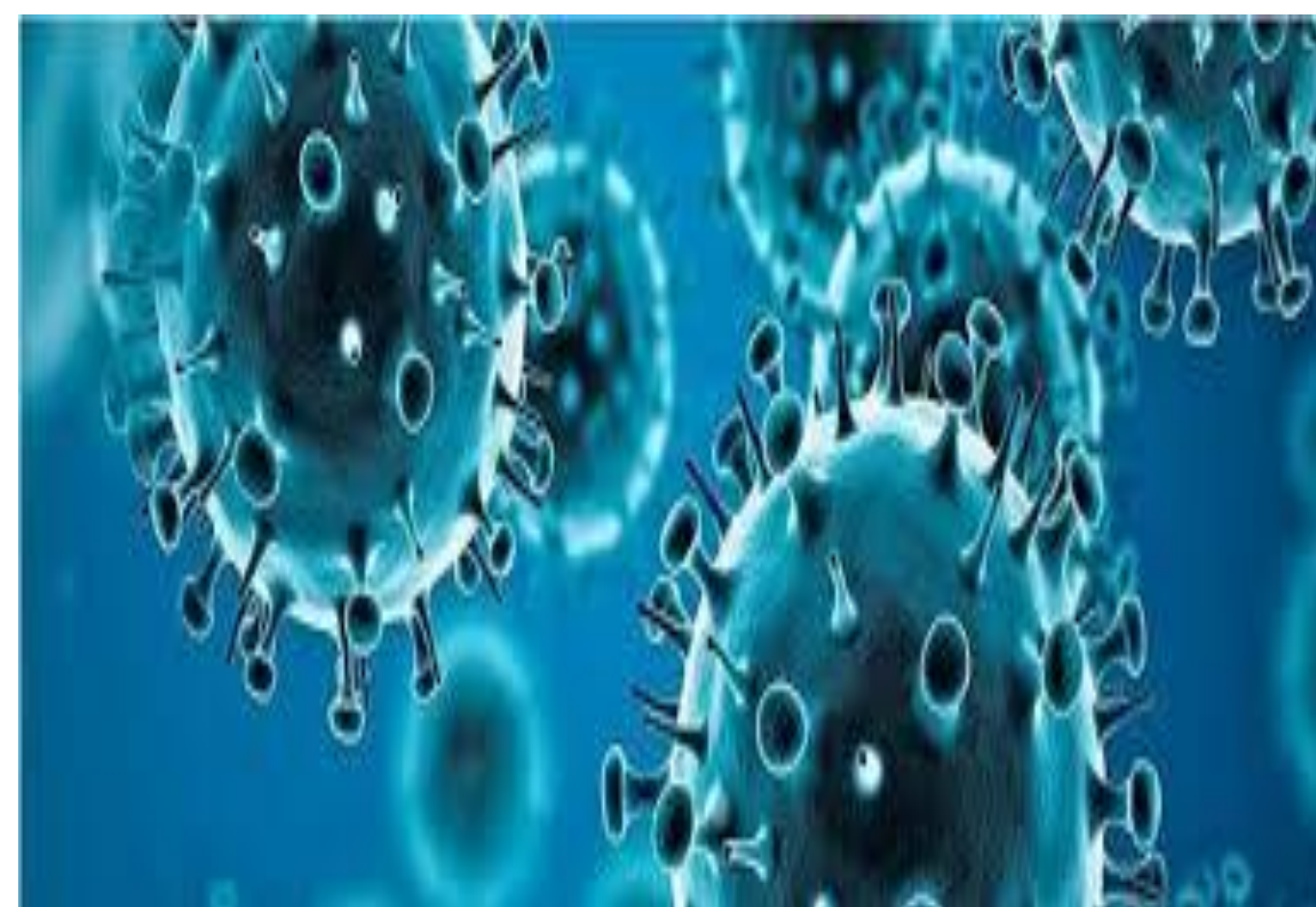


Introduction

The corona (COVID-19) pandemic has become a global concern and has impacted people worldwide. The research data is needed to formulate psychological interventions to lower the anxiety and stress levels in Pakistan. The aim of the study was to assess the anxiety and stress levels among the public of Karachi during COVID-pandemic.



Discussion

Previous researchers found female gender was at high risk of depression. -This research shows no association between gender and anxiety. Thirdly, this study indicates, showing concern related to COVID-19 was an associated risk factor related to anxiety and stress among the respondents. Government should introduce online relaxation activities to reduce panic and worry among the people. Furthermore, other researchers found applying precautionary measures was a protected factor related to high anxiety and stress among people. This study corresponds to it. Applying precautionary measures, especially maintaining social distancing was an associated risk factor related to stress and anxiety among the respondents while avoiding going out was a protective factor related to anxiety hence government should recommend people to stay at home.

Method

data was collected through an online survey regarding age, gender, education level, profession, physical symptoms in the past 14 days, knowledge and concerns about COVID-19, and precautionary measures against COVID-19. Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale om 2020/04/29 to 2020/05/03, (DASS-21) were used to assess mental health status. This study included 281 respondents from Karachi.



Results

In total 37.91% of respondents reported severe to extremely severe anxiety symptoms, and 23.13% reported severe to extremely severe stress symptoms. Many respondents were satisfied with the health information available (81.85%), spent 20 to 24 hours at home (90.75%), and took precautionary measures (98.22%). Students, matric education level, belonging to age group 20 to 30, 20 to 24 hours spent at home, showing concern related to family getting COVID were associated with higher anxiety levels ($P < 0.05$). Reporting physical symptoms, avoiding going out, and staying at home < 10 hours were associated with lower levels of anxiety ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion

During the outbreak of the corona pandemic, more than one-third of respondents reported severe to extremely severe anxiety and more than one-fifth reported severe to extremely severe stress. Our findings will help to identify vulnerable groups which are most likely to get affected psychologically by the COVID pandemic; This research will help to formulate psychological interventions to improve the mental health of vulnerable groups reporting high anxiety and lower the psychological impact of the outbreak

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