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LAUGHTER: DEMOGRAPHIC LEVELS AND FACTORS, IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

LA RISA: NIVELES Y FACTORES DEMOGRÁFICOS, EN EL CONTEXTO DE LA COVID-19

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RESUMEN

Introducción: La pandemia no se detiene, los estudios sobre la misma tampoco; esta pandemia produce dolor, tristeza, desesperación y muertes, cuyos números son incalculables. Ante esta situación difícil y dolorosa, la risa levanta su bandera de esperanza. **Objetivo:** El estudio tiene el objetivo de describir los niveles y los factores demográficos de la risa, en el contexto la COVID-19. **Métodos:** El estudio corresponde a un enfoque cuantitativo, de tipo descriptivo, de corte transversal. Los datos sobre los niveles de la risa se obtuvieron mediante una encuesta virtual, cuyos participantes fueron 101, de edades entre 20 y 60 años, quienes participaron voluntariamente, procedentes de las tres regiones del Perú: costa, sierra y selva. Los datos sobre la experiencia de la risa, con misma encuesta, con el tipo Likert: nunca, a veces y siempre. **Resultados:** De los 101 participantes, 87 (entre 20 y 60 años) presentan una risa en el nivel alto y 14 en el nivel medio. 14 participantes (entre solteros, casados, divorciados y convivientes) revelan una risa en el nivel medio y 87 en el nivel alto. De las tres regiones (costa, sierra y selva), 14 participantes se ubican en el nivel medio y 87 en el nivel alto. Por otro lado, 6 hombres y 8 mujeres practican una risa ubicada en el nivel medio, en el alto 28 y 59, respectivamente. En el factor: religión, 14 (entre católicos, adventistas, evangélicos y otros) revelan una sonrisa en el nivel medio, 87 en el alto. Según el factor: nivel de estudios (primario, secundario y superior), 14 y 87 ubican su risa en el nivel bajo y alto, respectivamente. En el círculo familiar y de los amigos, se experimenta siempre la risa: 58.4% y 66.3%, respectivamente; para los encuestados es más fácil reír, siempre, 54.5% y 66.3%, en el entorno familiar y de los amigos, respectivamente. Declararon que la risa previene las enfermedades, fortalece la salud, evita el covid-19, fortalece el sistema inmunológico y limita la producción de la hormona cortisol (responsable del estrés), siempre 70.3%, 31.7%, 81.2; 31.7%, 71.3% y 83.2%, respectivamente. **Conclusión:** En el contexto de la COVID-19, los niveles más significativos de la risa encontrados en el estudio son dos: medio y alto; los factores demográficos más ponderados son: edad, sexo, religión y estado laboral.

Palabras Clave: Risa; niveles; factores demográficos; COVID-19 (Fuente: DeCS BIREME).

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The pandemic does not stop, neither do the studies on it; This pandemic produces pain, sadness, despair and deaths, whose numbers are unmeasurable. Faced with this difficult and painful situation, laughter raises its flag of hope. Objective: The study aims to describe the levels and demographic factors of laughter, in the context of COVID-19. Methods: The study corresponds to a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional approach. The data were obtained through a virtual survey, whose participants were 101, between 20 and 60 years of age, participating voluntarily, from the three regions of Peru: coast, mountain and jungle. The data regarding laughter experience, within the survey, with Likert-type: never, sometimes and always. Results: Of the 101 participants, 87 (between 20 and 60 years old) are located in the high level and 14 in the medium level. 14 participants (among single, married, divorced and cohabitants) revealed laughter in the medium level and 87 in the high level. Of the three regions (coast, mountains and jungle), 14 were in the medium level and 87 in the high level. On the other hand, 6 men and 8 women practiced laughter in the medium level, in the high level 28 and 59, respectively. In the religion factor: 14 (among Catholics, Adventists, Evangelicals and others) reveal a laughter in the medium level, 87 in the high. According to the educational level factor: (primary, secondary and higher), 14 and 87 are located in the low and high level, respectively. In the family and friends circle, laughter is always experienced: 58.4% and 66.3%, respectively; for respondents it is easier to laugh, always, 54.5% and 66.3%, in the family environment and with friends, respectively. They declared that laughter prevents diseases, strengthens health, prevents covid-19, strengthens the immune system and limits the production of the cortisol hormone (responsible for stress), always 70.3%, 31.7%, 81.2; 31.7%, 71.3% and 83.2%, respectively. Conclusion: In the context of COVID-19, the most significant levels of laughter found in the study are two: medium and high; the most weighted demographic factors are: age, sex, religion, and employment status.

