

# Impacto Psicológico por la pandemia COVID-19 en los Profesionales de la Salud de la provincia de Cañete-Perú

Yrene Uribe-Hernández<sup>1</sup>, José Ruiz-Tejada<sup>2</sup>  
Brian Meneses-Claudio<sup>3</sup>, Nahuel Gonzalez-Cordero<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú). correo: [yrene.uribe2018@gmail.com](mailto:yrene.uribe2018@gmail.com). ORCID: 0000-0001-5893-9262

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Nacional de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle (Perú). correo: [jruizt@une.edu.pe](mailto:jruizt@une.edu.pe). ORCID: 0000-0003-4387-4085

<sup>3</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú) correo: [bmeneses@uch.edu.pe](mailto:bmeneses@uch.edu.pe). ORCID: 0000-0002-4550-4793

<sup>4</sup>Universidad de Ciencias y Humanidades (Perú). correo: [nahuelgonzalezcor@gmail.com](mailto:nahuelgonzalezcor@gmail.com). ORCID: 0000-0002-2563-8743

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Yrene Uribe-Hernández <sup>1</sup>  
José Ruiz-Tejada <sup>2</sup>  
Brian Meneses-Claudio <sup>3</sup>  
Nahuel Gonzalez-Cordero <sup>4</sup>

## Resumen

El impacto psicológico es uno de los sucesos más importantes en la salud mental de la población, aunque en los profesionales de la salud, la situación pone en riesgo no solamente su salud mental, sino además de una mala calidad de atención a los pacientes, por lo que su objetivo de investigación es determinar el impacto psicológico por la pandemia COVID – 19 en profesionales de la salud. Es un estudio de enfoque cuantitativo, descriptivo, transversal y no experimental, con una población total de 192 profesionales de la salud, que respondieron una encuesta digital de datos sociodemográficos y el instrumento de recolección de datos Depression, Anxiety and Stress (DASS-21). En los resultados observamos que, 115(59,9%) de los profesionales de la salud tienen un impacto psicológico bajo, 16(8,3%) impacto psicológico medio y 61(31,8%) impacto psicológico alto. En conclusión, se debe tener en cuenta la promoción y prevención de la salud mental en los profesionales de la salud durante la atención en pacientes COVID – 19, puesto a que va a permitir en el profesional mantenerse adecuadamente estable y que pueda disminuir los cuadros de depresión, ansiedad y estrés.

**Palabras clave:** Coronavirus; Pandemia; Depresion; Ansiedad; Estres; Salud Mental.

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<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú). correo: yrene.uribe2018@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0001-5893-9262

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Nacional de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle (Perú). correo: jruizt@une.edu.pe. ORCID: 0000-0003-4387-4085

<sup>3</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú) correo: bmeneses@uch.edu.pe. ORCID: 0000-0002-4550-4793

<sup>4</sup>Universidad de Ciencias y Humanidades (Perú). correo: nahuelgonzalezcor@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-2563-8743

# Psychological Impact for the COVID-19 Pandemic on Health Professionals of the province of Cañete-Perú

Yrene Uribe-Hernández <sup>1</sup>  
José Ruiz-Tejada <sup>2</sup>  
Brian Meneses-Claudio <sup>3</sup>  
Nahuel Gonzalez-Cordero <sup>4</sup>

## Abstract

The psychological impact is one of the most important events in the mental health of the population, although in health professionals, the situation puts not only their mental health at risk, but also a poor quality of care for patients, that is why this research work has as objective to determine the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health professionals. It is a study with a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional and non-experimental approach, with a total population of 192 health professionals, who responded to a digital survey of sociodemographic data and the data collection instrument Depression, Anxiety and Stress (DASS-21) . In the results, we observe that 115 (59.9%) of health professionals have a low psychological impact, 16 (8.3%) have a medium psychological impact and 61 (31.8%) have a high psychological impact. In conclusion, the promotion and prevention of mental health should be taken into account in health professionals during the care of COVID-19 patients, since it will allow the professional to remain adequately stable and it can reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress.

**Keywords:** Coronavirus; Pandemic; Depression; Anxiety; Stress; Mental health.

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<sup>1</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú). correo: yrene.uribe2018@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0001-5893-9262

<sup>2</sup>Universidad Nacional de Educación Enrique Guzmán y Valle (Perú). correo: jruizt@une.edu.pe. ORCID: 0000-0003-4387-4085

<sup>3</sup>Universidad Nacional de Cañete (Perú) correo: bmeneses@uch.edu.pe. ORCID: 0000-0002-4550-4793

<sup>4</sup>Universidad de Ciencias y Humanidades (Perú). correo: nahuelgonzalezcor@gmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-2563-8743

## INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, the coronavirus (COVID - 19) has been one of the diseases that has considerably affected the population, but especially in health professionals, who, seeing high rates of infections and the high demand of patients (Addis et al., 2021), has generated in them a mental vulnerability where pictures of depression, anxiety and stress are present (Xiao et al., 2020), and that likewise have been considered as one of the most recurrent public health diseases since the pandemic started (Bekele et al., 2021)(Alkhamees et al., 2020).

