

BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: LIFE POST COVID-19 THROUGH LOSS, GRIEF AND ADJUSTMENT

FOO, Z. F. R.¹ – GOH, I. S.^{1*} – TECKWANI, J. A.¹ – KHAN, M. R.¹ – YUSOFF, A. M.¹ – ZAMANI, Z. A.¹

¹ Faculty of Social Sciences and Leisure Management (FSLM), Taylor's University, Selangor, Malaysia.

*Corresponding author
e-mail: [gohianshen\[at\]sd.taylors.edu.my](mailto:gohianshen[at]sd.taylors.edu.my)

(Received 21st December 2025; revised 18th March 2026; accepted 03rd April 2026)

Abstract. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous influence on worldwide social, economic, and healthcare systems, resulting in broad post-pandemic difficulties. This qualitative study investigates the adaptation, resilience, and coping techniques of Malaysians who have endured substantial loss and grief during and following the pandemic. Using semi-structured interviews with individuals aged 21 to 58, consisting of both male and female participants, the study finds major themes such as adaptation and resilience, shifting societal norms, and coping methods used to manage post-pandemic living. A thematic analysis was conducted to code relevant themes to the studies objectives discovering that overcoming adversity required personal growth, lifestyle modifications, and professional adaptability. Furthermore, the study underlines changes in cultural expectations, particularly those related to job, social connections, and mental health considering shifting norms such as hybrid and working from home. The findings highlight the necessity of understanding individuals' various perspectives and solutions for dealing with the pandemic's ongoing challenges or when considering moving ahead and putting these challenges behind them. This study adds to the increasing body of research on post-pandemic recovery and its effects on mental health by providing insights into the lived experiences of persons navigating life after COVID-19.

Keywords: *resilience, adaptation, grief, mental health, COVID-19*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly strained the healthcare system and rigorously impacted global social and economic conditions (Mishra et al., 2020). Researchers investigated post-COVID-19 conditions over various aspects, including healthcare impacts, social impacts, cultural impacts, and other significant concerns. For instance, researchers calling for effective measures that could mitigate the devastating effects of COVID-19 are in line with the aim of the current study to contribute to post-pandemic recovery. This is further supported by the suggestion that focal issues for future research on different impacts of COVID-19, including jobs, life, support, and coping (Venkatesh, 2020). The study emphasised the unprecedented changes COVID-19 brought to all aspects of life warranted new research opportunities on post-COVID studies and the importance of conducting on different countries and cultural contexts, reinforcing the research gap of the current study. Many patients report lasting symptoms and a prolonged recovery process, such as shortness of breath, anxiety, and depression, which the World Health Organization has termed “post-COVID-19 condition” (Al-Mallah, 2021). For instance, in the same study, it is further stated that post-COVID-19 conditions extend beyond bodily symptoms, where research indicated a significantly higher risk of mental health issues. Hence, the adverse effects of post-Covid-19

conditions reinforce the significance of this study in understanding the challenges faced by the people and the strategies they utilise to navigate through them.

Previous studies have highlighted significantly impaired quality of life and increased fatigue among post-COVID-19 patients (AlRasheed et al., 2023; Román-Montes et al., 2023). Particularly, both studies found that respondents infected with COVID-19 reported lower quality of life and greater fatigue severity, with significantly lower quality of life after multiple infections. A systematic review further confirmed these adverse effects, irrespective of recovery time (Nandasena et al., 2022). An additional study indicated a moderated mediation model, showing that job loss significantly impacts the quality of life via hopelessness, moderated by trait emotional intelligence (Andrei et al., 2022). Based on 1610 Italian workers, the study revealed trait emotional intelligence acted as a protective factor, mitigating the negative effects of job loss and hopelessness on quality of life during the pandemic. Hence, these studies collectively support exploring challenges and strategies in post-pandemic life. It was found that COVID-19 had adverse effects on familial dynamics and adolescent well-being, indicating that job loss increased parent-adolescent conflict while working-from-home (WFH) increased parental warmth (Wang et al., 2021). Particularly, low-income families encountered greater difficulties due to limited WFH jobs and higher job loss rates, intensifying familial stress and emotional vulnerability. Moreover, results from a longitudinal cohort study reported that low socioeconomic status (SES) increased risk of long COVID-19 cardiovascular symptoms (Rad et al., 2024). This aligns with prior studies where individuals with lower education, income, and rural residences were more likely to experience post-COVID-19 symptoms, warranting the need to comprehend personal and societal experiences in post-pandemic life.

