

## Scientific Production on Suicide by Ibero-American Authors During the COVID-19 Pandemic

### Produção Científica Sobre Suicídio por Autores Ibero-Americanos Durante a Pandemia por COVID-19

**Keywords:** COVID-19; Pandemics; Publishing; South America; Suicide; West Indies

**Palavras-chave:** América do Sul; COVID-19; Índias Ocidentais; Pandemia; Publicação; Suicídio

Dear Editor,

We read with interest the article “The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children’s Health in Portugal: The Parental Perspective”, by Poppe M. *et al*, which aimed to describe the impact of the pandemic on the health, well-being, and access to medical care of children in Portugal. In this article, parents reported being concerned about the psychological, social and physical consequences that the pandemic could have on their children.<sup>1</sup> Knowing the consequences of confinement during the pandemic is essential in order to be able to adopt countermeasures,<sup>2</sup> considering that confinement has caused mental health problems in children and adolescents, such as the risk of suicide.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, developing research in this area contributes to the promotion of coping, resilience and increased access to mental health services in children and adolescents<sup>4</sup> as well as in the general population.

We conducted a retrospective study where we examined published articles on suicide during the covid-19 pandemic that were indexed in the Scopus database and whose authors were affiliated with Ibero-American institutions. The search included all articles published and indexed from January 2020 to April 2021 in the fields Article Title, Abstract, Keywords, using the following words as search terms: “suicide” OR “suicide ideation” OR “suicide attempts” OR “suicide epidemiology” OR “suicide risk factor” OR “suicide assessment” OR “suicide treatment” and its relation with the terms “2019-nCoV” OR “SARS-CoV-2” OR “2019 novel coronavirus” OR “COVID-19” OR “Coronavirus disease 2019”. We found 44 articles, including four types of articles: Research papers (63.64%), Reviews (27.27%), Letters to the Editor (4.55%), and Editorials (4.55%). The Ibero-American scientific production on suicide continues to increase; Spain is the country that contributes with the highest production, representing 29.55% of the Ibero-American production, followed by Mexico, Brazil and Portugal. Countries such as Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Chile have only one publication (Table 1).

In conclusion, there is lack of research on suicide during the covid-19 pandemic in Ibero-America, with most of it focused on a few Latin-American countries such as Brazil and Mexico, or in European countries such as Spain and Portugal. These countries could contribute to the reduction of the research gap on suicide if they provide research training to other countries in Ibero-America and are committed to developing collaborative projects.

#### AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

MASL: Draft of the paper.

MRP, LJSN, RMH, XMCR: Critical review and approval of the final version of the paper.

#### PROTECTION OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS

The authors declare that the procedures were followed according to the regulations established by the Clinical Research and Ethics Committee and to the Helsinki Declaration of the World Medical Association updated in 2013.

**Table 1** – Percentage of distribution of scientific production on suicide during the COVID-19 pandemic in Ibero-American countries

Country	2020		2021		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Spain	6	13.64	7	15.91	13	29.55
Mexico	2	4.55	6	13.64	8	18.18
Brazil	2	4.55	5	11.36	7	15.91
Portugal	4	9.09	0	0.00	4	9.09
Colombia	2	4.55	1	2.27	3	6.82
Ecuador	1	2.27	2	4.55	3	6.82
Peru	1	2.27	1	2.27	2	4.55
Puerto Rico	0	0.00	1	2.27	1	2.27
Dominican Republic	1	2.27	0	0.00	1	2.27
Argentina	1	2.27	0	0.00	1	2.27
Chile	0	0.00	1	2.27	1	2.27

## DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

The authors declare that they followed the protocols in use at their working center regarding patients' data publication.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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