

PSIHOLOGIE

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The Psychology of Pandemics

New trends and prospects



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Coordinator of the G2 (Supportive environments)
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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PANDEMICS: NEW TRENDS AND PROSPECTS



The last years of our lives and professional sphere brought to our attention a certain type of events which, awhile back, we could not even anticipate. A whole world stopped, went completely out of order and eventually found it's way back but not without heading into new unpredictable and uncontrollable new directions. Communities and institutions, groups and individuals, societies in their entirety were confronted with certain problems and difficulties to which an explanation or a resolution were either too far in the future or too hard to implement.

In the end, following numerous trials and errors, came solutions, strategies, plans, procedures and certain methodologies, after which all the available instruments were used to implement these certain solutions, finally being able to work towards resolving and ending all these unexpected problems and difficulties.

In the course of these general efforts, the whole world changed, and we followed it. Mindsets, beliefs, ideas, values, perceptions and attitudes, all these changed, therefore lots of resources and efforts to adapt were required from every single one of us.

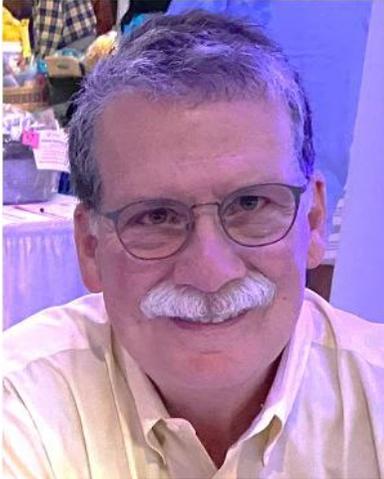
As professionals in this difficult and heterogenous field, we became forced to acquire new knowledge, develop brand new abilities and competences through which we could eventually face our current professional challenges.

While being in permanent contact with our clients, either face to face or online, we discovered within them a certain state of mind, characteristic to the crisis that was being lived. This state of mind involved visibly modified behaviours and unsuspected vulnerabilities, most of which became harder and more difficult to get to the bottom of during our daily, practical activities. In this particular context, new currents and tendencies in pandemic and post-pandemic psychology eventually emerged, forcing the already existent ones to recalibrate, therefore developing more appropriate methods and strategies in symptomatology and specific disorders.

This, therefore, is the general context in which we hope all of our efforts and our new publication can establish a presence and a foothold in.

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AN UNMISTAKABLE AND MUCH NEEDED COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Having achieved widespread success in 2020 with the online conference of the Association for Qualitative and Intercultural Studies, conference President, Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. habil. Marius Milcu organized an even more informative and engaging virtual meeting in 2021. This conference was the fifteenth in a series of uninterrupted gatherings, accredited by the Romanian College of Psychologists, of internationally renowned scholars and practitioners who, along with talented students, shared their theoretical, empirical, and applied work on a variety of topics that cut across such fields as clinical psychology and psychotherapy; educational psychology and pedagogical science;

work, organizational, and transportation psychology; forensic and military psychology; and social and transcultural psychology. In the spirit of lifelong learning, conference participants were afforded diverse opportunities to benefit from an in-depth exchange of perspectives, information, and professional experiences. Featured presentations, workshops, and scientific sessions of the 2021 conference have been collated in this published volume of proceedings, aptly titled, *The Psychology of Pandemics: New Trends and Prospects*.

These proceedings can rightly claim to provide a timely steppingstone toward greater integration of distinct social science fields. As important, *The Psychology of Pandemics* reflects an unmistakable and much needed commitment to social responsibility, that is, to improving the quality of life at individual, societal, and global levels.

Michael Stevens, PhD, DHC, LHD
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Past-President, APA Division of International Psychology

DEVELOPING OF AN INTEGRATIVE AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE OF RESEARCH



Despite two years of pandemic derived from Covid-19, science didn't stop and research in Psychology continued in the most diverse areas, with a greater social and political appreciation of the importance of psychologists in our society.

We can even say that the future of psychology will be increasingly linked to the future of society itself. In line with this dynamism, the Association for Qualitative and Intercultural Studies continued to hold annual international meetings, even in online format, contributing to the presentation of the most recent results of research carried out by researchers from different countries, in the most diverse areas of Psychology.

With an always very current focus, this year's theme is "The Psychology of Pandemics: new trends and prospects". However, this book integrates chapters on other topics of the most recent research in Psychology and its practical implications.

The general themes of the meetings and the corresponding books have allowed the development of an integrative and multidisciplinary perspective of research from different but complementary fields of psychology, contributing to improving the health and well-being of people and organizations.

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF THE COLLECTIVE TRAUMA



Although we knew that sooner or later a new pandemic would flood even the most advanced countries, we in fact found that we were unprepared to handle emergencies. The condition of increasing prosperity that has characterized life throughout the West since the middle of the last century has been managed by betting that we would not be hit by this kind of catastrophe too soon. Instead, in an unexpected form this has happened.

