

**Introduction:** COVID-19 outbreak has significantly affected the mental health of people worldwide. The first wave of the pandemic began during the beginning of March 2020, and included significant preventative measures. Previous research on mental health differences between the genders has found that women were more likely to exhibit symptoms of anxiety during the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Objectives:** The aim of our study was to assess the differences between the genders in depression, anxiety, and stress.

**Methods:** An online survey designed for the purposes of this study was distributed using the snowballing method during April and May of 2020. The survey consisted of two parts: sociodemographic and clinical data, and COVID-19 related data. Participants also filled out the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21) - a well validated, self-questionnaire instrument. T-test for independent samples was used to evaluate the differences between the genders.

**Results:** Out of the initially sent 563 surveys, a total of 161 were included in further analyses (28.6% response rate). Mean age of the sample was  $42.2 \pm 10.2$  and 65.2% of the participants were female. Mean scores on DASS-21 were as follows:  $8.78 \pm 6.66$  on depression,  $9.78 \pm 7.39$  on anxiety and  $7.76 \pm 7.14$  on stress. Females scored significantly higher on depression ( $t = -2.25$ ,  $p = 0.029$ ), anxiety ( $t = -2.25$ ,  $p = 0.028$ ), stress ( $t = -2.44$ ,  $p = 0.017$ ), and total DASS-21 score ( $t = -2.44$ ,  $p = 0.016$ ).

**Conclusions:** The results of our study imply that female participants exhibit higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. Larger, population-based studies could provide a more in-depth answer to the importance of these differences for the general population.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Gender differences; DASS-21; Anxiety

### EPP0333

#### TV or not TV? health information, anxiety and stress during the initial stage of COVID-19 epidemic in Italy.

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**Introduction:** With the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, there has been the dissemination of an enormous amount of information, through multiple channels, from different sources and with an often unverifiable basis (infodemic). In recent years, there has been debate in the literature about the possibility that different information channels (social media vs traditional media) can determine a more or less extensive emotional contagion regardless of the severity and direct exposure to the stressful event and more precisely through a 'secondhand' exposure to events.

**Objectives:** We want to investigate whether the information channel or the amount of time dedicated to the update is associated with greater psychological sequelae.

**Methods:** This study is based on a cross-sectional online survey conducted anonymously in the period between the tenth and seventeenth day of shelter in place in Italy. We used Zung Anxiety Self-Assessment Scale and Perceived Stress Scale 4. SPSS 21.0 was used for data analysis.

**Results:** We collected data on 1047 individuals. In our sample, the Internet was the primary health information channel (55%) followed by TV (36%). Most TV and internet users spend about 1-3 hours a day

for the update. There was no correlation between the time spent or the information channel used and higher levels of stress and anxiety.

**Conclusions:** In our opinion, this relationship between the time spent receiving information or the most widely used information channel and psychological disorders is not clear. Is it the news channel causing an emotional contagion or are the most anxious people looking for news anywhere and anytime?

**Keywords:** health information; TV; Internet; emotional contagion

### EPP0334

#### Suicide: The pandemic inside the pandemic

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**Introduction:** Covid-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO on March 11th and efforts have been made to minimize the impact that this new disease can produce. The mental health effects of this pandemic can be severe considering that each year close to 800.000 people die by suicide. This pandemic could increase those numbers, although this is not inevitable.

**Objectives:** This work reviewed the current available data on possible causes for a suicide rate increase and to try to understand if suicide is already increasing worldwide.

**Methods:** Non-systematic review of the literature with selection of scientific articles published in the past 6 months; by searching Pubmed and Medscape databases using the combination of MeSH descriptors. The following MeSH terms were used: Covid-19; suicide; SARS-Cov2; pandemic.

**Results:** Multiple factors can account for an increase in suicide rates such as isolation with a sense of decreased belongingness and increased burdensomeness. A synergy with known suicide precipitants can also occur such as domestic violence, intra-familial conflicts, alcohol consumption and access to means. Media communication can represent a danger with constant reports about the crisis. And lastly the loss of employment and financial stressors can produce an important impact.

**Conclusions:** In conclusion, Covid-19 will produce an important impact in many spheres of society, one of which will be mental health. If at the start of this crisis a widespread sense of solidarity was present with the maintenance of precipitant factors for suicide we expect to see an increase in suicide rates.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Suicide; SARS-Cov2

### EPP0335

#### Changes in sleep quality amidst COVID-19 pandemic among psychiatric patients in Romania

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**Introduction:** Sleep disturbances can occur as a result of major stressful events. Additionally, research evidence suggests that