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Physical and Mental Health Struggles During the Time of Pandemic: An Overview of Domestic Setting

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ABSTRACTS

The goal of this study was to highlight the physical and mental health challenges that people faced during a pandemic. This research takes a look at certain data from a household context. This article can be used as a guide for students who are concerned about their physical and emotional health while dealing with a pandemic. Finally, enhancing one's physical and mental health should be a key priority because it is the only weapon one has in the fight against the pandemic and to continue living once we return to regular life.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) becomes serious problems and changes conditions in our lives (Asriyanti et al., 2021; Sukmawati & Maryanti, 2022; Fale et al., 2021). Mental health in the COVID-19 pandemic requires separate handling because it has changed several aspects of life, including social distancing, quarantine, and self-isolation, activities at home, panic buying, to changes in handling at health facilities (Restauri & Sheridan, 2020). Conditions that change so quickly, for an indefinite period, and constant news, cause changes in mental health.

It is indeed a boundless challenge to every one of us on how we are going to promote our physical and mental health as the onslaught of the pandemic is still in effect. The issue of whether we are still having a sound mind and body is now a big question. During the 2nd quarter of the fiscal year 2021, suddenly, the world was at freeze. Almost all the physical activities of humankind were at a halt, limited physical movements were strictly imposed by the authorities, as stipulated in IATF guidelines. The movement of all persons shall be limited to accessing goods and services from permitted establishments, for work in such establishments, or such other activities allowed in this section. Furthermore, this action is tantamount only for the people to perform actions for daily survival only- availing of essential goods. Thus, no more time to do various activities is essential to achieve a balance life aspect.

Here, the purpose of this study was to show physical and mental health struggles during the time of the pandemic. This study overviews some data from the domestic setting. This paper can be used as a reference for taking care physical and mental health of students in facing pandemics.

2. METHODS

This study overviews some literature regarding physical and mental health issues in facing pandemic. This study took data from online news, surveys from participants, and articles from journals.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Physical health is the state of being free from illness or injury. It can cover a wide range of areas including a healthy diet, healthy weight, dental health, personal hygiene, and sleep. Physical health is vital for overall well-being.

The World Health Organization (WHO) conceptualizes mental health as a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to his or her community.

The domino effect from physical and mental issues are:

- (i) The massive effort of the different health entities to ensure that the transmission of this contagious health threat must be stopped, ensued to the behavior of the people to just stay home, and engage in not so many vigorous activities. For instance, contact sports, outdoor exercises (running, jogging, brisk walking), and other leisure-time activities were suspended.
- (ii) With this occurring situation, the chance of getting hooked into dormant activities or the so-called sedentary lifestyle is very high, which in return having an inactive lifestyle can be one of the causes of many chronic diseases.
- (iii) Physical inactivity because of home quarantine measures, increase all causes of mortality, doubles the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and obesity, and increases the risks

of colon cancer, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, lipid disorders, depression, and anxiety.

- (iv) Moreover, in the Philippine setting, it can be noted that during the Pandemic period chronic diseases got their peak level as the major cause of mortality, as shown in **Figure 1**.

