Research Article

Saudade: Precipitating Events, Feelings, and Coping Strategies

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Abstract

For Lusophones, saudade is a common psychological experience related with the physical separation from relevant people and/or familiar locations. The subjective nature of saudade was studied using both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The sample consisted of 199 Portuguese college students. Participants were asked to express the circumstances that usually trigger a saudade experience, the feelings they usually associate with the experience, and the main coping strategies they usually try to implement when confronted with the experience. The saudade experience was conceived to be primarily triggered in situations of spatial or spatial-temporal distancing from significant individuals. The emotion most often mentioned directly was sadness. During saudade, some people try to sustain the emotion in different ways, for example by approaching objects that may prolong it; others tend to get rid of the emotion as quickly as possible, and still others tend to accept the experience and do nothing special to change it. The use of quantitative tools showed that the usual strength of the saudade experience was close to the maximum value.

Keywords: emotions; space; space-time; saudade; coping; Portugal.

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The word *saudade*, utilized in Lusophone countries, refers to a psychological experience related with the physical separation from relevant others (e.g., parents) and/or significant places (e.g., birth house) (Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa Contemporânea da Academia de Ciências de Lisboa, 2001). In Brazil, there is a day celebrating officially *saudade* (on 30 January). This Portuguese term is usually considered as difficult to translate (Vasconcelos, 1996). In English, the word is usually translated by terms such as longing, yearning, missing, homesickness, and nostalgia (Silva, 2012). However, none of these terms seems to cover the exact meaning of saudade as Portuguese usually understand it.

Saudade has inspired the thought and literature from medieval ages to the present (Lourenço, 1978; Noronha, 2007). King Duarte of Portugal in the 15th century approached saudade as "precisely the feeling that the heart fails because it is apart from the presence of someone(s) whom it loves very much" (Botelho, 1990, p. 36). King Duarte considered this feeling as being different from sadness, disgust, sorrow, displeasure, or boredom. For philosopher Francisco Manuel de Melo, saudade is the "bad thing you like and [the] good thing you suffer from" (Vasconcelos, 1996, p. 101).

Empirical investigation about saudade is scarce even if it constitutes one of the most habitual emotions for Portuguese (Farrell, 2006). Empirical studies have shown that saudade is actually a common experience among Lusophone people. Neto and Mullet (2014) in their studies showed that about 40% of respondents in their samples (Portuguese adolescents, students or migrant adults living abroad) experienced saudade often or very often.

Saudade is a complex emotion that manifests itself at the cognitive (e.g., memories, thinking), emotional (e.g., sadness, joy, loneliness), behavioral (e.g., crying, calling others), and motivational (e.g., wanting to go back in time, wanting to be close) levels (Neto & Mullet, 2014). Based on Neto and Mullet (2014) research a prototype-based scale was developed to assess saudade, and by means of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses have found three separate components: Missing Close Others (e.g., "I suffer from being so far away

from people I love"), Lack of Intimacy (e.g., "I miss my friends"), and Longing for the Past (e.g., "I reminisce about the old days").

Saudade is a complex phenomenon, moreover, as it is a mixed emotion. Mixed emotions hold ambivalent attributes, including positive and negative experiences simultaneously (Branieka et al., 2014). Indeed, saudade contains not only negative attributes (e.g., depression, pain, and sensation of lost) but also positive features (happiness, friendship, and love) (Neto & Mullet, 2014). It means different things to different individuals. Just as all complex emotions, saudade results from an interaction of personal dispositions and situational factors.

The Present Study

The main objective of this study was to complement these previous studies by analysing participants' autobiographical saudade accounts. Autobiographical narratives represent a relevant source of information in addition to that provided by quantitative data analyses (Habermas, 2019; Weststrate, 2018). This is particularly true in the area of emotions such as anger (Baumeister et al., 1990), inspiration (Trash & Elliot, 2004), or nostalgia (Holak & Havelena, 1992; Wildschut et al., 2006).

Participants were first led to focus on the experience of saudade by verbally evoking one past experience of saudade. Precipitating events are factors that alter an individual's social life in some substantial manner. As Peplau (1985, p. 277) suggests, "precipitating events create a mismatch between the person's actual social relationships and his or her social needs or desires". It is expected that precipitating events would be connected to loved ones from whom one is temporarily distanced, especially close family members or romantic partners. The reasons for the estrangement would be mainly studies and work. It is also expected that precipitating events would be evocations of deceased loved ones (e.g., grandparents) or evocations of locations in which particularly pleasant and significant events from the past took place. Next, two open-ended questions were asked.