Although at present many of the health professionals consider COVID-19 as a syndemic, because it is related to other diseases in the same time and geographical area that generate a negatively higher health effect in the population (Sánchez et al., 2020).

Likewise, the mental exhaustion they have is becoming more and more noticeable in health professionals (Lozano, 2020), since it is evidenced by a poor quality of care and job dissatisfaction (García et al., 2020), where the increase in patients and the workload they present providing health services are factors that negatively harm both mentally and occupationally in themselves (Bekele et al., 2021)(Werner et al., 2020).

Therefore, the need to carry out immediate preventive measures that evaluate the mental load in health professionals is efficient to reduce depression, anxiety and stress (Khan et al., 2020), where in health professionals they are capable to be able to cope with the situation, and to be able to carry out their work properly (Wang et al., 2020)(Li et al., 2021).

In a study carried out in Spain (Santamaría et al., 2020), during the health emergency that took place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a high rate of stress and work overload was revealed in health professionals, and that the impact on their mental health indicated that they presented symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress and even sleep disorder, where in 421 health professionals

27.4% had a high depressive index, 37% high Anxiety index, 46.7% high stress index and 28.9% had a high sleep disorder index.

In a study carried out in Cameroon (Nguépy et al., 2021), they interpreted in their results that 292 health professionals had high rates of depression and anxiety, where 33.9% have moderate depression, 9.6% depression severe; Regarding anxiety, 27.1% presented moderate anxiety and 15.1% severe anxiety.

In a study carried out in Turkey (Tengilimoğlu et al., 2021), it was observed in 2076 professionals that, in their majority, 86.9% of health professionals presented depression, anxiety and stress, due to the fear of being able to infect their families from COVID - 19 by having direct contact with patients positive for the disease.

Therefore, the research objective is to determine the Psychological Impact during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals.

## METHOD

### Research type and Design

The present study, due to its properties and the way of data collection, is given in a quantitative approach, with a descriptive-transversal and non-experimental design (Fernández & Baptista, 2015).

### Population

The total population is made up of 192 professionals from the province of Cañete who work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Inclusion criteria

Health professionals working in COVID - 19 services:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Nursing Technicians

### Technique and Instrument

The technique was the digital survey, which was carried out through the Google form, to put the data collection instruments Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS - 21) that aims to measure the psychological impact of the COVID pandemic - 19 in health professionals.

The depression, anxiety and stress scale (DASS-21), each of the three DASS scales contains 14 items, divided into subscales of 2 to 5 items with similar content. The depression scale assesses dysphoria, hopelessness, devaluation of life, self-loathing, lack of interest or participation, anhedonia, and inertia. The anxiety scale assesses autonomic arousal, skeletal muscle effects, situational anxiety, and the subjective experience of anxious affect. The stress scale is sensitive to levels of non-specific chronic arousal. It evaluates the difficulty to relax, nervous excitement and discomfort, agitation or irritation, over reactivity and impatience. It consists of 4 response alternatives, 0 "not at all", 1 "sometimes", 2 "most of the time" and 3 "most of the time" that serve to rate the grade to which they have experienced each state during last week (Tran et al., 2013)(Lovibond, 1995).

The validity of the instrument to measure the psychological impact was determined based on the exploratory factor analysis technique. The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin sample adequacy measure obtained a coefficient of 0.955 (KMO > 0.5), while the Bartlett sphericity test obtained significant results ( $\chi^2$  approx. = 3752.065; gl = 210; p = 0.000).

The reliability of the instrument was determined with the Cronbach's Alpha statistical test, in which a coefficient of 0.972 (> 0.8) was obtained for the items (i = 21).

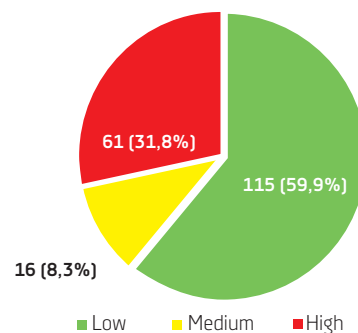
### Place and Application of the Instrument

The survey was conducted to measure the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health professionals that was carried out in the province of Cañete.

