

Human Sciences Research Council

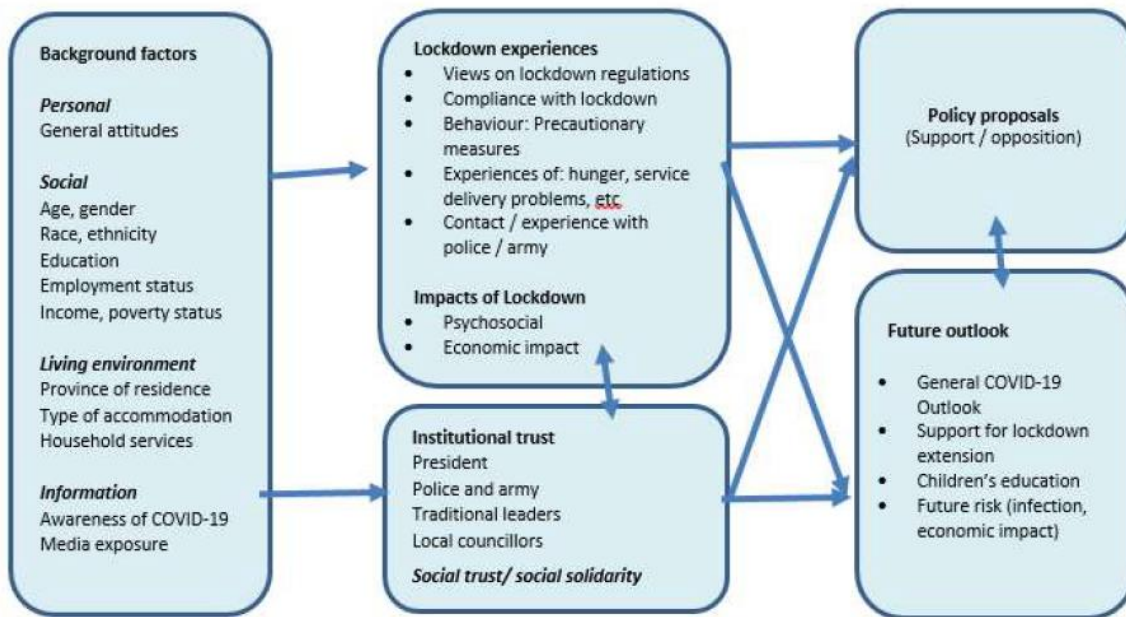
UJ-HSRC Covid-19 Democracy Survey Summary Findings

Thursday 04 June 2020

1. Background

The University of Johannesburg’s Centre for Social Change, with support from Human Sciences Research Council’s (HSRC) Developmental, Capable and Ethical State (DCES) division, recently conducted an online survey among South African adults to determine the social and economic impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, with a particular emphasis on lockdown experiences and attitudes.

The main aim of the Covid-19 Democracy Survey was to determine public perceptions of the economic, social and political impact of Coronavirus on life across the country. Conceptually, the survey questionnaire has been designed to examine the themes and relationships illustrated in the conceptual diagram below.



2. Survey methodology, characteristics and limitations

The online survey was conducted using the #datafree Moya Messenger App, which is currently used by 4 million people across the country. Approximately 1,6 million people make use of the platform at least every month, and 800 000 of these use it every day. The platform is operated by biNu, which has collaborated with the HSRC on several surveys to date. Anyone with a mobile phone is able to receive and respond to the survey, whether or not they have airtime or data available.

Users of the Moya Messenger platform are predominantly younger South Africans aged less than 40, and mainly black or coloured. For this reason, we also distributed a URL to the online survey by means of other media, to obtain responses from minority components of the population that are under-represented

amongst users of the Moya platform. The responses were anonymous and the IP addresses from which we are receiving responses will not be disclosed.

This report is based on 12,312 completed questionnaires. Findings have been weighted to match Statistics South Africa data on race, education and age, and can be regarded as broadly representative of the population at large. The distribution by gender was even and did not require weighting

The findings cover questionnaires completed between 13 April, when the survey was launched, and 11 May. To help monitor any changes in sentiment that occurred over time, the survey period was segmented into three phases, as follows: Phase 1 = 13-18 April, Phase 2 = 18-27 April and Phase 3 = 27 April to 11 May.

