

Abstract

The COVID-19 global pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health conditions of US adults. Even people with no pre-existing mental health conditions are at risk for psychological distress because of the impact the virus has on everyday life (Holingue et al., 2020). When examining the psychological distress during the pandemic, it is important to understand the effects of fear of COVID-19, isolation, unemployment, and financial distress. These factors may generate negative consequences in the form of stress, anxiety, and depression. Participants ($N=314$; mean age = 37; 61% male) recruited through the MTURK database answered a survey that measured fear of COVID-19, financial distress, money distress, isolation, social support, coping strategies, and psychological well being during the pandemic. Results from regression analysis indicate that there was a significant and positive association between fear of COVID-19 and stress ($\beta=.56, p<.000$), anxiety ($\beta=.63, p<.000$), and depression symptoms ($\beta=.49, p<.000$). Money distress was highly correlated with fear of COVID-19, depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms. Isolation and financial distress due to COVID-19 were significantly and positively associated with anxiety, depression, and stress symptoms. Whereas unemployment was significantly and positively associated with anxiety and stress symptoms, it was not significantly correlated with depressive symptoms. Other findings include single and younger participants had higher fear of COVID-19 compared with older and married participants. Implications for care, social support, and coping strategies will be discussed.

Key Words: COVID-19, financial distress, unemployment, isolation, psychological distress, coping strategies