With regards to resilience in post-pandemic life, there is emphasis on the importance of adaptability, innovation, and inclusivity, recommending a systemic shift towards sustainable development rather than reverting to pre-crisis conditions (Rockström et al., 2023). Equity is crucial for building resilient societies, as vulnerable and marginalised groups faced disproportionate impacts post-COVID-19. Nevertheless, researchers also highlighted vulnerable communities that regularly face significant yet manageable stress (those with extensive experience from previous health crises) might possess valuable resilience resources to handle global crises (Haldane et al., 2021). This aligns with the current study's goal to understand Malaysians' post-pandemic experiences in terms of adaptation and resilience. The socio-economic challenges caused by the pandemic were also evident in Malaysia, where there was a heightened risk of recession in the informal sector, with financial insecurity persisting despite government support (Homer and Khor, 2021). Consequently, social isolation also worsened mental health issues across all age groups in Malaysia's collectivist culture (Ali et al., 2021). For instance, in the same study, it is posited the lockdowns significantly disrupted physical and social health due to reduced out-of-home activities, although in-home activities did show some positive effects. Thus, findings from previous studies acknowledged the ongoing socio-economic challenges, supporting the current study to understand how Malaysians have adapted and built resilience in the aftermath of COVID-19.

Past research conducted in Malaysia illustrated the lasting impacts of COVID-19 on individuals' physical and mental health, economy, and lifestyle changes (Abdullah et al., 2022). As the pandemic shifted social interactions, jobs, and learning methods, respondents reported difficulties in adaptation, leading to increased physical and mental health deterioration. A cross-sectional study that investigated psychosocial impact of the

pandemic on Malaysian families further supported this, revealing significant psychosocial impact on them, whereby those who lack job security are most vulnerable (Zainudeen et al., 2021). Extending this, there is a study that reported that over half of Malaysians have jobs unsuitable for remote work, leaving them vulnerable during crises like COVID-19 (Rahman et al., 2022). Low-income earners, less-educated workers, and self-employed individuals are especially at risk, underscoring the importance of targeted recovery efforts to support these affected populations. Past research also explored the emotional burden of compounded loss during the pandemic, where individuals face multiple losses at once ranging from loved ones to everyday activities (Scheinfeld et al., 2021). This amplifies emotional challenges and strains communal coping mechanisms, often leading to further stress. Conversely, a qualitative study by reported various sources of grief among ageing adults during the COVID-19 pandemic, ranging from bereavement and loss of agency to social isolation, health struggles, and missed milestones (Statz et al., 2022). Hence, these personal experiences of grief emphasised the need for tailored mental health support.

Grief from losing loved ones during the pandemic has intensified psychological distress, particularly among those with pre-existing mental health conditions (Joaquim et al., 2021). This distress has led to heightened anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Notably, the high prevalence of brought-in-dead (BID) COVID-19 cases in Malaysia reflects significant societal losses (Lim et al, 2022), further supporting the aim to gain crucial insights into the emotional toll of the pandemic that could foster resilience and support post-pandemic recovery. Long after an acute infection, COVID-19 still has an impact on people's social, psychological, and physical health. Many people continue to experience clinically significant grieving years after the pandemic, according to research, which indicates that pandemic-related losses have led to sustained and elevated symptoms of extended grief, especially due to disrupted mourning rituals and abrupt bereavement (Reitsma et al., 2025). Helping professionals have also reported experiencing emotional distress and vicarious grieving as a result of prolonged exposure to loss during the pandemic, which may increase the risk of burnout and long-term mental health issues (Sera Jose et al., 2023). Furthermore, survivors continue to experience persistent post-COVID symptoms, such as diminished functional ability, chronic fatigue, and cognitive impairment, which further degrade quality of life and day-to-day functioning. Taken as a whole, these results demonstrate that COVID-19 has had long-lasting physiological and psychological effects, highlighting the necessity of ongoing mental health and rehabilitative care.

