The influence of lifestyle, social and coping behaviours and movement restriction on anxiety: A comparison between Malaysia, Iran and Pakistan

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Abstract

Studies reported many changes in individuals’ lifestyle, social and coping behaviours in the COVID-19 pandemic, yet little is known about the impact of movement restrictions on individuals’ mental health. We examined the effects of age, socioeconomic status (SES), and movement restrictions alongside individual behaviours on mental health in Malaysia, Iran and Pakistan. A total of 1030 respondents completed a series of questions on lifestyle, social and coping behaviours. Results showed that young adults were more anxious, lonelier, had lower social satisfaction, higher fear of isolation, poorer eating habits and less gratitude compared to middle-aged adults. The individual variance on lifestyle, social and coping behaviours contributed 42.0% in predicting anxiety and another 4.0% was from movement restrictions, age, and SES in our model. This suggests that national guidelines can exert detrimental effect on individual mental health with possible wide-ranging implications on citizens’ mental health for specific age groups.

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