Survey on the Impact of the Pandemic on Family Life Across Cultures – Preliminary results

Anis Ben Brik, PhD

Associate Professor, College of Public Policy, Hamad Bin Khalifa University (Qatar)
AGENDA

1. Overview & Objectives
2. Methods
3. Preliminary results: Depression, Anxiety, Stress; Family Satisfaction; and Family Policies
4. Q &A
Overview

- The **COVID-19 Family Life Study** is a research study that explores the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on family life across cultures. The study aims to:
  - Track patterns of symptoms, causes, and risk factors of mental health in parents during the COVID-19 crisis
  - Understand the experiences of parents during the coronavirus pandemic
  - Identify parents’ needs for support services during the coronavirus pandemic
  - Understand coping skills and mechanisms among parents

[https://www.covidfamilystudy.org](https://www.covidfamilystudy.org)
Objectives

• More specifically, the study intends to answer the following research questions:
  o What are the prevalent stressors (e.g., depression, anxiety and PTSD) affecting parents during this crisis?
  o What are the factors worrying parents and children and how do these vary by socio-demographic factors?
  o What are psychological and social experiences of parents and children during the pandemic?
  o What are the individual, family and community coping mechanisms and strategies to help manage emotional distress during this pandemic?
  o What are the policies, programs and services families are seeking?
Methods

• The data was collected via online survey starting May 30, 2020 that was translated by volunteers into 18 languages.

• The online survey reached out to parents of parent or a carer of a child of less than 18 years old.

• The study sample was recruited through a variety of channels including a call to participate via various social media.
Methods

- Europe (18): Germany, France, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Croatia, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, UK
- Asia (8): China, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Philippines, Australia
- Latin America (9): Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Columbia, Chile, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru
- Africa (5): Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ivory Coast
- Middle East & North Africa (13): Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, UAE, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco
- North America (2): USA, Canada
Partners

• We would like to thank and acknowledge the contribution of the International Federation for Family Development for their data collection support.

• We would like to thank Mr. Ignacio Socías and José Alejandro Vázquez, IFFD
Preliminary results

• As of today, **48,356** responses received.

**What is your gender?**

- **Female**: 68%
- **Male**: 32%
Preliminary results

What is your relationship status?

- In a relationship/married and cohabiting: 83%
- Never married
- Divorced
- Widowed

In a relationship/married but living apart
Preliminary results:

Intergenerational solidarity

Do you have caring responsibilities for any of the following?

- Elderly relatives or...: 27%
- People with long term...: 3%
- Grandchildren: 3%
- Not applicable: 60%
- Other (please specify): 13%
Preliminary results: DASS-21 (Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale-21)

How much the following statement applied to you?

- I felt there was no meaning to life
- I knew my heartbeat had changed even though I hadn't...
- I felt like I was worthless as a person
- I felt like I was going to panic
- I felt depressed and had no motivation
- I felt restless
- I got worried about situations in which I could have...
- I felt shaky (for example, in my hands)
- I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things
- I couldn’t seem to experience any positive feeling at all
- I found it hard to wind down

Not caring for Elderly  Caring for Elderly
Preliminary results: Family Satisfaction (FACES IV, Olsen, 2010)

- The degree of closeness between family members.
- Your family’s ability to cope with stress.
- Your family’s ability to be flexible.
- Your family’s ability to share positive experiences.
- The quality of communication between family members.
- Your family’s ability to solve conflicts.
- The way problems are discussed.
- The fairness of criticism in your family.
- Family member’s concern for each other.
- The amount of time you spend together as a family.
- Your family’s ability to cope with stress.
- The degree of closeness between family members.
Preliminary results: Family Policies

- Mental health support for children and teenagers
- Parenting counselling support
- Health coverage for all citizens
- Access to Child Care
- Access to Elder Care
- Paid sick days
- Unemployment benefits related to COVID-19 such as an employer subsidy
- Family Health Insurance
- Supporting parents with childcare needs
- Family Medical Leave
- Financial support for elderly
- Free and open digital tools to support remote learning for areas
- Paid leave for parents for childcare
- Marital counselling support
- Flexible work arrangements, including teleworking and work from home
- Health coverage for all citizens
- Parenting counselling support
- Mental Health Support Program including telephone counseling
- Mental health support for children and teenagers

- Cash for families
- Flexible payment plans for loans and credit cards (housing, car, ...)
Q&A
THANK YOU