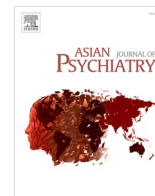




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Letter to the editor

**Addressing the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health**

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the weakness of public health readiness in structuring health care systems in various countries. It also provides lessons on the importance of building a common commitment by all parties to share a global responsibility for addressing prevalent vulnerabilities worldwide (Tandon, 2021a). According to previous research, the pandemic had a major impact on the mental health of various populations in Asia and globally. Furthermore, the emergence of the unexpected global pandemic with enormous mental health consequences requires valid information to guide the development of policies worldwide (Tandon, 2021b). This is because appropriate policies and planning help promote mental health (Nuryana, 2022). Another major concern is how to address the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health. After two years of social disruption and the destruction of various sectors, life slowly began to move towards a "normal" period (Tandon, 2022). In line with this phenomenon, concerns about mental health also arise because several countries have prepared policies on face-to-face learning after the pandemic.

This concern is reasonable considering the possibility of emotional disturbances, irritability, insomnia, depression, and stress symptoms associated with the imposed quarantine, especially among students who are more unstable with mental health. The long-term effects are relatively large and include anxiety, anger, depression, symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and behavioral changes such as avoiding crowds and always washing hands carefully. A warning and inspiration for the prevention of the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health were currently discussed in Kawakami et al. (Kawakami et al., 2022). It was suggested that concerns about the long-term impacts are not to be ignored because they can generate a threat to mental health in the future. From the school's perspective, the offline learning opening plan has to be conditioned in specific manner that the long-term impact does not prolong. In an atmosphere of fear, full of wild speculations and rumors, accurate information and appropriate policies are important (Tandon, 2021c), to promote mental health in schools. The reason is because mental health problems must be taken seriously and resolved quickly, especially in the field of education (Nuryana et al., 2022).

To address the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health, educators need to provide insightful perspectives in schools to face "normal" learning. Mental health is a condition of a person's well-being to manage stress and adapt well, work productively, and contribute to the environment. Consequently, the health dimension must be fulfilled by schools as regulations to overcome the problem. Thorough school planning is part of the intervention for helping students develop healthy coping skills (Veldhuis et al., 2021). The dimensions developed are emotional, intellectual, social, physical, and spiritual. Each of them is interconnected and important for addressing the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health. At school, every individual must be able to take a vacation, listen to songs and

music, as well as taking spiritual activities, for creating a dynamic balance of the soul (Septi Purnama and Prasetyo, 2016). Additionally, school programs to promote mental health need to be prepared such as adequate hand washing facilities, healthy canteens, posters, media, campaigns, as well as a comfortable environment for face-to-face learning. Students' mental health is closely related to the demands of the environment, hence the role of the school is important to develop programs when "normal" learning begins. Therefore, the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health can be managed properly.

Ethical statement

Hereby, I Zalik Nuryana consciously assure that for the manuscript "Addressing the long-term impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health" the following is fulfilled:

- 1) This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.
- 2) The paper is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere.
- 3) The paper reflects the authors' own research and analysis in a truthful and complete manner.
- 4) The paper properly credits the meaningful contributions of co-authors and co-researchers.
- 5) The results are appropriately placed in the context of prior and existing research.
- 6) All sources used are properly disclosed (correct citation). Literally copying of text must be indicated as such by using quotation marks and giving proper reference.
- 7) All authors have been personally and actively involved in substantial work leading to the paper, and will take public responsibility for its content.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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