The second question focused on the specific emotions related to the saudade experience. It is expected that the reported emotions would be negative (e.g., sadness) or very negative (e.g., depression) as well as positive (e.g., joy) in nature. The third question focused on coping strategies (or reactions to saudade), i.e., participants were asked to indicate what they actually do when they experience saudade. It is expected that people would either cultivate saudade by trying to extend it (e.g., by taking out a photo album from the drawer) or try to make this type of emotion disappear by using various means such as going shopping. It is also expected that some people would live the experience passively.

A secondary objective of this study was to gather additional quantitative information regarding (a) the frequency of experiencing saudade in the past and (b) the experience of saudade and its association with the experience of other emotions, positive or negative. It is expected that saudade would be a frequent experience correlated with both positive and negative emotions.

Method

Sample

The sample included 199 college students from Portugal attending the University of Porto. Eighty five percent were females and 15% males. Their ages ranged from 18 to 42 years old ($M = 20.29$; $SD = 3.82$).

Materials

Autobiographical narratives of saudade. As indicated in the introduction three open ended questions were asked: (a) "Please describe in as much detail as possible an event where you have felt saudade", (b) "What do you feel when you experience saudade?" and (c) "What do you do usually when you experience saudade?".

Frequency of the experience of saudade. Respondents were asked to express how often they experienced saudade using the same methodology as in previous studies (Neto & Mullet, 2014). They were asked to check one of the following seven options: at least once a day, three to four times a week, approximately twice a week, approximately once a week, once or twice a month, once every couple of months, and once or twice a year.

Affective states associated with the experience of saudade. The Portuguese version (Simões, 1993) of the PANAS (Watson et al., 1988) was used. It includes two sets of adjectives describing emotional states: ten positive adjectives (e.g., "alert") and ten negative adjectives (e.g., "afraid"). Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they experienced each of these feelings and emotions by recalling the recounted event associated with the feeling of saudade. The term "saudade" was also used. Respondents were asked to indicate the usual strength of this experience for them. A five-point response scale was used that ranged from *Not at all or slightly* (1) to *Very much* (5). In the current study Cronbach's alpha of positive (ten items) and negative affect (ten items) were .87, and .86, respectively.

Procedure

Respondents completed the questionnaire during regular courses. The study was in agreement with current legal and ethical norms in Portugal. It was performed according to the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed consent was acquired, and full anonymity was assured. There was no time limit to complete the survey, but mean time of completion was about 25 minutes. After completion, the respondents were debriefed. No compensation was offered for participation.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. It was used thematic analysis to identify, analyze, find patterns of meaning and report themes in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This type of analysis is generally utilized in researches that focus on the exploration of a phenomenon with limited literature. In this line, investigators utilize an inductive approach, avoiding the imposition of a categorical system of data interpretation. Initially, two researchers have read the data to become familiar with the scope of the content. Next, they coded and organized the data according to the main themes identified. Verbal responses were categorized by two researchers who extracted linguistic units. Monolexemic items, such as frustration or well-being, were easily considered as different attributes. When respondents utilized a sentence, however, it was necessary to judge whether it concerned a single attribute or if could be divided in two or more linguistic units. Quantitative analysis was used to generate descriptive statistics and for *t*-testing. It was used IBM SPSS statistical software (version 26).

Results

Precipitating events

The total number of linguistic units extracted from the feature lists was 263 ($M = 1.32$; $SD = .57$). Interrater reliability was good (Cohen's kappa = .85). Judges resolved remaining disagreements through discussion. A third coder resolved discrepancies. Coding yielded a total of 37 features that referred to five broad themes: physical separation (47% of the expressed answers), geographic mobility (20%), death (14%), locations where pleasant activities took place (10%), and a particular past period of life (9%). These themes will be presented in turn with examples of each from the narratives.

Table 1.
Themes of the events that precipitate saudade.

