

Effects of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions on symptoms for individuals with eating disorders

Module: Introduction to research

Module code: BMHP5005_LON

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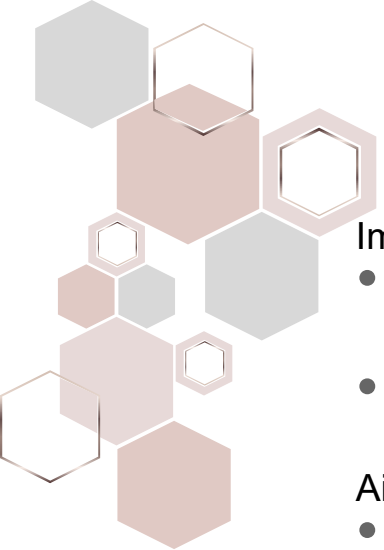
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(The Treatment Specialist, 2020)



Introduction

Importance of specific literature review:

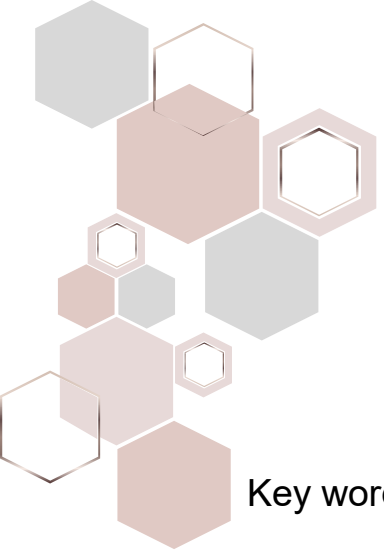
- Over 700.00 cases in the United Kingdom, numbers considered underestimated as many are undiagnosed. (NICE, 2019)
- One third of sufferers have suicidal thoughts. (Smith, Zuromski and Dodd, 2018)

Aim:

- A clear representation of effects the pandemic restrictions had on eating disorder population. The aim is to offer evidence based of the impact that the pandemic had directly on people with eating disorders and their symptoms from emotional coping strategies effectiveness to efficacy onf treatments for managing symptoms.

Objectives:

- Through a systematic literature review of 3 primary research studies effects of pandemic of individuals suffering with eating disorders will be evaluate . All 3 studies have similar themes but explore different aspects and levels of impact on symptoms.



Methods

Systematic literature review

Data bases used: Library & Learning Resources, BMC, Science Direct, ProQuest Central

Key words:

Covid-19 impact, eating disorders, coronavirus, pandemic, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, bulimia nervosa, binge-eating, effects on eating disorder, UK, United Kingdom, England

Inclusion criteria:

Date of publication: 2020-2022
Language: English
Location: United Kingdom
Type of search: Journals, articles, primary research, scholarly articles, journal of eating disorders (BMC)

Exclusion criteria

Books, magazines, studies published in other language than English or outside the United Kingdom

Literature review

Author(s), title, and year of publication	Aim of study	Methods and Sample size and characteristics	Summary of main findings
Dawn Branley-Bell, Catherine V. Talbot “Exploring the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and UK lockdown on individuals with experience of eating disorders, 2020	Determination of impact that coronavirus pandemic had on eating disorders symptoms. After evaluation being able to make future recommendations for improvement in healthcare and policy.	Online survey with a sample size of 153. Participants were recruited via social media. 24 participants were excluded after incompleting of first page of survey, 129 final participants. Age; 16-65 years old, 121 female, 7 male, 1 undisclosed	Pandemic impacted eating disorder population mainly negatively. Efficiency of treatments was minimal, lockdown, social distance, disruption to routine, change in physical activity caused increase in anxiety, symptoms worsening, unhappiness, control loss over their diets, reduced access to healthcare. (Branley-Bell and V. Talbot, 2020)
Vuillier, Laura et al. “The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Individuals With Eating Disorders: the Role of Emotion Regulation and Exploration of Online Treatment Experiences”, 2020	If emotion regulation and emotion coping strategies in the online psychological treatment have improved patients wellbeing and symptoms. The aim is to influence future strategies dealing with eating disorders.	Online survey Quantitative data collection on 207 participants, 131 females, 76 males, and a thematic analysis of this qualitative research	83.1% feel like symptoms have worsened as they are unable to manage emotions like anxiety about the unknown situation, pandemic. They reported deterioration of mental health, poor emotional clarity and the inability to accept own emotions resulting in having fewer emotional regulation strategies. (Vuillier et al., 2022)
Konstantinos Ioannidis et al. “Associations between COVID-19 pandemic impact, dimensions of behaviour and eating disorders: A longitudinal UK-based study, 2022	Analysing how factors about the impact of the pandemic correlate with eating disorders and analyse if the stress from pandemic has increased symptoms by analysing 2 markers, impulsivity and compulsive behaviours	Pre and mid-pandemic data collection. 489 adults from the Neuroscience in Psychiatry Network.	As a result of pandemic and lockdowns, conflicts at home increased, this increasing symptoms, as well as the change in family dynamics. Impulsivity and lack of perseverance coincide with the risk of increased symptoms. (Ioannidis et al., 2022)

