenges arise for vulnerable groups, including the elderly, individuals with preexist mental health disorders, and those living in areas with limited health services, all of whom may face a higher risk of mental health impacts from the pandemic. While the challenges faced during this pandemic are complex and diverse, there are efforts made by individuals, communities, and mental health institutions to provide the necessary support and services. This includes efforts to raise awareness of mental health, expand access to mental health services, and reduce the stigma associated with psychological conditions (Arjana, 2024).

Two studies have explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, but they focus on different aspects. Mehrsafari et al. (2020) discuss the broader societal impact, particularly in relation to the social distancing and lockdown measures, highlighting the mental health consequences such as stress, anxiety, and depression. However, the study mainly emphasizes short-term effects and does not delve deeply into the long-term mental health consequences or the specific challenges faced by vulnerable groups, such as healthcare workers. In contrast, Torales et al. (2020) focus on healthcare workers, acknowledging the heightened stress and mental health burden they face during the pandemic, but the study does not consider the implications for broader populations, especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). This research addresses these gaps by not only examining the short- and long-term mental health impacts of the pandemic on both general populations and healthcare workers but also by focusing on LMICs, where mental health responses have been fragmented and under-resourced. This study provides a more holistic view of the mental health crisis brought on by COVID-19, with particular attention to the unique challenges in LMICs.

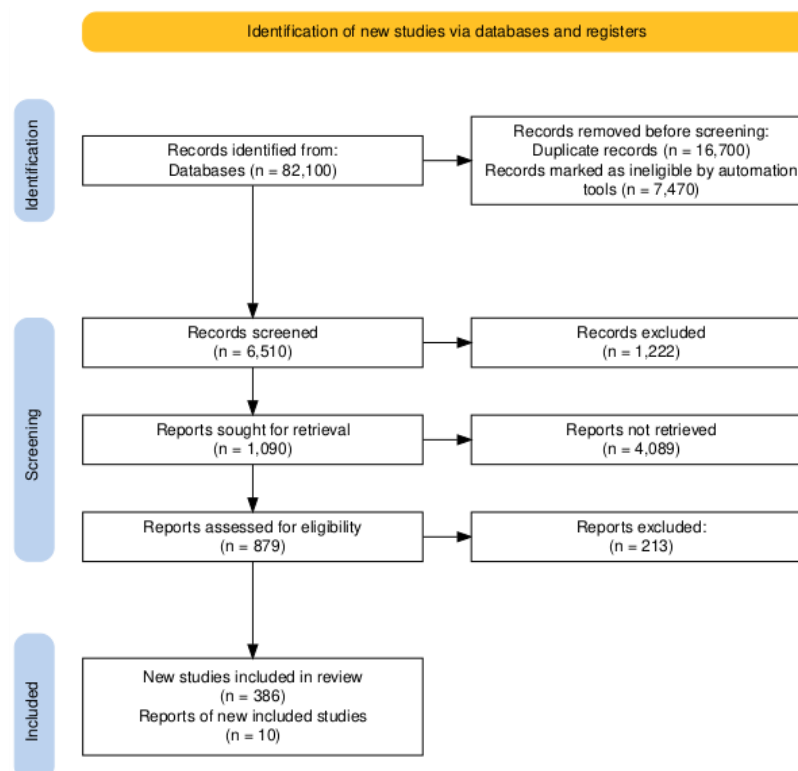
The objective of this study is to explore the mental health implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on both short-term and long-term effects on individuals and healthcare workers in low- and middle-income countries. The findings will offer valuable recommendations for policymakers, healthcare institutions, and mental health organizations to address the mental health crisis exacerbated by the pandemic, particularly in LMICs, and help improve mental health interventions in these vulnerable populations.

## Research Method

The research method used is literature review using journals from national and international sources through accredited databases such as Proquest, Science Direct, Scopus and Google Scholar with the keywords COVID-19, survivor and mental health. The literature search was conducted in 2019-2024 which was obtained through several databases, namely PubMed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. Articles or journals with published criteria in full with the keywords "Pandemic", "medical health", "Impact", and "Recovery", using a combination of "or" and "and". Next is the screening of the title, abstract, method, and research results used in the article. Articles are sorted based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

## Results and Discussion

Based on keywords entered into four databases, a total of 82,100 articles were obtained. The first step taken was to eliminate the selection of full text and topic suitability so that 82,100 articles were obtained. Based on the 82,100 articles obtained, a feasibility check was carried out based on inclusion criteria. So that finally the number of articles used in this literature study was 10 articles.



**Figure 1. Prism Method Flowchart**

**Table 1. research results**

Researchers	Research Title	Research Methods	Result
(Arjana, 2024)	Mental Health and Wellbeing During the Pandemic Challenges and Adjustments	With a holistic and sustainable approach	Psychological balance plays an important role in overall well-being, allowing individuals to feel calm, connected, and empowered in the face of life's challenges. Important
(Manchia et al.,	The impact of the	Using literature studies	Large differences between

