

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Exploring the Impact of Economic Crises on Mental Health: Narratives from Affected Individuals

Seyed Emad. Bateni¹, Amir Hossein. Khorshidi^{2*}

¹ PhD Candidat of Future Studies, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran

² Ph.D.Candidat in Public Law, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: Ahoseinkh14@gmail.com

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EDITOR:

Jeremiah Thuku Thuku

Department of Literary and Communication Studies, Laikipia University, Nyahururu, Kenya

jerethukuthuku@gmail.com

REVIEWER 1:

Pınar Reisoğlu

Faculty of Social Sciences, Recep Tayyip Erdogan University, Rize, Turkey

pınarreisoğlu@erdogan.edu.tr

REVIEWER 2:

Mehmet Çevik

Department of Social Sciences, Ankara University, Türkiye

mehmetcevik@asbu.edu.tr

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In discussing the relationship between economic conditions and substance use, you mention Carpenter et al. (2017) but do not explain how the economic downturns specifically elevate the risk of substance abuse. Adding a brief explanation of the mechanisms would enhance clarity.

The thematic analysis process is well-detailed. However, providing an example of how initial codes were generated and then grouped into themes would clarify the coding process for readers.

The table categorizing emotional impacts, coping strategies, and support systems is comprehensive. However, including specific quotes or excerpts from participants that illustrate each concept would provide richer qualitative evidence.

The section on depression mentions participants' loss of interest in activities. Including more specific examples of activities that participants used to enjoy but have since abandoned would make the findings more relatable and concrete.

You discuss substance use as a coping mechanism but do not address potential differences in substance use patterns among different demographics (e.g., age, gender). Discussing these differences could provide deeper insights.

The discussion aligns the study's findings with existing literature, but it could be strengthened by discussing any discrepancies or unique findings that diverge from prior research. This would highlight the study's contribution to the field.

The discussion on anxiety and stress mentions Tham et al. (2021). It would be beneficial to elaborate on any specific findings or insights from Tham et al. that are particularly relevant to your study's findings.

The section on perceived support systems is comprehensive. However, discussing the potential barriers to accessing these support systems (e.g., social stigma, lack of resources) would offer a more nuanced perspective.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The introduction references various studies but lacks a cohesive narrative connecting them to the current study's objectives. A concluding sentence summarizing how these studies frame the research question of this paper would strengthen the introduction.

The selection criteria for participants are well-defined. However, it would be helpful to provide more detail about the socioeconomic backgrounds of the participants, as economic crises may affect different socioeconomic groups differently.

You mention that interviews lasted approximately 60-90 minutes and were audio-recorded with consent. Including a brief description of how the data were stored and managed to ensure confidentiality and security would enhance the ethical considerations section.

When discussing shame and guilt, you mention Volkos and Symvoulakis (2021). Including a brief explanation of how societal stigma exacerbates these feelings would provide more context and depth to your argument.

The paragraph on grief and loss mentions Fenge et al. (2012) but does not elaborate on how the current study's findings compare with those of Fenge et al. Adding a comparative analysis would enrich the discussion.

The strategies for coping with emotional turmoil are well-outlined. Including a brief discussion on the effectiveness and potential limitations of these coping strategies would provide a balanced view.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.