

## **How Parasocial Relationships Affected Psychoemotional Aspects During Social Restrictions in the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the effects of interpersonal and parasocial relationships as coping mechanisms, particularly during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Interpersonal relationships involve direct, reciprocal contact, while parasocial relationships are one-sided, where one party does not know the other personally, often seen with celebrities or media figures. The study aims to discuss how parasocial relationships can influence coping abilities in situations of isolation and loneliness and to stimulate further discussions. The research method involved a qualitative literature review of various academic sources in Portuguese, English, and Spanish and an analysis of selected social media posts from 2020 to 2023, focusing on the pandemic period. The findings highlight similarities between both types of relationships, such as providing emotional support, fostering group participation, expanding social circles, and offering acceptance and inspiration. Both types of relationships have stages of approach and distancing and can become pathological. The study emphasizes that while parasocial relationships are not replacements for interpersonal relationships, they are significant. It argues that denying the importance of both types of relationships limits the understanding of human social capacities. The paper concludes that further research is needed on the effects of these relationships, considering the influence of meso and microcultures and their development over different time frames, calling for more attention to the topic within psychology to encourage debates and new research.

**Keywords:** Coping, COVID-19, Interpersonal, Parasocial, Relationship