Theme	Proportion in the narratives
Separation	47
Geographic mobility	20
Death	14
Leisure	10
Period of life	9

The general theme of *Physical separation* refers mainly to geographical distancing inside the country from loved ones, such as family members, friends, and romantic partners and, more episodically, pets. Family members are the most frequently recalled within this theme. A 42-year-old woman stated: "I'm away from my mother, I often talk on the phone with her, but I feel saudade for not being physically with her. Many times, when we talk on the phone, I feel saudade for her food, her laughs, her frontality."

Current romantic partners come next. A 20-year-old woman stated: "I feel saudade for my boyfriend mainly when he goes on vacation because he is from Madeira Island and I am from Porto. And that's when I feel saudade for him the most, because it's the time of year when I'm without him for the longest time, and even though cell phones and internet are never the same. Nothing replaces face to face contact".

Past romantic partners were also evoked, although less often that current partners. A 19-year-old woman stated: "When I was tidying up my room and found my ex-boyfriend's clothes. I should stress that what made me feel saudade most was not the clothes as something physical but the smell and all the memories that this smell brought me of him."

Friends come next to romantic partners. A 20-year-old woman declared: "Today at lunch I was in the kitchen listening to my current housemates talking about work. While listening to their "background" conversation I remembered our dinners, the songs we sang, all the laughter. I wasn't sad by the memory, I just felt saudade of living with that person."

Finally, there was few references to pets. A 19-year-old woman stated: "Every year, in summer, I go to some destination away from home for fifteen days. Although it seems silly, I genuinely feel saudade for my cat over time."

The broad theme of *Geographic mobility* involving external migration -- of self or of persons to whom the person was affectionately attached – was, as indicated early, the second most common. Self-migration was more often recalled than others' migration given that a number of students go to study abroad. A 22-year-old woman said: "When I came to University, I had to change country and in the first weeks I felt very alone and helpless. To arrive at an empty room, in an apartment with people I didn't know was quite distressing. I missed someone to talk to, someone who was interested in what had happened to me or what I had done."

In some cases, geographic mobility may be more extreme. A 30-year-old man stated: "When I was in the military, I made a peace mission. I was absent for a few months. Festive seasons (Christmas, New Year's Eve, Women's Day) were spent away from family and

friends. I never spent Christmas so far away from my family. The saudade I had for them was made up for by the festivities with all the military that were with me."

As indicated earlier mobility of close others to study or to work come next to self-mobility. A 28-year-old woman declared: "When I was a child my father was emigrated for a while. As he only visited the family twice a year, this date was eagerly awaited. I think that was when I first got in touch with the feeling of saudade. It seemed that the closer the date of his return got, the more I felt saudade for him, making him count the days until the moment I saw him again."

The broad theme of *Death* -- the third most often expressed -- mostly referred to the death of a being to which the person was affectionately attached. Death is not only a spatial separation; it is a spatial-temporal separation. Close others most often recalled are grandparents, often with the "bittersweet" emotion inherent to saudade. A 21-year-old woman said: "Here for days I was lying there watching a soap opera where a grandmother and a granddaughter appeared. At that moment I remembered her and felt like crying, I felt saudade for her... I haven't seen my grandmother for almost six years because she passed away."

Apart from grandparents, younger family members and friends are evoked. A 19-year-old man stated: "Sometimes I feel saudade for my uncle who died and who was very close to me and my brothers. This happens when I remember how happy and funny he was. It's a good saudade, although sometimes I cry, but not because I can't be with him anymore, but because it was good to meet him and be with him." As in the case of physical separation, pets are also present in several narratives. A 20-year-old woman declared: "I feel saudade for my cat who died this year, I feel a pain in my chest, a despair to know that I will not have him back here with me and a feeling of powerlessness for not being able to do anything about it".

The broad theme of *Locations where pleasant activities took place* -- the fourth most often evoked -- referred mainly to places where enjoyable leisure experiences occurred in the past, such as holidays, birthdays, food, and specific activities, such as football games, horse riding and reading. Memories of vacation locations were most often evoked. A 20-year-old woman declared: "An event that made me feel saudade was a vacation I had with all my closest cousins, who were spent in the Algarve, without parents, uncles, or figures of greater responsibility."

Finally, the broad theme of *Past period in life* -- the least recalled in the narratives – referred to events that occurred in childhood, elementary school, high school, or Christmas festivities. This theme focused mainly on temporal separation. A 19-year-old woman declared: "I feel saudade for the old days, without responsibilities. Christmas, mainly. That Christmas when I had the whole family around the table. A banquet decorating the kitchen and the whole decorated space. Each one with his own candle, a full plate and a smile on his face. The smell of turkey, old rag and lit candle. The joy, the laughter and the old and typical stories of our past blunders. Table and heart full. It's a memory that I love a lot. That makes me feel saudade for an easier time, without responsibilities."