If the economic effects we have somewhat attempted to cope with by measuring their magnitude with some competence, the social effects have yet to be quantified and delineated. We can certainly already say that for minors it was a highly destabilizing experience because many certainties and boundaries between family life and social life were lost, as well as that many bereavements still require processing, but in fact we have not yet clearly defined what the pandemic has taught us with respect to the psychological dimension of the collective trauma to which we have been exposed for a long time, consistently.

The conference is precisely intended to consider the psychological and social areas that we still need to plumb in order to ensure that people and communities recover quickly from the pandemic and perhaps even improve on the pre-Covid times.

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MAKING PSYCHOLOGY MORE VISIBLE THAN EVER



It is really amazing how, during two years of pandemic from Covid-19, citizens all over the world including researchers, professionals and policy makers namely in the area were able to keep walking their way: avoiding the world to stop and in what Psychology is concerned, making Psychology more visible than ever, recognized in their role helping people coping with their protection and with preventing infection, and in this post pandemic period helping people to feel good.

Not unexpectedly, this year's theme is “The Psychology of Pandemics: new trends and prospects”, and as this is a broad multidisciplinary issue, this book is full of diversity, covering a large amount of relevant themes.

Special times imply special measures therefore we are living a period of special challenges for psychologists all over the world, and a period where social engagement, social participation and social cohesion is of utmost importance to join efforts in order to mitigate the undermining effects of this recent atypical past and to design a better innovative future.

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WHAT'S NEXT? LOOKING FOR OUR OWN IDENTITY

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EARLY BEGINNINGS

Back in 2007, along with a small group of colleagues and collaborators, we started to consider organising a scientific and professional conference regarding social and human sciences. In spite of the fact that we, at start, had very small funds, we had a substantial amount of trust and confidence and we were also armed with the support and enthusiasm of our students. With the help of all that, we managed to create a very promising organising plan (the first plan of all those that followed during the next years) and, almost unexpectedly, we managed to set up the final dimensions of the conference.

After launching the final announcement, we waited. To everyone's surprise, including the organisers', the first people started to sign up to attend the conference. At first, they weren't very numerous, but soon many more followed and the sign ups started transforming and becoming more constant and stable.

The first 647 participants who were present at the first edition of our conference offered us a lot more trust and confidence and power so we managed to organise this conference each and every year.

BACKGROUND

Over a century ago, psychology took a decisive step in its evolution, breaking away from the mother-philosophy and developing its own research field, its own conceptual and methodological machinery. The young science was thus trying to become non-speculative, practical, applied, going slowly towards a new occupational axis: observation, analysis, intervention, improvement as far as psycho-behavioural, social or organizational processes and phenomena are concerned.

At the beginning of the 21st century, psychology introduces itself as a matured, adaptable, particularly diverse science, bearing a great number of branches and sub-branches, carrying great and obvious impact on modern man, on groups and organizations, on society as a whole. Psychology is visibly going through a stage of scientific development, of enrichment concerning the conceptual system, of diversification of the kit of methods, instruments and work techniques.

Nowadays psychological research plays an essential part, outlining and revealing new human and social horizons. By integrating in a way proper to its means a mixture of instruments and techniques of investigation and intervention, psychological research becomes the primary force of modern psychology, a truly vanguardist element. In this framework, it is our belief that organizing a scientific event dedicated to research in psychology would be most welcome.

TARGETS OF THE CONFERENCE

- Our primary target includes the gathering of specialists, of highly skillful practitioners in the field, with a view to exchanging information. We aim at providing specialists with the opportunity to

present their work, to reveal their latest research methods and instruments, to achieve intensive informational exchange, to the benefit of all taking part, as well as of psychology as a whole.

- The purpose of this conference is to tackle practical, methodological aspects of health, education and social sciences (psychology, sociology, pedagogy, medical sciences, etc.), stemming from current research and its methodological, ethical, social, and cultural ramifications. We therefore aim to avoid purely theoretical, speculative activities, and organize instead practical, applied activities (workshops, debates), starting from topics of particular interest in field.
- Since the future of the profession lies in the hands of current students, our event will include a special section dedicated to our future colleagues. Our purpose is to facilitate the contact between students and highly praised specialists, to accustom them to the relevant topics of modern research, to raise up the quality standards within training process, to contribute thus to the shaping of specialized knowledge and the enhancement of the experience of the students involved. Students will therefore benefit from specific scientific events, where they can reveal their own research work and projects, from round tables, trainings and workshops dealing with particularly interesting topics, all under the supervision of acclaimed specialists from various branches of psychology.
- The city of Sibiu was nominated, for 2007, alongside with Luxemburg, as an European Cultural Capital. Thus becoming one of the bridges through which Europe will come to know Romania. The enlargement of the E.U. is likely to encourage the informational exchange between specialists, to promote the cultural, scientific, civic values under the auspices of the new 21st century.

