

Editorial

At the time of writing this editorial, Brazil (and the World) is experiencing a painful resurgence of COVID-19. While still struggling to cope with its multiple negative impacts – especially in terms of mental health – we are again called to face this global threat. In our country, the first person was vaccinated a few days ago, offering a faint but comforting light at the end of the tunnel. However, several factors – from the supply of the materials needed for vaccine manufacturing, the mobilization of physical spaces, and human resources necessary for its large-scale application, to population adherence – may result in several months, until a substantial portion of our population is immunized. However, we have not yet reached this point and, in the absence of effective treatment, the best weapon to combat this pandemic is behavioral. In this sense, now more than ever in our recent history, the absolute importance of multidisciplinary scientific cooperation in facing a public health challenge of this magnitude has become evident. Psychology, as a science dedicated to the study of the human mind and behavior, thus assumes a fundamental role in the understanding of the psychological factors associated with the responses of individuals, families, and society to this pandemic.

Aware of the need for rapid dissemination of reliable information regarding the psychological factors associated with coping with COVID-19, the editorial committee of *Psicologia: Teoria e Prática* launched, in April 2020, a special call on the topic. We received almost 140 expanded abstracts – proof of the rapid and strong mobilization of Brazilian psychological scientists against the COVID-19 crisis. Despite the undeniable merit of most works, given the need for quick processing and careful selection of proposals with the greatest potential for impact, only 44 were invited to send the complete manuscript, with 10 manuscripts (~ 7% of the total) ultimately being approved for publication. Nevertheless, given the high quality of many of the works received, we invited several authors whose submissions were refused to consider re-submitting to a regular section of our journal.

For three months (between July and October 2020), our section editors and administrative staff – to whom I would like to express my profound gratitude – worked tirelessly to ensure that the abstracts and submitted manuscripts were

processed as quickly as possible. I am also grateful to the countless reviewers who generously offered to carry out their reviews in record time.

As a result, I am pleased to present the special section *COVID-19: Psychological impact on individuals, families, and society* – strategically incorporated in the first volume of the journal to be published in the new *ahead of the print* format, which will allow, from now on, the rapid on-line publication of all accepted papers. This special section consists of 10 papers and an invited commentary. The latter, authored by researchers from the United Kingdom and Brazil, is located at the intersection between Psychology, Economics, and Public Policy, and emphasizes the importance of studying the effects of cash transfer programs on the promotion of mental health in young people living in poverty, mainly given the strong economic impact of the pandemic on this demographic group. It is an extremely relevant commentary and I sincerely thank the authors for accepting our invitation. Furthermore, the papers selected for publication – six empirical papers and four systematic/scoping reviews – cover studies focused on the characterization of mental health indicators and/or coping strategies in different populations, including groups at greater vulnerability to mental health problems, such as health professionals, parents and children (either typically developing or with developmental disorders) and prison population. We believe that all papers stand out for their high theoretical and methodological quality, offering important advances in the scientific study of the theme in this section. We hope that the special section on COVID-19 will offer opportunities for reflection on the psychological impact of this pandemic, ways of dealing with the countless adversities, but also of capitalizing on potential opportunities for change and improvement.

I conclude by encouraging new submissions of manuscripts on the topic. The direct and indirect psychological effects of the current situation are likely to be prolonged for several years. Thus, we reaffirm our journal's commitment to disseminating scientific knowledge about the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals, families, and society, as well as intervention proposals and reflections for professional practice and public policies dedicated to mitigating these impacts.

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