Materials and Methods

Participants, demographics, approach and inclusion criteria

The participants for this qualitative research project, titled "Beyond the Pandemic: Understanding Life Post Covid-19 Through the Lens of Loss, Grief, and Adjustment," was selected with the aim of representing the diverse experiences of individuals who have grappled with significant loss, grief, and adjustment during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Purposive sampling, or criterion sampling, was used to assure the inclusion of participants who met particular criteria related to the research aims. The age range of the respondents was 21 to 58 years old. The age groupings were distributed as follows: five being female and five being male. This was done in order to accurately represent the experiences of each gender. The age range was to encompass a wide variety of life

experiences including those who had experience in loss, grief or adaptation starting from university, working life, and up to retirement age. The respondents also comprised students, working adults and professors (*Table 1*). Inclusion criteria were established to recruit participants who have experienced severe loss during the pandemic and have either already adapted to the transition post-Covid-19 or are in the midst of doing so. Loss in this context encompasses various dimensions, including the loss of loved ones, jobs, or other significant aspects of participants' lives. The participants were aged 18 years old and above, hailing from diverse ethnic backgrounds. They were included to ensure a broad representation of experiences. Participants were selected based on how well they were able to demonstrate adaptation strategies and adjustment to the "new normal" brought about by the pandemic. Language proficiency, willingness to share experiences, and informed consent were essential considerations during the recruitment process. To promote sensitivity and tolerance, cultural subtleties were carefully considered throughout the study process.

Table 1. Lists the respondents age, gender and employment status.

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Employment status
Garth	23	Male	Employed
Harold	21	Male	Student
Jennifer	26	Female	Student
Jessica	41	Female	Employed
Joy	39	Female	Employed
Sam	51	Male	Employed
Seth	27	Male	Employed
Stella	23	Female	Employed
Vidal	24	Male	Employed
Zoe	58	Female	Employed

Research design, research procedure and data analysis

Semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect data, allowing for a flexible but focused study of individuals' experiences, perspectives, and coping mechanisms linked to loss, sorrow, and adjustment after Covid-19. Interviews were recorded in audio form with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for subsequent analysis. The recruitment process began by reaching out to potential participants through multiple social channels, including community organisations and social media platforms. Individuals who were interested in participating were given information regarding the research objectives, inclusion criteria, and the voluntary nature of the process. Prospective participants were given the opportunity to clarify any of their concerns before providing the informed consent to participate. Thematic analysis was used to uncover patterns, themes, and variations in the data through a systematic and iterative procedure. Initial codes were derived from interview transcripts and then organised into bigger topics through ongoing comparison and modification. The data analysis required a thorough and methodical approach to uncovering the rich and different narratives expressed by the participants. Themes and patterns were identified by carefully reviewing the interview transcripts, paying attention to both explicit text and underlying meaning. Interpretations were created iteratively, with findings triangulated across many sources of data to improve credibility and consistency. Throughout the study, reflexivity was maintained to acknowledge and to prevent the researchers' potential biases and assumptions. Reflexive journaling and peer debriefing were used to improve

methodological rigour and transparency throughout the research process. The findings were presented coherently and comprehensively, accompanied by verbatim quotes and contextualised within the existing literature on loss, sorrow, and adjustment.

Results and Discussion

The results section dives into individuals' complex and multifaceted experiences as they navigate life after the pandemic. Key themes and subthemes emerged via thematic analysis, providing profound insights into the adaptive techniques used, the problems experienced, and the future goals maintained against a backdrop of loss, grieving, and adjustment. These themes and subthemes, supported by direct participant statements, provide a complete grasp of the complex and diverse ways people cope and evolve in this new era.

Adaptation and resilience

Several recurring themes emerged as we investigated the participants' diverse experiences, shedding light on their collective journeys. The first theme is Adaptation and Resilience (*Table 2*). It was interesting to see how this theme focuses on the various solutions people have devised to deal with unexpected disruptions, as well as their resilience in the face of adversity.

Table 2. Themes, subthemes and helpful codes for adaptation and resilience.

