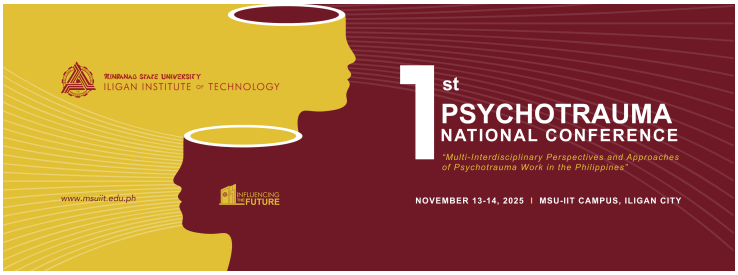

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Mental Health Outcomes of Persons with Comorbidities during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Prevalence and Predictors

Thursday, November 13, 2025 3:00 PM (15 minutes)

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected global mental health, with individuals having pre-existing medical conditions facing heightened vulnerability due to disrupted healthcare access, fear of infection, and financial strain. Despite growing evidence of the pandemic's psychological toll, limited research has focused on this medically at-risk population. The present study addressed this gap by examining the prevalence and predictors of psychological distress, generalized anxiety, and depression among adults with comorbid medical conditions in the Philippines. Using a cross-sectional design and purposive sampling, 401 participants aged 18 and above completed an online survey assessing sociodemographic background, psychological distress (K6), anxiety (GAD-7), depression (PHQ-9), and pandemic-related adversity. Descriptive statistics and multiple logistic regression analyses were performed. Results revealed high prevalence rates of psychological distress (76.06%), generalized anxiety (53.61%), and depression (59.60%). Younger age (<23 years), lack of a partner, and pre-existing psychological illness were identified as consistent risk factors across all three mental health outcomes. In contrast, protective factors included rural residence, employment, higher household income (₱10,000–19,999 or >₱60,000), good perceived health, adequate sleep (6–8 hours), and medical insurance. Pandemic-related concerns, particularly healthcare system capacity and quarantine restrictions, were significantly associated with higher anxiety levels. These findings emphasize the urgent need for accessible, context-specific mental health interventions and policies that address the compounded vulnerabilities of individuals with medical comorbidities during public health crises.

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