Feelings associated with saudade

Regarding feelings, the total number of linguistic units extracted from the feature lists was 519 (*M* = 2.61; *SD* = 1.58). Interrater reliability was good (Cohen's kappa = .93). Coding yielded a total of 80 features that can be classified into six themes: depression (40%), longing for the past (18%), anxiety (12%), positive affect (11%), other negative affect (10%), and psychosomatic symptoms (9%).

A 19-year-old man declared: "A tightness in the chest. I get very anxious and melancholic. I get very apathetic and I don't reason well. I can't seem to think about anything else and I get very depressed because I can't have that person(s) by my side in those moments". An 18-year-old woman stated: "I feel some anguish, sometimes happiness because when we feel saudade for someone or some place it's because that person or situation was important for us. It is almost like a bipolar feeling: joy and happiness and on the other hand sadness/pity for not being able to go back". A 24-year-old woman declared: "When I feel saudade, I sense a huge emptiness inside me, as if a part of me was slowly erased. I don't feel at all complete. A chest pain that doesn't pass with time only softens".

Overall, as shown in Table 2, sadness was expressed by a majority of participants (64%). It was followed by sense of constriction in the heart, nostalgia, anguish, and wanting to go back in time. Three of these categories - depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms – are usually associated with mental health problems. From the participants' reports, depression can be invoked because of the frequent report of feelings of sadness, melancholy, emptiness, and loneliness. Mental health can also be negative affected by frequent reports of feelings of anguish and anxiety. Also, one clear psychosomatic symptom involved the sense of constriction in the heart. All the valence ratings associated with these feelings were negative (Neto & Mullet, 2014).

Table 2.

Emotions directly associated with the experience of saudade.

Emotion	N	Valence
Sadness	127	-1.70
Constriction in the heart	47	-1.00
Nostalgia	39	-0.08
Anguish	37	-1.43
Wanting to go back in time	27	0.06
Emptiness	24	-1.86
Joy	18	2.13
Melancholy	16	-1.25
Anxiety	15	-1.21
Happiness	14	2.50
Wanting to see the person	14	1.44
Loneliness	12	-2.00
Want to cry	11	-0.65

Valence measurements (-3 to 3) have been taken from Neto and Mullet (2014). N refers to the number of times this emotion has been reported by more than ten participants.

On the other hand, two of these categories -- positive affect (joy, happiness and wanting the see the person) and negative affect (want to cry) -- are usually associated with subjective well-being (Diener et al., 2018). The valence ratings associated with positive affect were of course positive, and with negative affect were negative. Only two -- wanting to go back in time and nostalgia -- seemed to have neutral valences.

Coping with saudade

The total number of linguistic units extracted from the feature lists was 347 (M = 1.82; SD = .99). Interrater reliability was good (Cohen's kappa = .92). Coding yielded a total of 38 features. The overall set of these features can be classified into four broad themes: thinking (38%), social contact (22%), sad passivity (21%), and activity (19%) (see also Table 3).

Table 3.

Most often coping strategies directly evoked. Features mentioned by more than ten participants within each category.

Strategy	N
Thinking	
Remember good moments	69
Avoid thinking	47
Social contact	
Speak with someone	49
Call someone	25
Passivity	
Cry	21
Watch photos	16
Do nothing	11
Activity	
Listen to music	15

The general theme *Thinking* - the most common - included positive reflection on the past as well as avoiding thinking about the past. Positive thinking refers to the voluntary recall of all kinds of pleasant moments. A 20-year-old woman declared: "I often like to think about it. I like to anticipate the moment when the saudade will disappear and I will get back that something or someone so dear!" Avoidance thinking refers to attempts to cognitively separate oneself from feelings of saudade, i.e., to simply avoid feelings of saudade. A 19-year-old woman declared: "I try to abstract myself from what I feel. I tend to push those thoughts away and suppress them because I know there's nothing, I can do to change that." The features mentioned by more than ten participants within this category are remember good moments and avoid thinking (see Table 2).

