

Depression and Personal Goals: Cognitive and Emotional Anticipation

Explanation of Methodology & Datasets

Methodology

Participants & Procedure

281 participants were recruited, with 263 fully completing the **Goal Task** and **Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale** (CESD-R; Eaton et al, 2004) within Qualtrics.

CESD-R

20 item inventory measuring severity of depressive symptoms devised by Eaton et al (2004).

Goal Task

Participants generated eight personal goals, defined as “things you would like to achieve in the future” (approach goals) and “things you would like to avoid in the future” (avoidance goals) (4 of each) using the sentence stems “In the future, it will be important for me to...” or “In the future, it will be important for me to avoid...”. They provided the following ratings:

- Temporal Distance – estimate of how far into the future this goal could be achieved (1 = within the next week; 2 = within the next month; 3 = within the next year; 4 = within the next 2-4 years; or 5 = within 5 or more years)
- Likelihood of achievement (How likely do you think you will achieve this goal) - 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Controllability (How much control do you think you have over achieving this goal) – 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Importance to Life Story (How important would achieving this goal be to your life story) - 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Motivation to achieve goal (How much motivation do you feel right now imagining achieving this goal)- 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Effort required to achieve goal (How effortful do you think achieving this goal would be)- 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Vividness with which they can imagine goal achievement (How vividly can you imagine achieving this goal)- 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)
- Visual perspective when imagining goal achievement (To what extent do you imagine achieving the goal in the first person perspective (seeing it through your own eyes) – 7 points scale anchored by 1 (entirely first-person perspective) and 7 (entirely third-person, observer, perspective).

Participants assigned to provide measures of either anticipated or anticipatory emotion.

Anticipated pleasure, happiness and satisfaction (‘how much [xxx] would feel this if you were to achieve the goal’) - 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)

Anticipatory pleasure, happiness and satisfaction (how much [xxx] do you feel this right now when imagining achieving the goal) - 7 point scale anchored at 1 (not at all) and 7 (extremely)

After completion of the study, all goals were coded for specificity and life domains. Specificity was coded as {0, 1, 2} where 0 = general, 1 = moderate, 2 = specific (per Belcher & Kangas, 2014). Domain was coded as {1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11}, corresponding to the 11 domains listed on p. 738 of Gamble et al. (2021).

Datasets

depgoals_cog_emo_characteristics.csv contains raw data for 263 participants. Data was extracted from Qualtrics, where study was completed anonymously. Data was cleaned to remove participants who withdrew during study (closed browser so incomplete Qualtrics submission) or did not adhere to task instructions (e.g. misunderstood goal task) and to remove any potentially identifiable information (i.e. IP addresses).

ID – Participant ID assigned by researcher to organise data

GROUP – Assignment to anticipated or anticipatory emotion ratings

Duration(s) – Completion time for Qualtrics in seconds

Age – Participant's age in years

Gender – Participant Gender {1 = Male, 2 = Female, 3 = Other/Prefer not to say}

CESD1-CESD20 – Item ratings for CESD-R. Each item coded 1-4.

CESDRTOT – Total CESD-R Score. Sum of items CESD1 to CESD20

AVOID1, AVOID2, AVOID3, AVOID4, APPROACH1, APPROACH2, APPROACH3, APPROACH4 – Qualitative statements of personal goals

[AVOID1]DISTANCE – Temporal distance estimate (1-5 scale)

[AVOID1]ACHIEVE – Likelihood of achievement rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]CONTROL- Controllability rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]IMPORTANCE – Importance to life story rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]VIVIDNESS – Vividness rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]PERSPECTIVE – Visual perspective rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]HAPPINESS – Anticipated or anticipatory happiness rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]SATISFIED – Anticipated or anticipatory satisfaction rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]PLEASURE – Anticipated or anticipatory pleasure rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]MOTIVATION – Motivation to achieve goal rating (1-7 scale)

[AVOID1]EFFORT – Effort required to achieve goal rating (1-7 scale)

Specificity_Domain_Coding.csv contains qualitative statements of personal goals extracted from **cog_emo_characteristics.csv**, with corresponding specificity (SPEC) and domain (DOM) coding.

Specificity Coding: 0 = general, 1 = moderate, 2 = specific (per Belcher & Kangas, 2014).

Domain was coded as {1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11}, corresponding to the 11 domains listed on p. 738 of Gamble et al. (2021): 1 = work & education, 2 = close relationships, 3 = hobbies and growth, 4 = health & fitness, 5 = home life, 6 = travel, 7 – money, 8 = emotions & feelings, 9 = social life, 10 = community & volunteering, 11 = spirituality & religion.