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Does pandemic denial help or harm? Belief in and experience of COVID-19 as factors affecting psychological consequences of using neurotic defence mechanisms

Zaprzeczanie pandemii – pomaga czy szkodzi? Wiara w COVID-19 i jego doświadczenie jako czynniki wpływające na psychologiczne konsekwencje stosowania neurotycznych mechanizmów obronnych

Supplementary Material

RESULTS

We first conducted a zero-order Person correlation analysis. The results of correlation are presented in Supplementary Tab. 1. This analysis showed that neurotic defence style was positively correlated with depressive symptoms and negatively (although weakly) correlated with SoC, which in turn was negatively related with depressive symptoms. Moreover, believing in the pandemic was positively related to experience, but this relationship was further investigated using a non-parametric test since the variables were dichotomous.

	Belief	Experience	Neurotic defence style	SoC	Depressive symptoms
Belief	-	27**	-0.01	-0.01	0.01
Experience		-	0.03	0.03	-0.05
Neurotic defence style			-	-0.07*	0.18**
SoC				-	-0.62**
Depressive symptoms					-
M			34.86	122.17	13.34
SD			9.23	21.44	4.12

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.
Note: Belief – belief in pandemic; experience – experience of COVID-19.
Belief in pandemic was coded: 0 – not believing, 1 – believing; experience of COVID was coded: 0 – no experience at all, 2 – self, close others or acquaintance experiencing COVID-19; significant correlations are marked with asterisks.

Supplementary Tab. 1. Pearson zero-order coefficient between study variables with means and SD for continuous variables

We then tested whether there were differences in the frequency of individuals who believed or not in the pandemic depending on whether they experienced COVID-19. The frequencies of believing and experiencing are presented in Supplementary Tab. 2. The differences in frequencies of believing between those who experienced COVID-19 and those who did not were different ($\chi^2[1] = 53.55, p < 0.001$). In general, there were about twice as many individuals who experienced COVID-19 in some way (67.6%) versus those who did not have any experience; this was also true for those who believed in COVID-19 (70.0%). It was assumed that 70% of individuals would believe in the pandemic in both experience groups. However, the proportions of people believing were different from expectations; in the non-experienced group, less people than expected believed in COVID-19 (51.9%), whereas in the experienced group, there were fewer non-believers than expected (21.4). In addition, among non-believers, there

was an almost equal distribution of people who had experienced COVID-19 (48.1%) versus those who were not experienced (51.9), despite the expectation that only 32% of people would not be experienced. When the group of believers was considered, there was a prevalence of experienced individuals, and the difference between expected and observed frequencies was not substantial (76% of observed believers vs. 67.6% of expected believers). Thus, the largest disproportions in believers versus non-believers were observed in the non-experienced group.

		Believing		Sum
		No	Yes	
Experiencing	No	112 (48.1)	121 (51.9)	233 (32.4)
	Yes	104 (21.4)	383 (78.6)	487 (67.6)
	Sum	216 (30.0)	504 (70.0)	720 (100)

Note: Percentage is presented in parenthesis.

Supplementary Tab. 2. Frequency of believing in COVID-19 pandemic and experiencing COVID-19