



Short communication

Does suicidal ideation increase during the second COVID-19 lockdown?



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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study aimed to investigate the predictive factors of suicidal ideation during the second lockdown in Greece. The respondents presented a 4.32% suicidal ideation in the second lockdown, which did not differ significantly to the initial 4.81%. Anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation during the first lockdown and living with a person with frail health and vulnerable for COVID-19 severe infection emerged as significant risk factors for suicidal ideation during the second lockdown, after controlling for gender, age, and mental health history. Depression was found as the only significant prognostic factor for suicidal ideation incidence of the second lockdown.

1. Introduction

The societies worldwide have been suffering from subsequent waves of COVID-19 pandemic for more than a year. This pandemic may be linked with severe psychosocial consequences in the community, while its impact on suicidal behavior remains questionable (Jefsen et al., 2020). Studies have shown an increase of suicidal ideation from the initial to the last weeks of the first lockdown period (Killgore et al., 2020; Papadopoulou et al., 2021), so it remains crucial to investigate changes of suicidal ideation during different lockdown periods as the pandemic unfolds, changes that merit attention of the policy makers and researchers.

To the best of our knowledge, there is one follow-up study (Veldhuis et al., 2021) in the general population during five months within COVID-19 pandemic in the USA, showing a significant increase over time in the mean scores of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. However, no conclusions can be made from this study regarding the possible increase in suicidal ideation probable cases.

A web-based survey of our research team exploring the psychosocial

impact of COVID-19 pandemic during the first lockdown period in Greece showed 5.20% prevalence of suicidal ideation (Papadopoulou et al., 2021). Taking into consideration that the second wave of the pandemic was much fiercer worldwide, an up-to-date investigation of suicidal ideation possible cases in the second lockdown is of crucial importance. Consequently, this longitudinal study aimed to investigate the prevalence and the prognostic factors of suicidal ideation during the second lockdown in Greece and the within-person differences in comparison to the first lockdown as well.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Process and participants

The methods of our study have been described in detail in a previous paper (Papadopoulou et al., 2021). In short, during the first lockdown (April 7 to May 3, 2020) 5116 individuals participated in a web-based survey, completing a questionnaire developed to obtain socio-demographic, psychological and physical health related data, as

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