Peer Review Report

Review Report on Social Disconnectedness and Mental Health Problems During the COVID-19 Pandemic in China: A Moderated Mediation Model

Original Article, Int J Public Health

EVALUATION

Q 1   Please summarize the main findings of the study.

Social disconnectedness was positively associated with mental health issues, and the perceived isolation significantly mediated the correlation. Covid-19 concern played a moderating effect between the two.

Q 2   Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

Limitation: online convenient sampling
Strenght: large sample, importatn topic

Q 3   Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

The social disconnectedness and mental health problems during the Covid-19 pandemic in China a moderated mediation model, investigated an important issue using a relatively large sample. Overall, this is a good study with appropriate research design and analysis methods. The results and discussions are fine. Here are some suggestions.

1. The Introduction can be organized more smooth, a graph/framework regarding the research hypotheses can be added along with the hypotheses, which can make it clearer because the authors had both mediation and moderation variables. By the way, the H3a, H3b, H3c, seem not correct? typing errors? take the H3a as an example, social disconnectedness moderates the direct effect of social disconnectedness on mental health problems? the first social disconnectedness should be the covid-19 concern, right?

2. The Methods section, the measurements of key concepts, such as social disconnectedness, perceived isolation and covid-19 concern should have citation sources. If the authors designed these items by themselves, they should discuss with prior literature and justify the measurements.

3. The mental health issues, included anxiety, loneliness, and depression. I suggest the authors use these three as dependent variables separately. The current concept of "mental health problems" is too vague.

4. The analysis method: which software did you use? There is no need to represent the math formula here since the authors only applied the models, and the math formulas were relatively naive. Instead, what types of regressions (OLS, or ordinal logit or ordinal probit?) should be reported. How the mediation and moderation analysis were analyzed should be reported.

5.The results can be improved. For each paragraph, it is suggested the authors report the concluded finding first, then report the detail technical issues.
6. The discussion should have more linkages with prior studies.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 — Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes

Q 5 — Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes

Q 6 — Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes

Q 7 — Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 — Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

Yes

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 — Originality   ▮▮▮▮▯

Q 10 — Rigor   ▮▮▮▯▯

Q 11 — Significance to the field   ▮▮▮▮▯

Q 12 — Interest to a general audience   ▮▮▮▮▯

Q 13 — Quality of the writing   ▮▮▮▮▯

Q 14 — Overall scientific quality of the study   ▮▮▮▮▯

REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 — Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Major revisions.