Theme	Subtheme	Helpful codes
Adaptation and Resilience	Personal Growth and Lifestyle Changes	Encouraging personal growth and resilience, Academic lifestyle, Adjusting lifestyle due to caregiving responsibilities.
	Coping Mechanisms and Strategies	Coping strategies: Continuing some coping mechanisms post-pandemic, Adaptation to societal shifts and coping mechanisms, Coping strategies: Cultural taboos and societal pressures in coping with job loss and health issues
	Professional and Societal Adaptation	Societal changes: Observations of changes in city life post-pandemic, Adaptation to societal shifts and coping mechanisms

The participants described their Personal Growth and Lifestyle changes that they had to undergo in order to adapt to a life post-pandemic. Zoe, 58, mentioned that one of the lifestyle changes they had to undergo was to bring their mask with them wherever they are:

“...we're still wearing masks when we feel uncomfortable when in a crowded place...carry our masks in our purse...even on the plane... the train... abroad.”

The participants also detailed the Coping Mechanisms and Strategies to overcome these adversities that they faced in life post COVID-19 as well as the Professional and Societal Adaptation challenges, they needed to overcome as the world was very different in the wake of such initiatives like working from home and new expectations within society and themselves as a person. For example, Participant Dr. Jessica, 41, a Malaysian, who was working in Australia as a professor, got stuck in a lockdown in Malaysia and had to adapt to culture shock and the difference in work culture:

“...For me, the major challenge is...being in that culture....and currently I chose to stay in Malaysia because I felt that...it's still my country of citizenship and it always will be so, I still am struggling to adapt to the culture.”

Similarly, Participant Garth, 23, mentioned about his maladaptive coping mechanism which was to look forward to the routine of watching the number of COVID-19 cases which gave him much stress and anxiety:

“...the only thing I could do is...just wait for...every day at 5 PM, wait to look at the news...for me, I was just waiting for the days to pass. I was waiting to see the end of it. You know, it's like the only thing I would...probably keep me going well is sleep.”

The post-pandemic environment has needed significant change in both personal and professional realms, demonstrating the individuals' remarkable resilience and flexibility. Participants in the study noted substantial personal changes, such as donning masks and moving to remote work. These adjustments illustrate the human ability for resilience, emphasising the ongoing importance of personal flexibility and mental resilience as the world navigates the changing terrain of the pandemic's aftermath. It is interesting to note that the participants experienced significant professional hurdles, such as cultural adaptations and maladaptive coping strategies. These findings emphasise the need of businesses and educational institutions providing strong mental health assistance and adapting working standards to better meet the developing professional landscape. Employers should think about developing comprehensive mental health programs and flexible working arrangements to help employees handle these transitions effectively.

Changing societal norms and expectations

Another theme that emerged was the Changing Societal Norms and Expectations. After the COVID-19 pandemic, society norms and expectations have experienced considerable changes. This theme investigates how these developments have transformed daily life, influencing individual behaviours, societal interactions, and communal attitudes (*Table 3*). The pandemic altered conventional patterns and customs, requiring a rethinking of what is considered "normal" and acceptable in all sectors of life, including employment, school, socialising, and healthcare.

Table 3. Themes, subthemes and helpful codes for changing societal norms and expectations.

Theme	Subtheme	Helpful codes
Changing Societal Norms and Expectation	Shift in Working Methods and Environment	Societal changes: Shift to hybrid classes, flexibility in work/study, Adjustments post-COVID, SOP, environment, lifestyle, post-COVID-19 environment.
	Reevaluation of Social Interactions and Priorities	Social interactions, social anxiety: Difficulty with strangers

In terms of the participants, they explained how there was a Shift in Working Methods and Environment and how remote employment and online learning, which were formerly viewed as transitory solutions, have now become essential components of modern life. Participant Harold, 21, a degree undergraduate mentioned that there was more flexibility in hybrid classes:

“...guess societal, I guess there's more flexibility post-pandemic...in terms of, work and studying. So, like, a lot of things, like, I think, like, classes are, like, hybrid now, like, online.”

However, this was not entirely positive as Harold also felt disconnected socially:

“...But I guess at times it can feel disconnecting to have a lot of these things online... I guess adjusting to that was a bit tedious, but it's still off...like adjusting to that kind of environment...like being stuck in my room for like 24/7.”