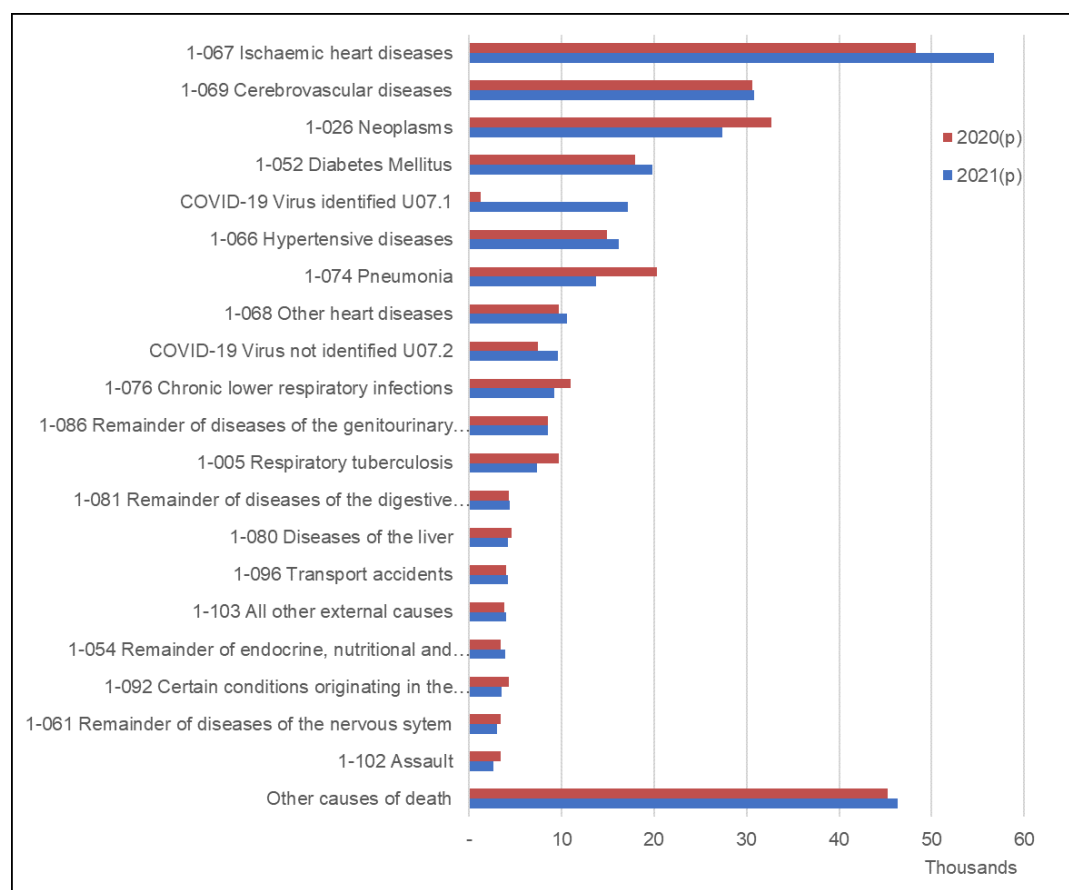


Figure 1. All Causes of Mortality in the Philippines.

Mental Exhaustion can be explained in the following:

- (i) Going back to world history, when the “Spanish Flu” rampantly took over the whole world, it is then the most severe influenza outbreak of the 20th century and, in terms of total numbers of deaths, among the most devastating pandemics in human history.
- (ii) In the present times, people who got acquainted with little or vast knowledge about the tremendous effect of the said pandemic express fear and discomfort. A different kind of mentality can be associated with the question what will happen next? how far can we still go with the present situation of the Covid 19 pandemic? And, is this the end of our life? Depression and anxiety follow.
- (iii) The true color of the health problem reveals, as it slowly paralyzes the economy, loss of loved ones, financial constraints were faced by every household.
- (iv) Here comes “Coronaphobia” which is the fear of COVID-19 has become an emerging issue among different communities and healthcare workers. Stress is one of the mental health disorders that occurred as the result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Society has developed fears for themselves and their families, manifesting feelings of helplessness, boredom, loneliness, and depression (Fekadu *et al.*, 2021).

For the understanding link between physical health and mental health, the following explanations are shown. Understanding how the different parts of our bodywork are quite fluent, we have been studying it as early as we step in our elementary grades, we have learned a lot on how to protect, nourish, and perfectly attended to its needs. But what about the mind and body? since during our childhood years when we are still having our graduate development. The physical and mental aspect of our personality is so much interconnected more than we know. This connection is real- the mind and body. It works hand in hand. The more we take good care of our physical health is the more we improve our mental health. Practicing simple healthy lifestyle habits will bring a positive impact to the totality of our personality. in such case it can be seen in this association:

- (i) Poor mental health is a risk factor for chronic physical conditions.
- (ii) People with serious mental health conditions are at high risk of experiencing chronic physical conditions.
- (iii) People with chronic physical conditions are at risk of developing poor mental health.