The theme of *Social contact* involved talking with someone, calling relatives and close friends, i.e., establishing personal contact, directly or by phone or through social media platforms. A 19-year-old woman reported: "I try to see the alternatives I have to be in touch with what I need. Usually, I feel saudade not of something but of someone, so I see the alternatives I have to be with that person."

The theme of *Sad passivity* involves crying, watching photos and videos, watching television, trying to sleep, and doing nothing. A 20-year-old woman declared: "I don't do anything, waiting for that feeling to go away." Finally, the theme *activity* - the least common - involves listening to music, reading, studying, playing, eating, cooking, exercising, working at a hobby, walking (along the coast). A 19-year-old woman stated: "I eat chocolate, I go training or I go shopping."

Frequency of saudade

Fifteen percent of respondents expressed that they felt saudade at least once a day, 21% three to four times a week, 18% approximately twice a week (the median value), 25% approximately once a week (the mode value), 11% once or twice a month, 7% once every couple of months, and 3% once or twice a year. For most of the respondents in this research, saudade was, therefore, a common experience.

Affective states

Table 4 shows the average scores assigned to the twenty emotions experienced during this experience of saudade episodes. If we look at the ten highest scores, we see that eight of them corresponded to emotions considered positive (e.g., interested) and only two corresponded to emotions considered negative (e.g., jittery). The average scores were 2.34

(positive emotions) and 1.95 (negative emotions). The difference was significant, $t(198) =$ 5.54, p < .001. The average score for strength of saudade was 4.15 (*SD* = 1.01).

Table 4.
Means and standard deviations of scores in terms of the strength of emotions (positive and negative) associated with the saudade experience.

Emotion	Valence	*M*	*SD*
Interested	+	2.69	1.26
Jittery	-	2.58	1.42
Attentive	+	2.50	1.33
Nervous	-	2.48	1.36
Proud	+	2.42	1.37
Strong	+	2.39	1.21
Alert	+	2.37	1.20
Inspired	+	2.37	1.31
Determined	+	2.29	1.19
Excited	+	2.19	1.20
Active	+	2.12	1.25
Distressed	-	2.11	1.18
Enthusiastic	+	2.06	1.26
Upset	-	1.97	1.16
Irritable	-	1.92	1.16
Scared	-	1.84	1.14
Afraid	-	1.83	1.08
Guilty	-	1.75	0.99
Ashamed	-	1.70	1.03
Hostile	-	1.32	0.76

Discussion

As expected, for the majority of respondents, saudade was a common and pervasive experience. Over three-quarters of participants (79%) felt saudade at least once a week, and more than one-third (36%) at least three or four times a week. These results are consistent with previous studies (Not & Mullet, 2014): Saudade is deeply rooted in the daily lives of the Portuguese.

As expected, the saudade experience tends to be triggered mostly in situations of spatial separation (physical distancing) or spatial-temporal separation (death) from people (or animals) with whom one has been in close emotional contact for a long time (e.g., a romantic partner). The reasons for the separation are study and work, either because the participant has moved away or because the object of the saudade has moved away (or died).

Geographic mobility involving external migration is a phenomenon historically constant for Portuguese (Godinho, 1978; Serrão, 1974). The Age of Discovery and the subsequent emigration to India, Brazil, and Africa forced the Portuguese to be separated from the loved ones and had to bear their absence. According to the 17th writer Francisco Manuel de Melo, "love and absence are the parents of saudade" (Vasconcelos, 1996, p. 101). Nowadays, international migration continues to be an important source of saudade.

It has also been shown that mourning related to the affiliated people is associated with saudade. In particular, the death of grandparents evidenced utmost relevance for this sample. However, it has also happened that the object of the saudade is a particularly appreciated place where one may go more, a particularly pleasant event that will not happen again, even a whole period of life (carefree childhood).

Various feelings experienced by people living with saudade were directly reported. The emotion most often mentioned was sadness, which was consistent with the nature of the events that triggered the experience of saudade, i.e., the separation from loved ones or places (Shirai & Negamine, 2020). Depression and psychosomatic symptoms may also be present. However, some positive affects have also been mentioned. Saudade thus appeared to be associated with a constellation of traits that are most often unpleasant but also with certain positive traits, i.e., sadness tinged with joy.

