Article Title

Emotion regulation, psychological distress and demographic characteristics from a Spanish-speaking sample: Data from the lockdown due to COVID-19

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Abstract

Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, several governments around the world implemented strict lockdown measures. However, these measures produced a number of negative psychological and social consequences, such as increased anxiety and depression [1,2]. This article presents raw data from variables related to psychological distress, and from possible sources of psychological distress, such as the use of certain emotion regulation strategies, exposure to different media sources, demographic information (e.g., age, marital status, having children), or characteristics of the house (e.g., overcrowding or isolation). The data were collected online during the first months of the lockdown measure in Ecuador (from

March to June 2020) in a Spanish speaking sample of 663 participants (18-75 years old). The provided dataset could be useful to other researchers interested in investigating potential sources of psychological distress or vulnerable groups during a lockdown situation.

Keywords

psychological distress, emotion regulation, COVID-19, lockdown, WEIRD, worries, anxiety, depression

Specifications Table

Subject	Psychology
Specific subject area	Mental health, behaviour, demographic characteristics, and coping during lockdown due to COVID-19.
Type of data	Table
How data were acquired	Data were acquired using an online survey posted online on Google Forms and advertised on social media.

Data format	Raw
Parameters for data collection	All data were collected online and anonymously.
Description of data collection	Data collection started on March 26 2020 and was closed on June 1 2020. It was advertised in Ecuador through social media (i.e. Facebook and Twitter) as a study investigating the effects of the lockdown measures on psychological distress. Participants were encouraged to share the link to the study and, as a result, participants from other countries from America and Europe also completed the questionnaire.
Data source location	Institution: University of Guayaquil City: Guayaquil Country: Ecuador
Data accessibility	Repository name: Open Science Framework (OSF) Direct URL to data: https://osf.io/9cr3q/

Related research article	
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Value of the Data

- The data were collected during the first months of lockdown in several countries and includes an evaluation of psychological distress, cognitive emotion regulation strategies, hobbies, social support, seeking information related to COVID-19, perceived risk of infection, house characteristics, and demographic characteristics.
- Data can be used for identifying predictors of psychological distress during a lockdown situation.
- Other researches may look for group differences, identification of vulnerable groups, and the elaboration of models predicting psychological distress.

Data Description

All data is presented in a single database available at <https://osf.io/9cr3q/>. Data includes information from a number of variables related to their confinement and about possible psychological distress experienced. All data presented in the

database is raw and no participant has been excluded. Three of the questionnaires included in data collection (i.e., State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, and Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression scale) required a total score to be calculated from their items. Total scores, as well as the score of each item, are provided. In cases where the score of an item required to be inverted, that is, converted into a different score in order to be used for the calculation of the total score, only the inverted score has been presented.

Due to an error in data collection, data from the first 40 participants was lost for the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression scale.

The online survey can be found in the Supplementary Materials. Table 1 summarise demographic characteristics from the sample.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	%
Level of education	
Primary school	0.45
High school	31.98
Technical degree	4.68
Undergraduate studies	44.5
Graduate studies	18.4
Marital status	
Single	65.6
Married	22.6
Divorced	5.88
Civil union	2.11

Living with a couple	3.77
Gender	
Female	62.9
Male	36.43
Prefer not to say	1.1
School-aged children	
Yes	27.6
No	72.4
Number of school-aged children	
0	72.4
1	14.18
2	8.75
3	3.02
4	0.3
5	1.36
Employment status	
Unemployed	42.5
Casual	10.26
Employee	47.21
Working in contact with others	
Yes	18.85
No	81.15
Family income per month (USD)	
0-400	14.78
401-800	28.36
801-1500	30.47
1501 – or more	26.4

Experimental Design, Materials and Methods

The database contains data from four questionnaires. The first questionnaire was elaborated for evaluating the psychological effects of the lockdown, and covered demographic information, hobbies during the lockdown, medical and psychiatric history, characteristic of the house where the participant was staying during the lockdown, media sources of information usually accessed, trust in official sources, number of times they looked for information about COVID-19, current worries and worries about the future. This instrument took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Emotion regulation was evaluated using the 27-item Spanish version of the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire [3,4]. This instrument was designed to evaluate nine different emotion regulation strategies primarily relying on a cognitive component. These strategies can consist in directing the responsibility of the event triggering the negative emotions to others (Other-blame) or themselves (Self-blame), on how the event is being processed, such as re-evaluating it in a more positive way (Positive Reappraisal), putting it into a broader perspective in order to minimise its relevance (Putting into Perspective), focusing on the negative aspects of the situation (Catastrophising) or in continuously bringing the event back to memory (Rumination). Other strategies consist of refocusing attention to other more positive things (Positive Refocusing) or on looking for solutions (Refocus on Planning). The last strategy identified by these authors consists of accepting the event and resigning to it (Acceptance). The scale consists of 27 items presenting possible cognitive behaviours commonly used to cope with negative events. Participants were required to rate on a 5-point scale (1 = almost never, and 5 =

almost always) each of the items and total scores were obtained for each sub-scale. Higher scores represent higher use of a particular strategy.

Anxiety was evaluated using the Spanish version of the State-trait Anxiety Inventory [5]. This inventory consists of two sub-scales: State anxiety, measuring a transitory experience of anxiety, and Trait anxiety, measuring anxiety as a more stable characteristic in the person. Each scale includes 20 items describing different feeling and ideas related to the experience of anxiety and participants were required to rate them on a 4-point scale (0 to 3). A total score for each sub-scale was then calculated. Higher scores represent higher levels of anxiety.

Depression was evaluated using the Spanish version of the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale [6,7]. This is a 20-item scale covering a number of depression symptoms. Participants were required to rate on a 4-point scale (0 to 3) how often they experienced each of those symptoms during the previous week. A total score was obtained from all items. Higher scores represent higher levels of depression.

Procedure

Data collection was advertised through social media (i.e., Facebook and Twitter) providing a link for completing all questionnaires and using a snow-ball procedure, encouraging participants to share the link containing the survey. All questionnaires were presented as a single online survey using Google Forms. The questionnaires were presented in the following order: (1) the questionnaire collecting demographic information (2) the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, (3) the Cognitive Emotion

Regulation Questionnaire, and (4) the Center of Epidemiological Studies Depression scale. In total, 663 Spanish speaking participants (mean age = 30.03, SD = 11.3, range = [18-75]) completed the survey from March 26 to June 1 from 2020.

Ethics Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. No identifiable information was collected.

CRedit author statement

Jose A. Rodas: Conceptualisation, methodology, data curation, writing. **Maria Jara-Rizzo:** Conceptualisation, methodology, data curation. **Daniel Oleas:** Conceptualisation, data curation.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships which have or could be perceived to have influenced the work reported in this article.

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