

# ABSTRACT

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## Submission Form

## ENVIRONMENTS BY DESIGN: HEALTH WELLBEING AND PLACE

- **PAPER / PROPOSAL TITLE:**

Mental health of nurses during the COVID-19 outbreak in Italy

- **AUTHOR(S) NAME:**

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- **UNIVERSITY OR COMPANY AFFILIATION:**

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- **PRESENTATION METHOD.** I would like to:

Present via pre-recorded film (without a written paper)

- **PREFERRED STRAND.** (Selection optional)

Pandemic effects on vulnerable people (Italian Society for the Sociology of Health)

- **ABSTRACT (300 words):**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, nurses and physicians faced exhausting work conditions, making morally difficult decisions, and taking health risks to themselves and their loved ones. This situation also affected their mental health, with high levels of psychological distress that have been reported by those healthcare workers. The present study mainly aimed to assess the psychological impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on nurses and physicians working in Italy.

The responses of 73 nurses and 72 physicians were collected through an online survey. Participants were asked to indicate sociodemographic, clinical and work-related information, and to complete three self-report questionnaires to assess anxiety (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory-Form Y1, STAI Y1), depressive (Beck Depression Inventory, BDI-II), and posttraumatic (PTSD Checklist for DSM-5, PCL-5) symptoms.

Independent *t*-tests were performed to evaluate possible differences between nurses and physicians on sociodemographic, clinical, and work-related variables, health-related questions, and psychological variables. Significant differences between nurses and physicians were found on both Visual Analogue Scales (VAS) we used for the assessment of health-related aspects (Health evaluation VAS, nurses vs. physicians, mean  $\pm$  SD:  $7.11 \pm 2.0$ ,  $8.4 \pm 1.4$ ,  $t(126.64) = 4.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 0.77$ ; Health concern VAS:  $7.04 \pm 2.5$ ,  $6.0 \pm 2.6$ ,  $t(143) = -2.42$ ,  $p = .017$ ,  $d = 0.40$ ). Indeed, nurses rated lower their health and reported to be more worried about contracting COVID-19 with respect to physicians. Similarly, significant differences emerged between nurses and physicians on anxiety symptoms and PTSS, with the former reporting higher scores on the STAI Y1 ( $53.8 \pm 14.5$ ,  $48.8 \pm 12.9$ ,  $t(143) = -2.21$ ,  $p = .029$ ,  $d = 0.37$ ) and PCL-5 ( $29.1 \pm 18.6$ ,  $20.3 \pm 14.2$ ,  $t(134.52) = -3.19$ ,  $p = .002$ ,  $d = 0.53$ ), respectively.

Taken together, the present findings underline the importance of paying attention to the psychological health of this healthcare professional group.

- **AUTHOR(S) BIOGRAPHY (200 words each):**

Dr Marialaura Di Tella is a research fellow in Psychology at University of Turin, Italy. During both her undergraduate and postgraduate studies, she carried out research projects aimed at investigating psychological and cognitive components in different clinical populations. Particularly, her PhD research focused on the investigation of emotional and social cognitive difficulties in fibromyalgia, a chronic pain syndrome. These studies highlighted the presence of social cognitive and emotional functioning alterations in fibromyalgia patients, with the latter significantly being associated with the affective dimension of pain experience. This work has led to the publication of different scientific articles and nationally funded research projects, with impact on the fields of fibromyalgia, social cognition, emotional functioning, and pain understanding.

During her postdoctoral work, Dr Di Tella investigated psychological outcomes in people who experienced various traumatic experiences, including the recent COVID-19 outbreak. The findings of those studies indicated a non-linear relationship between positive (posttraumatic growth) and negative (anxiety-depressive symptoms) outcomes, with different factors involved in determining one or the other. This work brought to the the publication of different scientific articles, impacting the understanding of post-traumatic outcomes in clinical and non-clinical populations.

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▪ **WHERE DO YOU TYPICALLY SEARCH FOR CONFERENCES:**

I search for possible conferences on psychology websites.

▪ **WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS CONFERENCE:**

- I received an official communication from the University of Turin mailing list.

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