The cultural expectations about health and safety have developed and changed from what was previously assumed. As such, many participants had a Reevaluation of Social Interactions and Priorities. Participants mentioned how it was difficult to shift back into interacting physically and reevaluated if it was worth the engagement and effort. Participant Stella, 23, detailed how she noticed herself and others of her generation being so used to interacting online that not only were there mental health implications to trying to socialise physically again, it had to be a prioritised occasion as well:

“...because during COVID-19 everything went virtual. Till today, there are people who are unable to come out of that. Like, if you put them in a public setting, they are unable to function because they are so used to that online environment...being behind the screen...don't have to really speak much, you can kind of just be yourself. So in the public, you can get anxious, which I think increased due to COVID, particularly with the generations right now.”

The pandemic has also triggered a reevaluation of societal norms and expectations, notably in the workplace and learning environment. The transition to hybrid work arrangements and online learning has opened up new opportunities and problems. These improvements increased flexibility, although they also created feelings of detachment among participants. The reduction of social separation and increasing efficiency are important. As such, organisations must strive for a mix of remote and in-person connections. Creating environments that promote both professional development and personal well-being is critical in this new era of work and education. Participants reported problems returning to physical social settings after extended periods of solitude. Participants also mention the accustomed digital style of learning and working has created a boundary in approaching the same situations in a physical setting as it elicits such responses such as social anxiety due to not having the skills to adapt to said situations. Mental health professionals play an important role in establishing ways to support social reintegration by assisting individuals in rebuilding their social skills and confidence in face-to-face interactions. Programs that progressively reintroduce social involvement and offer assistance during the transition can be extremely beneficial to persons dealing with social reintegration.

Coping with loss and grief

One of the most important themes to emerge from the participants on life after COVID-19 is Coping with Loss and Grief. The pandemic resulted in unparalleled amounts of loss, ranging from the death of loved ones to the loss of jobs, social relationships, and a sense of routine. Participants described their experiences negotiating

these deep losses and the pain that followed them. There were several main sub themes that could be seen in the participants’ responses, the first being Mental Health Impact and Awareness. The participants detailed how they were mentally affected by the pandemic and how they became aware of the impact even post-pandemic (*Table 4*).

Table 4. Themes, subthemes and helpful codes for coping with loss and grief.

Theme	Subtheme	Helpful codes
Coping with Loss and Grief	Mental Health Impact and Awareness	Work-life balance, mental health impact, Social Impact, Personal Impact, Job Instability, Impact of pandemic on mental health, Impact of loss: Close relationship with deceased parents, impact of suddenness and proximity of deaths
	Support Systems and Resources	Support from social circle to overcome social anxiety, online support systems, Support system through Discord groups, family support
	Transition and Adaptation in Career Paths	Work experience helped transition post-pandemic, Transitioning to online learning, Career transition and motivations, Career progression

Participant Joy, 39, detailed the difficulty of going through the pandemic after the news of her best friend’s parents passing away who were like second parents to her. This was also compounded by the fact she could not visit them due to MCO restrictions, which affected her mentally:

“...I'm not allowed to attend the funeral...they actually stop people from going to funeral, only very close relatives or family members can..So essentially a sad thing, I can't even attend their funeral...I feel very sad because for Chinese, it's like the last respect is very important but we can't do anything about it.”

Another subtheme that emerged was Support System and Resources. Participants repeatedly emphasised the importance of having strong support networks and access to resources when dealing with the pandemic's aftermath. This encompassed a variety of sources including family, friends, community or professional services. For example, Participant Seth, 27, detailed following a 12-step groups of recovery programme usually for recovering drug addicts. Seth attended for his own mental health as services were being offered to those not struggling with drug addiction either during the pandemic and he found it helped him express himself and his mental health difficulties:

“...When one person shares, the other members of the group just keep quiet and listen...and whenever you just want to release your emotions, you call one of the members up, and we just talk. The power of just listening and not having to give feedback or feeling judged...as everyone in the group is struggling as well.”

However, support systems were not always healthy for some participants. Participant Vidal, 24, detailed how he was so starved of intimate connections during the pandemic that it impacted how he sought out romantic relationships for a while post-pandemic:

“...mean, I just got out of the relationship when it first started. And so therefore by coping with it was to look for more intimate relationships, be it... healthy or not. So it's just to look for such and coincidentally, maybe because of the setting, a lot of people are also looking for such. Therefore like Tinder.”

