

Responses

Dr. Kuo, Jing-Houng

Professor, Chinese Culture University

Thank you for your comments on the paper of “The Crisis and Turning Point of Adolescents in the Post-Pandemic Era in Greater China: A Comparative Analysis of Social Care, Integration Promotion, and Mental and Physical Health”. I strongly agree that there is no exception how the COVID pandemic has affected people’s the perception , attitude and behavior all over the world.

Nevertheless, this is a joint project among China, Macau and Taiwan. The first data collection was conducted in 2018 before the COVID pandemic, focusing on family functioning and resilience towards the influence of the adolescent’s negative emotional state and disturbance; the second data collection was conducted in 2022 during the COVID pandemic, focusing on internet use, social support resilience towards the influence of the approach to screen up the predictive variables to account for the adolescent’s negative emotional state and disturbance.

In this study, we just described the societal phenomenon among the cities of three regions (China, Taiwan, and Macao) as well as tried to find the major predictable variables to account for the adolescent’s negative emotional state and disturbance. Besides, these findings will contrast the data in 2018. In general, we found the family functioning and internet use were the key influences on the adolescent’s negative emotional state and disturbance.

We appreciated of Dr. Kim’s comments and suggestions which will refine our study. We will separate suggestions in the different regions and take the sibling variable into account.

Dr. Lin, Hsuan-Hsiang

Professor, Chinese Culture University

Thanks a lot for Prof. Kim’s comments and the questions from the audience.

Since I did not write the paper, and the topic of the paper is not my expertise, it is very difficult for me to respond to Prof. Kim's comments on behalf of Dean Kuo. However, I have taken notes of the main points of Prof. Kim's comments, and I will take your comments back to Taiwan and convey them to Dean Kuo.

I would like to take a moment to illustrate the connection between mental health, social welfare and peace. In the field of international relations, when we talk about war and peace, the first relevant factors that come to mind are geopolitics, economic interdependence, international

institutions, regime type, technological and weaponry development, etc. Constructivists may also add ideological factors such as identity and ideology (e.g. nationalism). Therefore, according to the conventional thinking in international relations, mental health and social welfare may be relegated to the status of so-called “low politics”.

In recent years, however, the IR community has begun to pay attention to the impact of emotions on international relations, and new area of research called “emotion and IR” has emerged. Such research can help us understand empirically how emotions play a role in international relations. On a normative level, however, emotions can have negative effects on international relations, such as making people less willing to compromise, or even escalating conflict. In the case of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we can see that the words and actions of the parties involved are full of emotions. In such a situation, it is difficult for rational dialogue to exist. From this point of view, it can be said that there is a close relationship between emotion management and peace, and that emotion management should also become an important topic in peace study.

But how is emotion management possible? My hypothesis is that the more mentally healthy a person is, the more likely she is capable of managing her emotions. If this hypothesis can be proven to be valid, then a positive relationship between mental health and peace can be established. Inspired by Dean Kuo's paper, I further hypothesize that if people are exposed to unfavorable social environments such as poverty and isolation over a long period of time, it will have a negative impact on their mental health, causing them to become depressed, anxious, and thus more aggressive. As we all know, adolescence is an important stage of personality formation, and once a distorted personality develops in adolescence, its impact on mental health may last for a lifetime. Therefore, according to Dean Kuo's study, the government has the responsibility to improve the social conditions that affect mental health through social welfare policies and measures.

Based on the above discussion, my reasoning is that for the sake of peace, we must consider the possible negative impact of emotions on peace. In order to manage emotions, we must pay attention to mental health, especially the mental health of the youth, and therefore the government must improve the social conditions affecting mental health through social welfare policies. Following this line of thought, youth mental health and social welfare is no longer just an issue of “low politics”, but an important issue concerning peace and war.