Keywords: Laughter; levels; demographic factors; COVID-19. (Source: DeCS BIREME).

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INTRODUCTION

Laughter has accompanied men throughout the history of humans. When we talk about laughter, immediately synonyms come to mind such as smile, giggle, contraction, tickles, belly laugh, chuckle, cackle, laughter. We see that laughter has its source in comedy present in literature[1]. Concepts exist that are not disassociated, for example, "positive emotions, humor and laughter", whose boundaries are complex [2].

Laughter is a physiological or psychological response or reaction generated by a stimulus: humor[3]. For Torres [1], laughter is "an inherent faculty of humans", whose source is comedy, presents positive functions, generating benefits for men and society, provokes the reactions of muscles and nerves, including compromises intellect, mind, in a space where the mass participates. Laughter is social, not permanent, it is momentary, universal. According to Fernández-Poncela [4], laughter, semantically, does not divorce from humor, understood as a "multidimensional and complex phenomenon". When we speak of emotions, a reference of "physical and mental, neurophysiological and biochemical, psychological and cultural, basic and complex processes" is built, "laughter is happiness, joy" [2]. Laughter is a mechanism, reduces physical excitement, stress, emotional tension, unpleasant and negative situations, stimulates and improve blood flow, improve breathing, relaxes muscles, also improves them, and can "revert the effects of hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, hormones that during stress increase to levels that suppress the immune system" [3]. Laughter is a means to reach complete wellbeing in people [5].

Laughter has a "tension and passion releasing effect", "a healing, therapeutic character", improving mood and the organism, because they release endorphin and regulate heart function, for example[1]. The scope of laughter is complex for its emotional process and humor, in a scene where "perceptions, sensations, thoughts, emotions, feelings for it, needs and actions" stand out, whose humor consists of "an attitude towards life" and is related with "pleasant sensations and emotions", allows us to understand the cognitive, emotional, psychophysiological (breathing, nervous system, hormonal, and neuronal), behavioral or motor and social aspects. It has a function of distension, in the sense of "releasing tension, freeing pressure, dedramatizing, breaks up conflicts"[4].

Laughter keeps a relationship with sensations, perceptions, thoughts and positive emotions: satisfactorily, pleasant. "Laughter is fundamental for health and life, it is also essential for the development of sensations and emotions that get us closer to wellbeing and happiness"[2]. It possesses a conceptual variant, denominated laugh therapy, understood as a type of therapeutic technique, whose purpose is to generate laughter in patients, who reveal "emotional, mental, corporal that serve as a preventive tool against health deviations", laughter generates physical and psychological benefits, in oncological patients[6].

A person without laughter is not normal, every person expresses a smile or laughter, in this manner, it has the function of laughter therapy, whose experience was carried out in cancer and AIDS patients, generating feelings of happiness and joy, meaning, it has very positive effects on people's health, exclusively facing stress, improves the psychological state, brain health, health in general, without excluding the benefits: immunological, respiratory, circulatory, hormonal, rest and sleep, digestive [5].

Laughter could be "festive, happy, lighthearted or sad, mischievous, sarcastic, taunting". The study's objective is to describe the levels and demographic factors of laughter, in the context of COVID-19

METHODS

Design and area of study

The study is quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional [7]. The quantitative data collection was carried out, the statistical description of levels of laughter was carried out, furthermore the information was collected in one moment and for one time. The study was not observational, and neither was it prospective or retrospective, because the phenomenon was not observed, much less has the denominated cohorts been determined.

Participants

The concepts population or sample are not used. A population or sample have not been determined. The concept of participants is used because these have collaborated with the study voluntarily. In this sense, the number of participants is 101, whose ages range between 20 and 60 years, originating from three regions of Peru: coast, mountain, and jungle. Therefore, no sample has been performed: not probabilistic or non-probabilistic. Better yet, the participation of subjects by convenience was determined, which is why a representative sample is not mentioned. Instead, inclusion criteria or participation of greater than 20 years of age were used. Exclusion criteria was not determined.