The following subtheme that emerged from Loss and Grief was the Transition and Adaptation in Career Paths. Participants recounted how the pandemic caused job losses, furloughs, and significant shifts in their industries, resulting in a profound sense of uncertainty and financial distress. This professional change was not just a practical challenge, but it also caused emotional distress. The loss of long-held employment or professional paths elicited sentiments of mourning, as people grieved the identities and security associated with their previous roles. Participant Sam, 51, detailed his experiences quitting his job at which he worked for 11 years and was always seen as a stable source of income:

“...because of the pandemic, because the business was very bad...so at that time, my team was not doing very well, so we have to cut down all the expenses...I was very shocked because I've been working for almost in the company, I think, 11 years. And then after that, it's not that easy, you know, it's not that easy.”

Another participant, Participant Jennifer, 26, recounted how she made the very difficult decision to transition entirely from the field of Interior Designing to something else entirely in the Mental Health Field and considering studying a Masters of Counselling as she wanted to be there for people like how people were there for her.

“...someone who is listening to them, you know, and I realised it could be something that fit into my character and maybe I can find a purpose in life from that.”

Coping with grief and loss has been an important component of the post-pandemic experience, with far-reaching consequences for mental health. The study found that participants experienced significant mental health issues as a result of their grief and loss during the pandemic. This was exacerbated due to the restrictions such as the lockdown which prevented the participants from attending their loved ones' funerals and prayers which lead to common feelings of non-resolvment. This research emphasises the critical need for specialised mental health services and resources to address these concerns. Mental health providers should prioritise interventions that particularly address sorrow and loss, giving people the tools and support they need to deal with these emotional challenges. The usefulness of support systems differed among participants, with some finding peace in group settings and others experiencing difficulty. This heterogeneity emphasises the importance of mental health services providing a variety of support tools customised to individual requirements. Understanding and adapting individuals' particular preferences and coping strategies might help support systems work more effectively. Job losses and job changes have caused considerable identity and financial distress for participants. Career counselling services must address the emotional consequences of these shifts while also providing support to persons experiencing career transitions. This assistance should include practical advice on job hunting and skill development, as well as emotional support to help individuals cope with the associated stress and uncertainty. These services must also include a holistic view of the expectations of individuals and companies post-pandemic as the working landscape has changed drastically over the years.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a severely negative impact on mental health and social conventions, among other elements of human life. As the world enters a post-pandemic era, it is critical to comprehend the adjustments, difficulties, and coping

strategies that people have used to get through this extraordinary time. This qualitative study investigates how people adapt on a personal and professional level, how society's expectations are changing, and how dealing with loss and grief may affect one's mental health. The study offers insightful information about the adaptability, resilience, and support networks that have developed in response to the pandemic's difficulties through in-depth interviews with individuals. There is a pressing need to improve support mechanisms and develop programs for social and emotional reintegration. Mental health practitioners should focus on developing comprehensive interventions that address the different needs of individuals as they adjust to life after the pandemic. Employers and educational institutions have a critical role in creating flexible work and learning environments that promote productivity and mental health. Policies that promote work-life balance, mental health support, and flexible scheduling can greatly increase employee and student well-being. Diverse resources customised to individual requirements are critical. Support organisations must address both the practical and emotional aspects of post-pandemic life, providing a variety of services to meet the diverse needs of the population.