Results

Identified themes

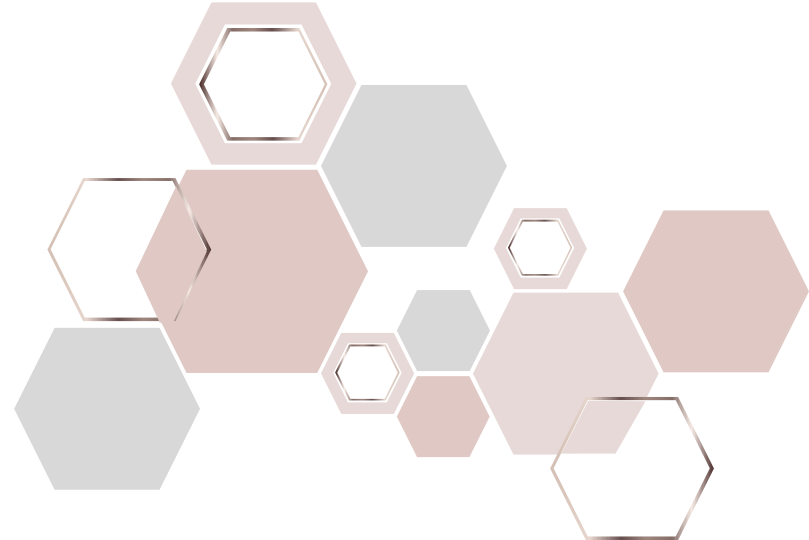
- Routine disruption
- Change in physical activity
- Impact of social distancing
- Limited access to health and social care systems
- Change in family dynamics

Key findings

- Pandemic restrictions/lockdown were mainly detrimental to eating disorders individuals
- Inability to manage emotions
- Deteriorating mental health
- Emotional regulating strategies in online support were ineffective
- Loss of control of eating diets



(Google.co.uk, 2022)



Discussion

Strengths of studies

All studies suggest future recommendations as they were able to point out inequalities in health care service providers or even lack of efficiency in treatments during lockdown.

All studies have provided vast data considering effects of pandemic on eating disorder population. (Branley-Bell and V. Talbot, 2020)

Weaknesses of studies

Some findings may be inaccurate due to studies being conducted online making them easily tempered with.

Female against male participants rates were higher making the study possibly inaccurate when applied to larger population. (Ioannidis et al., 2022)

Participants for one study were recruited thru social media making those without access to technology unable to participate, and therefore making the study potentially bias.

Future recommendations

Incorporation of treatment of emotion regulating skills in therapy. (Branley-Bell and Talbot, 2020)

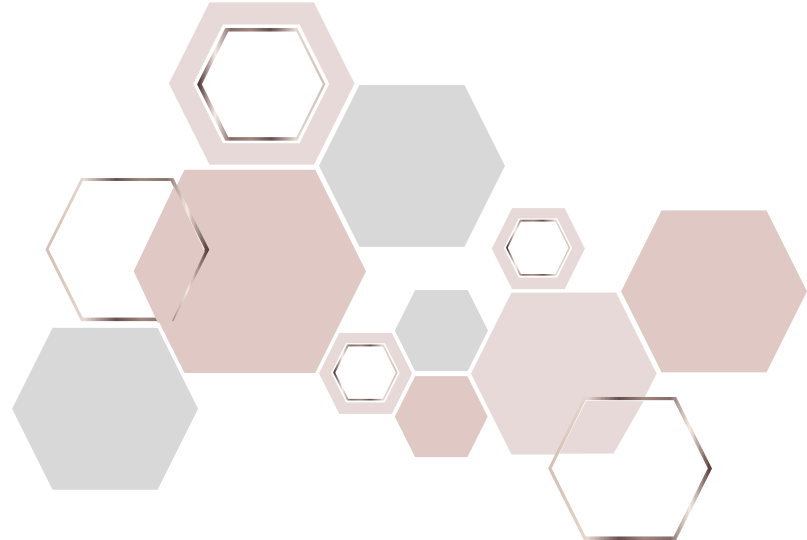
The necessity of long term monitoring on mental health effects the pandemic had on eating disorders individuals. (Katzman, 2021)

Conclusions

- Vast consequences of symptoms on eating disorders population have been found during the restrictions of Coronavirus Pandemic. Research showed that the majority were detrimental and negative like deteriorating mental health and inaccuracy in eating habits.

Evaluated studies found different dimensions of symptomatic sphere but did come with a series of limitations.

- As these restrictions were unprecedented for modern times, recommendations for future similar situations were made.



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