

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Health-related factors of psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic among healthcare workers in Ecuador.

Original Article, Int J Public Health

Reviewer: Guido Mascialino

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EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

A moderately high (66%) percentage of healthcare workers in Ecuador during the pandemic met criteria for psychological distress as measured by the GHQ-12. Women had greater distress, and number of symptoms was associated with distress as well. Adherence to preventive measures and perception of better health were protective factors.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

Strengths include adequate sample size and inclusion of health-related and behavioral variables. Limitation includes convenience sampling.

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

Line 14: the phrasing "it was obtained" can be eliminated or changed to "Results showed..."

Line 30: include the date for those statistics.

Line 39: remove the additional periods.

Line 54: change to: "In addition to work overload and long hours"

Line 70: I don't think you mean to use the word "affectation" here, the meaning of which is posturing or inauthentic speech or actions.

Line 82: please check the latest numbers as Pichincha province alone accounts for 166k cases, or 25% of the total.

Line 86-89: please clarify the role of "ethnic factors such as indigenous populations and refugees" in an uneven implementation of restrictions.

Line 104: in the Sample section, it would be best to include the number of healthcare professionals in Ecuador and a formula to determine that your number is representative (which I imagine it is).

Line 106: it would be helpful to give numbers for the regional origin of the healthcare professionals, divided into the 4 regions of Ecuador: coastal, Amazon, Andean, Galapagos.

Line 120: change "of own elaboration" to "developed by the authors of this study."

Line 123: please describe in more detail the section of the ad-hoc instrument that asked about symptoms. If the questions you listed are all of them, then state so.

Line 208: It seems like the number 3.6 is from a previous organizational approach to the text, and also this title should be bolded to be consistent with your style.

Line 141: You may want to specify in this section that analysis at the item level used all of the Likert values, while the scale sum was done based on a binomial scoring system. Otherwise, it may confuse the reader.

Line 149: in your data analysis section it would be helpful if you explain in more detail your analytic strategy. I am unfamiliar with CHAID analysis but it appears to be a non-parametric equivalent of a regression providing a classification system. If so, how did you select which variables to include in the model? Was it those that had significant univariate relationships with PD? If so, please state it clearly or explain your process.

I am also curious as to why you didn't use logistic regression if you wanted to keep PD dichotomous, or used GHQ-12 as a continuous variable and used parametric statistics. I am not saying you should change all your analysis, but I would like to understand your rationale for choosing potentially less powerful analytic techniques.

Line 169: Here you describe the sample and say: "(65.2%), 47.0% being 30 years of age or younger," which gives the impression that 47% of women were 30 years or younger when you are I assume describing the whole sample. Please change your phrasing.

Line 217: here you state: "distinguishing between without 218 symptoms, one to three symptoms and more than three symptoms," is this classification something that the CHAID analysis do automatically or did you categorize your symptoms variable a priori? If so, please explain your rationale in the data analysis section.

Line 282: you may want to change "being an inflammatory..." to "given that COVID-19 is an inflammatory..."

Line 314: the word "limitaitions" is misspelled. Change to Limitations.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

Yes

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 10 Rigor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 11 Significance to the field	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 12 Interest to a general audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 13 Quality of the writing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.