While the study provides valuable knowledge, numerous limitations must be addressed. The sample size of ten participants may limit the generalisability of the findings. Future study should incorporate a larger and more diverse sample size in order to capture a wider range of experiences and viewpoints. Because the study is qualitative, the conclusions are based on personal experiences and may not reflect the full scope of post-pandemic existence. While these insights are significant, they should be weighed against other data sources. Participants may struggle to recollect past experiences or feelings associated with the pandemic, thus contributing to data mistakes. Future research should examine ways to reduce recall bias, such as using longitudinal designs. As the post-pandemic situation evolves, participants' perceptions may shift, thereby impacting the findings' usefulness over time. Ongoing study is required to follow these changing perceptions. Future studies should involve a broader spectrum of people from all backgrounds and experiences in order to capture diverse perspectives on post-pandemic life. This method can increase the generalisability and richness of the findings. Implementing longitudinal studies that follow individuals over time can provide useful insights into long-term changes and emerging difficulties. Such research can capture the dynamism of post-pandemic adaptation. Integrating qualitative and quantitative studies can provide a more comprehensive picture of the pandemic's effects and coping mechanisms. This method can offer a balanced perspective by combining the depth of qualitative insights with the breadth of quantitative analysis. The study's thorough and in-depth analysis of post-pandemic mental health disorders offers a thorough insight of the participants' experiences. The fluid and adjustable research methodology enabled real-time alterations in interviews, capturing evolving findings. The qualitative approach revealed deep complexities that quantitative studies sometimes overlook, providing compelling human-centric evidence that demonstrates the multidimensional nature of post-pandemic living.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examined how people adjusted to changes in their personal and professional lives in the wake of the epidemic, highlighting both their resiliency and the difficulties they encountered. Important conclusions emphasise the necessity for

varied support networks, adaptable job and learning settings, and continuous mental health care. The study highlights how important it is for businesses, educational institutions, and mental health specialists to collaborate when creating plans for social reintegration and resolving emotional effects. In order to fully comprehend the pandemic's long-term consequences on mental health and societal standards, future study should incorporate a range of viewpoints and long-term observations.

Acknowledgement

The researchers would like to thank Taylor's University for the support and the participants who took part in this study.

Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abdullah, N., Hashim, N.Z., Zainal Abidin, I.S., Mohd Shazali, S.M. (2022): Impact of covid-19 pandemic in Malaysia: A critical survey. – *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 30(4): 1857-1879.
- [2] Al-Mallah, M.H. (2021): The way ahead: Life after covid-19. – *Methodist DeBakey Cardiovascular Journal* 17(5): 83-88.
- [3] Ali, M., de Azevedo, A.R., Marvila, M.T., Khan, M.I., Memon, A.M., Masood, F., Almahbashi, N.M., Shad, M.K., Khan, M.A., Fediuk, R., Timokhin, R., Borovkov, A., Haq, I.U. (2021): The influence of covid-19-induced daily activities on health parameters-a case study in Malaysia. – *Sustainability* 13(13): 22p.
- [4] AlRasheed, M.M., Al-Aqeel, S., Aboheimed, G.I., AlRasheed, N.M., Abanmy, N.O., Alhamid, G.A., Alnemari, H.M., Alkhowaiter, S., Alharbi, A.R., Khurshid, F., Trabelsi, K., Jahrami, H.A., BaHammam, A.S. (2023): Quality of life, fatigue, and physical symptoms post-covid-19 condition: A cross-sectional comparative study. – *Healthcare* 11(11): 14p.
- [5] Andrei, F., Mancini, G., Agostini, F., Epifanio, M.S., Piombo, M.A., Riolo, M., Spicuzza, V., Neri, E., Lo Baido, R., La Grutta, S., Trombini, E. (2022): Quality of life and job loss during the COVID-19 pandemic: Mediation by hopelessness and moderation by trait emotional intelligence. – *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19(5): 12p.
- [6] Haldane, V., De Foo, C., Abdalla, S.M., Jung, A.S., Tan, M., Wu, S., Chua, A., Verma, M., Shrestha, P., Singh, S., Perez, T., Tan, S.M., Bartos, M., Mabuchi, S., Bonk, M., McNab, C., Werner, G.K., Panjabi, R., Nordström, A., Legido-Quigley, H. (2021): Health Systems Resilience in managing the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons from 28 countries. – *Nature Medicine* 27(6): 964-980.
- [7] Homer, S.T., Khor, K.S. (2021): Exploring the perceptions of Malaysian gen Z towards the impact of covid-19 on sustainable development. – *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 29(57): 85700-85716.
- [8] Joaquim, R.M., Pinto, A.L.C.B., Guatimosim, R.F., de Paula, J.J., Souza Costa, D., Diaz, A.P., da Silva, A.G., Pinheiro, M.I.C., Serpa, A.L.O., Miranda, D.M., Malloy-Diniz, L.F. (2021): Bereavement and psychological distress during COVID-19 pandemics: The