THE EVOLUTION. THE CONSTANT SEARCH FOR OUR OWN IDENTITY

At this very moment we situate ourselves at the 15th edition of our conference. It obviously suffered, as expected, changed regarding the organisation, the public, the topics and the professions we are targeting. Step by step, we managed to extend our area of interests, so that right now the conference gained a multidisciplinary aspect, allowing interactions between prestigious specialists coming from many more fields than before.

More than that, along the years, the conference changed it's very own title. Here are just a few examples:

- Modern Psychological Research. Trends and Prospects;
- Modern Psychological Research. Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research;
- Modern Research in Psychology. Prospecting advanced Research in Health, Education and Social Sciences;
- Modern Research in Psychology. Modern Research in Health, Education and Social Sciences;
- Modern Research in Psychology. Prospecting Interdisciplinarity in Health, Education and Social Sciences: Theory and Practice.

Today, we can easily say that organising this conference became a tradition. Our conference is known and highly appreciated by the thousands of the participants from all over the World who honoured us with their presence.

A FEW RESULTS

Following the eleven editions which we carefully organised, we managed to publish 15 conference proceedings volumes, as you can see below:

- Marius Milcu, Michael Stevens, Saul Neves de Jesus (2020). *Rethinking applied psychology: research paradigms vs. practical approaches*. Editura Universitară București, 249 p.

- Marius Milcu, Michael Stevens, Saul Neves de Jesus (2019). *Modern research in psychology. Rethinking research collaborative*. Editura Universitară București, 245 p.
- Marius Milcu, Michael Stevens, Saul Neves de Jesus (2018). *Mind, Body and Behavior: New trends and prospects in Health, Education and Social Sciences*. Editura Universitară București, 298 p.
- Marius Milcu, Michael Stevens, Iris Dahl (2017). *Modern Research in Health, Education and Social Sciences. From Evaluation to Intervention*. Editura Universitară București, 324 p.
- Marius Milcu, Saul Neves de Jesus, Juan Tobal (2016). *Prospecting interdisciplinarity in health, education and social sciences: theory and practice*. Editura Universitară București, 340 p.
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TERMS OF ATTENDANCE

The event we are organizing is exclusively devoted to practical, applied, methodological issues in health, education and social sciences, connected to current research and its methodological, ethical, social, cultural implications. This is the main reason why we want to avoid theoretical, speculative activities. We are mainly interested in organizing practical, applied activities (workshops, debates), starting from topics of particular interest to the field of health, education and social sciences (psychology, sociology, pedagogy, medical sciences, etc.). Pares that have been already published in various magazines or presented at other scientific events can not be presented during scientific communication sessions.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION WITH SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

The event is available to all professionals interested in the proposed topics, with a BA in health, education and social sciences (psychology, sociology, pedagogy, medical sciences, etc.) or not, as well as to those enrolled in various forms of education (undergraduate students, MA, or doctoral students).

WHAT'S NEXT?

After a twelve-year evolution, we aim to new objectives:

- diversifying our professional offer in the international conferences' market;
- enlarging the addressability zone of the conference by attracting specialists from many more areas and domains;
- becoming more active regarding the relationships between our partners and collaborators.

SCIENTIFIC SECTIONS

I. RESEARCH IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SETTINGS.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

- **Research design and data analysis**
- **Cross-cultural research**
- **Immigration issues**
- **Individuals and groups**
- **Interpersonal relationship**
- **Group behaviour**
- **Intergroup relations**
- **Norms and values**
- **Social discrimination and stereotypes**

II. LIFE QUALITY AND WELLBEING

- **Culture and health**
- **Health promotion in society**
- **Traditional and modern approach in health assurance**
- **Assessing the life quality**

III. RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

- **Research for Lifelong Learning**
- **Research and education for entrepreneurship**
- **Curricula design for education**
- **Strategies for quality improvement in education**
- **Social and public responsibility in modern education**

IV. CAREER AND WORKPLACE ISSUES.

WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

- **Aging in workgroups / organizations**
- **Health promotion in workgroups / organizations**
- **Balancing personal and professional life**
- **Self-regulation and affirmation**
- **Knowledge and skills. Performance and dynamic competence in workgroups and organizations**
- **Coping with dysfunctional people or groups**
- **Stress and emotions**
- **Risk perception in work places**
- **Communication. Social change**
- **Organizational culture**
- **Rules, regulations and values in organizations**
- **Social support, coping and wellness**
- **Innovation and creativity**

- **Leadership competences**

V. CLINICAL AND HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY. PSYCHOTHERAPY

- **Personality and health**
- **Illness perception**
- **Managing illness**
- **Family and health**
- **Occupational health**

**VI. FORENSIC SCIENCES AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.
FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY**

- **Criminal personality**
- **Criminal behaviour**
- **Civil disputes**
- **Criminal laws**
- **Government regulations**
- **Public health protection**
- **Criminal groups**

VII. MISCELLANEOUS ...