In the data collection processing, prior coordination was carried out with health professionals (Doctors, Nurses and Nursing Technicians) who work in hospital institutions in the province of Cañete to participate in the research work, although limitations were evidenced because not all staff were available to fill out the digital surveys.

## RESULTS

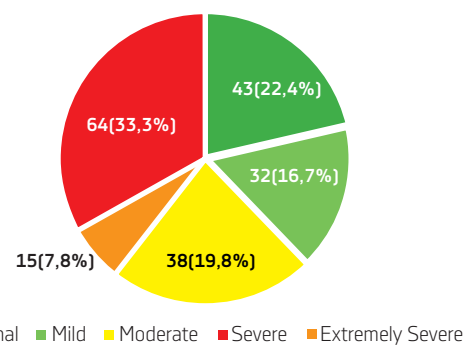
### PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT



**Figure 1.** Psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health professionals

In Figure 1, we observe that 115 (59.9%) of health professionals have a low psychological impact, 16 (8.3%) have a medium psychological impact and 61 (31.8%) have a high psychological impact.

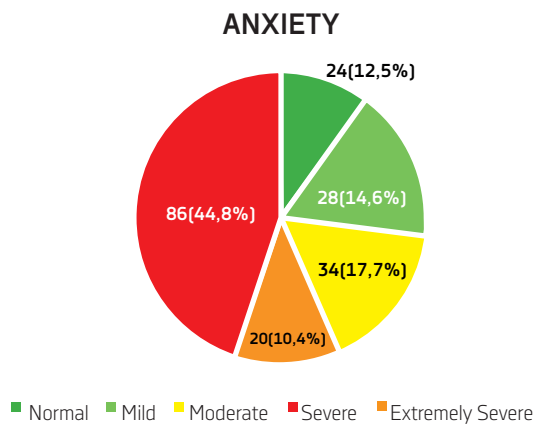
### DEPRESSION



**Figure 2.** Psychological impact in its dimension Depression during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals

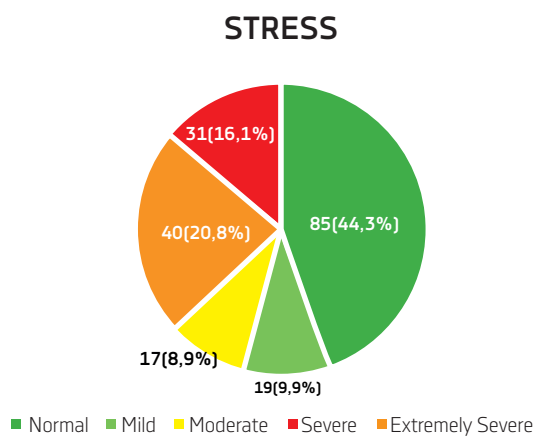
In figure 2, we observe in the depression dimension that 43 (22.4%) of health professionals have a normal depression, 32 (16.7%) mild depression, 38 (19.8%) moderate depression, 15 (7.8%) severe depression and 64 (33.3%) extremely severe depression.

Figure 4 shows that 85 (44.3%) of health professionals have normal stress, 19 (9.9%) mild stress, 17 (8.9%) moderate stress, 40 (20.8%) severe stress and 31 (16.1%) extremely severe stress.



**Figure 3.** Psychological impact in its dimension Anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals

Figure 3 shows that 24 (12.5%) of health professionals have normal anxiety, 28 (14.6%) mild anxiety, 34 (17.7%) moderate anxiety, 20 (10.4%) severe anxiety and 86 (44.8%) extremely severe anxiety.



**Figure 4.** Psychological impact in its dimension Stress during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals

**Table 1.** Psychological Impact in relation to sex during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals.

			Psychological Impact			
			Low	Medium	High	Total
Sex	Female	Count	67	9	35	111
		% within sex	60,4%	8,1%	31,5%	100,0%
	Male	Count	48	7	26	81
		% within sex	59,3%	8,6%	32,1%	100,0%
Total	Count	115	16	61	192	
	% within sex	59,9%	8,3%	31,8%	100,0%	

### CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's Chi-square	,030 <sup>a</sup>	2	,985
Likelihood ratio	,030	2	,985
Linear by linear association	,015	1	,901
N of valid cases	192		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected a count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.75.

In Table 1, the psychological impact is related to the sex of health professionals, in which it was determined with Pearson's chi-square test ( $X^2$ ). The level of significance of the test obtained a value of 6.75 ( $p > 0.05$ ) ( $X^2 = 0.30$ ;  $d.f = 2$ ). Therefore, we can interpret that 67 (60.4%) of female health professionals have a low psychological impact, 9 (8.1%) a medium psychological impact and 35 (31.5%) a high psychological impact; As for male health professionals, 48 (59.3%) have a low psychological impact, 7 (8.6%) have a medium psychological impact and 26 (32.1%) have a high psychological impact.