When experiencing saudade various coping strategies were reported. Thinking was the most frequent coping strategy used by the present sample. This finding may suggest that people experiencing tend to ruminate a lot. Within this theme appears a clear distinction between thinking positively and disengagement thinking. Thinking positively is a type of coping similar to active and positive reframing coping strategies (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). On the other hand, past research suggests that suppression of unwanted thoughts and feelings fuel emotions one tries to avoid (Gold & Wegner, 1995). Therefore, future research should test if avoiding feelings of saudade might lead eventually to more severe saudade complaints.

Social contact is another of the themes used by these study's participants. Social contact is similar to the social support coping strategy and it is one of the positive emotion-focused coping strategies helpful in sharing emotional and personal problems with particular people (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). In this study, participants shared their feelings with others by contacting them directly or indirectly though phone and Internet technologies to alleviate saudade. Overall, interaction with others seems to reduce saudade. Findings of Pinquart and Sorensen (2001) showed that the quality of social contacts was more important than their quality to cope with loneliness and that communication with friends and neighbours had a

stronger relationship with loneliness than relationship with family members. Future research is needed to clarify if the same findings on loneliness can be generalized to saudade.

Sad passivity is another theme used by these study's participants. It constitutes a reaction to saudade probably among those who feel severely saudade. The passive reaction to saudade does not seem to be beneficial to the saudade person.

Evidence suggests that active saudade can also be used to develop and create activities when one is feeling saudade. The participants of the present study stated that involving in activities have diverted their minds from feeling saudade. This coping strategy is similar to the emotional-focused coping strategies such as distraction and engaging in useful activities (Saravanan et al., 2019). Overall, "get myself busy" prevents participants from having negative feelings associated with saudade.

In this study no data were collected which could test the hypothesis that certain coping strategies are more beneficial than others. Thus, future research should specifically focus on the quality of the different coping efforts.

When measured with validated, quantitative scales, the usual strength of the saudade experience was very high, close to the maximum value. In addition, and although the conditions were therefore not optimal for observing high correlations, the strength of the experience was, as expected, associated with positive characteristics (e.g., excitement) as well as with negative ones (e.g., nervousness). In fact, participants experienced more pleasant than unpleasant affects when they felt saudade. This finding can be contrasted with the early description of saudade by Luis Camões, who referred to it as "pure, sweet and painful torment" (Poet Luis Camões; Castro, 1980, p. 18). These results were consistent with previous empirical findings that described saudade as an unpleasant overall affect tinged with tones of happiness (Neto & Mullet, 2014). In the present study, its valence, when measured using validated scales, appears to be rated more positive than negative, although the same individuals, when asked directly to recall, tend to describe it as more negative than positive. This may be explained by the fact that negative feelings tend to be more prominent in recall than positive ones.

Limitations

The results of qualitative research are always context-related (Kvale, 2007). This research was accomplished in a Portuguese context and the results cannot be automatically transferred to other Lusophone contexts such as Brazil or Angola. In addition, since our sample was made up of young people, the results may not be fully valid for older people.

There is high probability they would actually report more disappearances and death overall (of parents, grandparents, siblings, friends) due to their older age.

Despite its limitations, this study was, to our knowledge, the first to explore empirically the triggers of saudade, as people conceive of them, and the coping strategies they employ in the face of this experience. This study was also the first to show very clearly the emotionally ambiguous nature of this experience. The experience of saudade is not necessarily mostly negative. When people are asked about the positive elements of the experience using a questionnaire, their statements are more positive than negative.

It is undeniable, however, that for some individuals this experience is above all negative and that they indeed suffer from it. One path of investigation would hence be to examine whether drawing these individuals' attention to the positive elements of the experience by means, for example, of positive cues, priming, cognitive training or reflexion, would alleviate depression and psychosomatic symptoms and improve subjective well-being. Other avenues of research could also include studying which coping improves mental health, which trigger is associated with poorer mental health, and expanding this study to older populations and populations of other Lusophone cultures.

Conclusion

Saudade was conceived to be primarily triggered in situations of spatial or spatial-temporal distancing from significant individuals. The emotion most often mentioned directly was sadness. During saudade, some people try to sustain the emotion in different ways, for example by approaching objects that may prolong it; others tend to get rid of the emotion as quickly as possible, and still others tend to accept the experience and do nothing special to change it. The use of quantitative tools showed that the usual strength of saudade was close to the maximum value.

Funding/Financial Support

Other Support/Acknowledgement

Competing Interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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