- impact of death experience on mental health. – *Current Research in Behavioral Sciences* 2: 7p.
- [9] Lim, P.Y., Md Said, S., Kadir Shahar, H., Azman, A.Z., Mokhtar, S.A., Mahmud, A. (2022): Covid-19 inpatient deaths and brought-in-dead cases in Malaysia. – *Frontiers in Public Health* 10: 9p.
- [10] Mishra, N.P., Das, S.S., Yadav, S., Khan, W., Afzal, M., Alarifi, A., Kenawy, E.R., Ansari, M.T., Hasnain, M.S., Nayak, A.K. (2020): Global impacts of pre- and post-covid-19 pandemic: Focus on socio-economic consequences. – *Sensors International* 1: 7p.
- [11] Nandasena, H.M., Pathirathna, M.L., Atapattu, A.M., Prasanga, P.T. (2022): Quality of life of covid 19 patients after discharge: Systematic review. – *PLOS ONE* 17(2): 12p.
- [12] Rad, M.R., Abbasi, M., Salimian, E., Norouzi, M., Emamjomeh, A., Haghighatdoost, F., Mahmoudi, S., Najafian, J., Masoudi, S., Dabaghi, G.G., Mohammadifard, N. (2024): Baseline socioeconomic status predicting post-COVID-19 symptoms: Results from Isfahan COVID Cohort (ICC) study. – *Preventive Medicine Reports* 45: 5p.
- [13] Rahman, A.A., Jasmin, A.F., Schmillen, A. (2022): The vulnerability of jobs to mobility restrictions: Malaysia's experience during the covid-19 pandemic. – *Southeast Asian Economies* 39(3): 313-329.
- [14] Reitsma, L., Mooren, T.M., Mouthaan, J., Pociunaite-Ott, J., Van Hoof, M.J., Groen, S.P., Lotzin, A., Boelen, P.A., Lenferink, L.I. (2025): Trajectories of prolonged grief disorder severity after loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Loss and Trauma* 31(1): 5-28.
- [15] Rockström, J., Norström, A.V., Matthews, N., Biggs, R., Folke, C., Harikishun, A., Huq, S., Krishnan, N., Warszawski, L., Nel, D. (2023): Shaping a resilient future in response to COVID-19. – *Nature Sustainability* 6(8): 897-907.
- [16] Román-Montes, C.M., Flores-Soto, Y., Guaracha-Basañez, G.A., Tamez-Torres, K.M., Sifuentes-Osornio, J., González-Lara, Ma. F., León, A.P. (2023): Post-covid-19 syndrome and quality of life impairment in severe COVID-19 Mexican patients. – *Frontiers in Public Health* 11: 9p.
- [17] Scheinfeld, E., Gangi, K., Nelson, E.C., Sinardi, C.C. (2021): Please scream inside your heart: Compounded loss and coping during the COVID-19 pandemic. – *Health Communication* 37(10): 1316-1328.
- [18] Sera Jose, K.M., Navarro, A.J., Pomida, A.N., Hechanova-Alampay, M.R. (2023): Bereaved in me: Understanding the vicarious grief experiences among helping professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. – *OMEGA-Journal of Death and Dying* 91(3): 1236-1256.
- [19] Statz, T.L., Kobayashi, L.C., Finlay, J.M. (2022): 'Losing the illusion of control and predictability of life': Experiences of grief and loss among ageing US adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. – *Ageing and Society* 43(12): 2821-2844.
- [20] Venkatesh, V. (2020): Impacts of COVID-19: A research agenda to support people in their fight. – *International Journal of Information Management* 55: 6p.
- [21] Wang, M.T., Henry, D.A., Del Toro, J., Scanlon, C.L., Schall, J.D. (2021): Covid-19 employment status, Dyadic family relationships, and child psychological well-being. – *Journal of Adolescent Health* 69(5): 705-712.
- [22] Zainudeen, Z.T., Abd Hamid, I.J., Azizuddin, M.N., Abu Bakar, F.F., Sany, S., Zolkepli, I.A., Mangantig, E. (2021): Psychosocial impact of covid-19 pandemic on Malaysian families: A cross-sectional study. – *BMJ Open* 11(8): 8p.