Researchers	Research Title	Research Methods	Result
2022)	prolonged COVID-19 pandemic on stress resilience and mental health: A critical review across waves		individuals exist, and for future pandemics there is a clear need to comprehensively and integratively assess resilience from the outset to provide personalized assistance and interventions tailored to the specific needs of vulnerable groups.
(Diwyarthi, 2021)	The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Era of New Habits in the Perspective of Tourism Psychology	Qualitative research with literature studies	The Covid-19 pandemic has made the tourism world slump and is in an era of a new life order that implements strict health protocol standards. Local wisdom that used to tend to be sidelined, is now developing again.
(Ramanathan et al., 2020)	COVID-19 mental health impact and responses in low-income and middle-income countries: reimagining global mental health	Review the Literature Review	Not only must we invest in building mental health systems now but we must also ensure that these investments embrace the diversity of experiences and actions that characterize poor mental health, far beyond the narrow biomedical focus on doctors, diagnoses, and medications that have dominated mental health policy globally.
(Sarjito, 2024)	Public Health Services in Crisis: Lessons from Pandemic Response Strategies in Indonesia	Qualitative research method using secondary data to	Effective policies, data-driven decision-making, strengthening health care systems, regional adaptability, and community engagement are important in strengthening crisis preparedness.
(Rahayuni, 2020)	Mental Health of Indonesian Athletes during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges, Recommendations and Research Opportunities	Literature review	The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on people's lives globally, including impacting athletes' mental health.
(Einvik et al., 2021)	Prevalence and Risk Factors for Post-Traumatic Stress in Hospitalized and Non-Hospitalized COVID-19 Patients	Literature Review	Social isolation and quarantine for several weeks or months can have significant social and psychological impacts
(Hakim, 2020)	The impact of the coronavirus disease (covid) 19 pandemic and lockdown on mental health: a study of psychology and religion	Literature research methods	The Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic does not only attack physical health, but also mental health. The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown policies have made people experience stress, anxiety, and take actions beyond the threshold of reasonableness such as killing their own

Researchers	Research Title	Research Methods	Result
(Sarjito, 2024)	Analysis of the Effect of Vuca on Mental Health After the Covid-19 Pandemic	Quantitative semi-descriptive research method	children, committing suicide, and others. The results of the study show that VUCA affects people's mental health. Covid-19 is part of VUCA, an uncertainty that causes uncertainty in the world economy and leaves a very deep scarring effect, making the problem even more complex. Uncertainty is the main factor that drives mental health problems.
(Rokhmah et al., 2022)	Mental Health Risks in Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Patients in the Community: Literature Review	Literature review with seven databases	Based on the driving factors, high social support will reduce the level of symptoms of mental health disorders. Meanwhile, the stigma and discrimination received among patients will exacerbate the emotional impact

Source: processed data

## Discussion

Impacting people of all age groups, both physically and mentally, can affect health. The 2014 health law states that people who are said to be mentally healthy are individuals who can develop both physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially, and are able to live a productive life. Meanwhile, according to Maslow and Mittlemen, mental health is seen as a manifestation of psychological health, meaning that a psychologically healthy condition is characterized by a sense of security both mentally and socially, having self-esteem, and values that are comparable to one's potential (Zulkarnain, 2019)

Indonesia, as one of the countries with the largest population in the world, has not been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The country faces unique challenges in managing the response to the pandemic, including the rapid spread of the virus, limited resources, and diverse geographical and social complexities. This crisis also highlights the important role of a strong public health system in facing public health challenges (Ministry of Health, 2020).

Athiyyah & Santoso (2021) found that covid-19 sufferers have a level of depression and

High anxiety during the covid-19 pandemic which is a mental health problem. Mental health disorders during the covid-19 pandemic that occurred include anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, stress, and trauma-related disorders (Fidiansjah, 2020). An online survey through self-examination was also conducted by the Indonesian Psychiatric Specialist Association (PDSKJI) regarding mental health which refers to three psychological problems, including anxiety, trauma, and depression (Indonesian Psychiatric Specialist Association, 2020). As a result of the pandemic, the anxiety rate reached 63%, while 66% of respondents experienced depression (Indonesian Association of Psychiatric Specialists, 2020). Research was also conducted in Indonesia, 69% of Indonesians experience psychological health problems (Rozali et al., 2021)

Covid-19 is the highest stress-triggering factor that causes mental health problems, the Covid-19 pandemic has made many people lose their jobs which has an impact on the increasing number of unemployed, loss or decrease in sources of income, illness due to the Covid-19 virus and deep grief over the loss of loved ones and global economic conditions due

to Covid-19 which have not recovered to date, It further causes concern among various circles of the public. Stress is a person's reaction physically and emotionally, both mentally and psychologically, when there is a change in the environment and requires self-adjustment. Basically, stress is a natural part of life, but if it is heavy and lasts for a long time, it can interfere with mental health and physical health which can cause an individual to become unproductive (Pakpahan, 2022)

The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2022, stated that mental health problems increased very sharply during the Covid-19 pandemic, depression and anxiety increased by 25% in the first year of the virus pandemic. Corona-19, (news.detik.com) [4]. In Indonesia itself, mental health problems have increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, depression increased by 35% or increased 2-3 times compared to the 2018 Basic Health Research data (Sri and Amer, 2021)

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health are not only temporary, but also have long-term impacts. These conditions include an increased risk of mental health disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress, as well as an overall decline in quality of life. Additional challenges arise for vulnerable groups, including the elderly, individuals with preexistent mental health disorders, and those living in areas with limited health services, all of whom may face a higher risk of mental health impacts from the pandemic (Arjana, 2024)

## Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on people's mental health in Indonesia, affecting all age groups. The surge in cases of depression, anxiety, stress, and trauma disorders is proof that this crisis has not only a physical, but also psychological impact. This condition is exacerbated by factors such as job loss, deep grief, and limited mental health services, especially for vulnerable groups. The WHO noted a surge in mental disorders globally, and Indonesia experienced a similar increase that required long-term attention and treatment.

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