The main idea in this paper is How to Improve Physical and Mental During this Time of Pandemic. Filipino's culture of resiliency is quite a unique ability that stands out worldwide, known to be people who can easily adapt to whatever situation comes forth. It is already manifested in different conditions where people face hardship, chaos, and trauma- experiencing the aftermath of super typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruption, etc. but with this kind of global health crisis scenario, Filipinos are again engaging in a more complicated challenges-on how to continuously give importance in maintaining a sound physical and mental health despite the pandemic.

There are some suggestions on how to nourish our physical and mental health: take care of your body, be mindful about your physical health, and take care of your mind to reduce stress triggers.

Regarding mindful of physical health, the following information is:

- (i) Get enough sleep. Go to bed and get up at the same time each day. Stick close to your typical sleep-wake schedule, even if you're staying at home.
- (ii) Participate in regular physical activity. Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood. Find an activity that includes movement, such as dance or exercise apps. Get outside, such as a nature trail or your backyard.
- (iii) Eat healthily. Choose a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress, anxiety, and sleep problems.
- (iv) Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. If you smoke tobacco or if you vape, you're already at higher risk of lung disease. Because COVID-19 affects the lungs, your risk increases even more. Using alcohol to try to cope can make matters worse and reduce your coping skills. Avoid taking drugs to cope unless your doctor prescribed medications for you.
- (v) Limit screen time. Turn off electronic devices for some time each day, including 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime. Make a conscious effort to spend less time in front of a screen — television, tablet, computer, and phone.
- (vi) Relax and recharge. Set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to settle your mind and reduce anxiety. Many people benefit from practices such as deep breathing, tai chi, yoga, mindfulness, or meditation. Soak in a bubble bath, listen to music, or read or listen to a book — whatever helps you relax. Select a technique that works for you and practice it regularly.

Take care of your mind in reducing stress triggers are explained in the following:

- (i) Keep your routine. Maintaining a regular daily schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for

meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise. Also set aside time for activities you enjoy. This predictability can make you feel more in control.

- (ii) Limit exposure to news media. Constant news about COVID-19 from all types of media can heighten fears about the disease. Limit social media that may expose you to rumors and false information. Also limit reading, hearing, or watching other news, but keep up to date on national and local recommendations. Look for reliable sources, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- (iii) Stay busy. Healthy distractions can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Enjoy hobbies that you can do at home, such as reading a book, writing in a journal, making a craft, playing games, or cooking a new meal. Or identify a new project or clean out that closet you promised you'd get to. Doing something positive to manage anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.
- (iv) Focus on positive thoughts. Choose to focus on the positive things in your life, instead of dwelling on how bad you feel. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. Maintain a sense of hope, work to accept changes as they occur, and try to keep problems in perspective.
- (v) Use your moral compass or spiritual life for support. If you draw strength from a belief system, it can bring you comfort during difficult and uncertain times.
- (vi) Set priorities. Do not become overwhelmed by creating a life-changing list of things to achieve while staying in the home. Set reasonable goals each day and outline steps you can take to reach those goals. Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small. And recognize that some days will be better than others.

Improving the quality of one's physical and mental health should be a top priority since it is the only weapon that one's possessed to win the battle against this pandemic and continue leaving once, we get back to normal life.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows physical and mental health struggles during the time of the pandemic. This study overviews some data from the domestic setting. This paper can be used as a reference for taking care physical and mental health of students in facing pandemics. Finally, improving the quality of one's physical and mental health should be a top priority since it is the only weapon that one's possessed to win the battle against this pandemic and continue leaving once, we get back to normal life.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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