**Table 2.** Psychological Impact in relation to the profession during the COVID-19 pandemic in health professionals

			Psychological Impact			
			Low	Medium	High	Total
Profession	Doctor	Count	22	6	19	47
		% within Profession	46,8%	12,8%	40,4%	100,0%
	Nurse	Count	44	5	26	75
		% within Profession	58,7%	6,7%	34,7%	100,0%
	Nursing Technicians	Count	49	5	16	70
		% within Profession	70,0%	7,1%	22,9%	100,0%
Total	Count	115	16	61	192	
	% within Profession	59,9%	8,3%	31,8%	100,0%	

### CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's Chi-square	7,090 <sup>a</sup>	4	,131
Likelihood ratio	7,103	4	,131
Linear by linear association	5,757	1	,016
N of valid cases	192		

a. 1 cells (11.1%) have expected a count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.92.

In Table 2, the psychological impact is related to the profession, in which it was determined with Pearson's chi-square test ( $X^2$ ). The level of significance of the test obtained a value of 3.92 ( $p > 0.05$ ) ( $X^2 = 7.090$ ;  $d.f = 4$ ). We can interpret that, in health professionals who are Doctors, 2 (46.8%) have a low psychological impact, 6 (12.8%) have a medium psychological impact and 19 (40.4%) have a high psychological impact; in Nurses, 44 (58.7%) have a low psychological impact, 5 (6.7%) have a medium psychological impact and 26 (34.7%) have a high psychological impact; and in Nursing Technicians, 49 (70%) have a low psychological impact, 5 (7.1%) have a medium psychological impact and 16 (22.9%) have a high psychological impact.

### DISCUSSION

In the present research work on the psychological impact on health professionals, it was given from a focus on mental health and public health in the population that work especially in COVID-19 patients, due to the fact that strategies were used or sought that allow to prevent an imbalance at the emotional level of professionals and allow them to provide adequate care during their working hours.

In the results of psychological impact on health professionals, it is observed that they have a low level, this is because many of the people, especially health professionals, try to cope with the situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, since there are risks that involve major factors such as depression, anxiety and stress, which affect their mental health, so they look for ways to be able to promote or carry out strategies where they can keep their mental health balanced. In (Nguépy et al., 2021), they argue that depression, anxiety and stress are those that most compromise the mental health of those who work in the health field, since they are very vulnerable to any change that exists within their work and that when they face it, they will have the risk of presenting negative thoughts and that this puts their own mental health at risk.

In the results of the dimensions of the psychological impact, it can be observed that depression and anxiety are extremely compromised, this is because due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the health professionals know that they have to work overtime in the work, taking shifts which extend more than one day, problems falling asleep, changes in appetite, frustration, impotence and lack of spirit are factors that incite an increase in depression and anxiety in the person, and this can generate hypochondriacal behaviors. In (Santamaría et al., 2020), they interpreted that isolation within their work, insomnia, fatigue, worry about not seeing their families, insufficient food intake and excessive demand from patients increase the rates of depression and anxiety and this is becoming more noticeable as the health professional is not able to comply with what they do.

In relation to sex, it is observed that the female sex presents a lower emotional state than in the male sex, this is due to the fact that the mental level of the female sex is more compromised, although not only because of the pandemic, but also that they are more susceptible to their emotional state being more altered, where factors such as sadness, despair, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, stress, suffering and apathy, are factors that



put at risk that their emotional stability is completely negative. In (Tengilimoğlu et al., 2021), they interpreted that female mental health is more susceptible to drastic changes that may occur, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and that this generates very high depressive symptoms, since when depression becomes more critical, anxiety and stress levels complicate both their mental and physical health of them.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that the promotion and prevention of mental health should be taken into account in health professionals during the care of COVID-19 patients, since it will allow the professional to remain adequately stable and it can reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress.

It is concluded that mental health should be taken into account today as a public health problem, because many of the health professionals can improve their emotional state and allow them to carry out their work in a positive way.

The limitation of the present research study is that in our country few studies were carried out on the subject, since during the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health should be considered a high priority because in the long term it can generate conflicts and consequences in health professionals leaving consequences on their mental health due to COVID - 19.

This study will benefit that other studies can be carried out proposing this research and that they can choose to improve the public's knowledge about mental health presented by health professionals in times of a COVID-19 pandemic.

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