The survey collected responses about levels of awareness and information sources that are being used. We are asking whether people thought the pandemic is being exaggerated, and whether people are prepared to sacrifice some of their human rights in the national fight against the spread of the virus. Amongst the other questions, we tested the extent to which the public trust the leadership of the President, the police and the army, in managing the situation, and the emotions that people have been feeling as a result of the lockdown.

A next round of surveying is being planned for the near future, using the same Moya Messenger platform, in order to capture changes since the transition to Lockdown Level 3, as well as views on new emerging priority issues.

3. Covid-19 Democracy Survey Results

1. How much would you say you know about the Coronavirus outbreak in South Africa?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
A lot	29	28	31	29
A fair amount	47	45	43	46
A little	20	20	22	20
Nothing at all	2	3	2	2
(Don't know)	2	3	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100
Total a lot/ a fair amount	77	74	73	75
Total a little / nothing at all	22	23	24	22

2. What have been your main sources of information about Coronavirus and the measures taken (e.g. the lockdown) in response? (Select all that apply – multiple response table)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Television	78	78	74	77
Radio	43	42	49	44
Medical professionals (doctors)	14	13	15	14
Government health officials	40	35	35	37
News sites on the internet, or	50	45	43	47
WhatsApp	36	34	38	36
Social media such as Facebook,	34	30	32	33
Friends, family and colleagues	29	28	29	29
Flyers, pamphlets and	13	12	15	13
Other	9	8	8	9

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

3. I believe the threat from the Coronavirus is exaggerated

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Strongly agree	16	18	16	17
Agree	17	16	15	16
Neither agree nor disagree	19	16	19	18
Disagree / strongly disagree	35	42	42	39
(Don't know)	13	8	8	10
Total	100	100	100	100
Total agreement	33	34	31	33
Total disagreement	35	42	42	39

4. I am willing to sacrifice some of my human rights if it helps prevent the spread of the virus.

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Strongly agree	41	43	42	42
Agree	35	37	35	36
Neither agree nor disagree	12	10	11	11
Disagree	6	4	7	6
Strongly disagree	6	2	2	4
(Don't know)	0	4	3	2
Total	100	100	100	100
Total agreement	76	80	77	78
Total disagreement	12	7	9	9

Would you say that the following are doing a good job or a bad job in responding to the Coronavirus outbreak?

5. President Ramaphosa

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	53	59	60	56
Good job	29	27	29	28
Neither good nor bad job	11	9	7	10
Bad job	2	1	2	2
Very bad job	2	1	1	1
(Don't know)	3	2	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	82	87	89	85
Total bad job	4	2	3	3

6. The police

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	19	23	25	21
Good job	30	30	27	29
Neither good nor bad job	23	25	26	24
Bad job	12	11	10	11
Very bad job	10	7	8	9
(Don't know)	6	4	3	5
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	49	53	52	51
Total bad job	22	18	19	20

7. The army (SANDF)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	19	22	26	21
Good job	25	28	26	26
Neither good nor bad job	23	24	25	24
Bad job	13	11	10	12
Very bad job	11	8	8	9
(Don't know)	9	7	5	8
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	44	50	52	47
Total bad job	24	19	18	21

8. Traditional leaders

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	11	15	15	13
Good job	21	24	24	23
Neither good nor bad job	21	22	21	21
Bad job	6	4	5	5
Very bad job	4	4	2	4
(Don't know)	37	32	33	35
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	32	38	39	35
Total bad job	10	8	7	9

(Excluding high 'don't know' values)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	17	22	22	19
Good job	34	35	35	34
Neither good nor bad job	34	32	32	33
Bad job	9	6	7	8
Very bad job	7	5	4	6
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	50	57	57	54
Total bad job	16	11	11	13

9. Your local councillor

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	12	10	11	11
Good job	17	20	18	18
Neither good nor bad job	18	19	19	19
Bad job	13	14	16	14
Very bad job	14	17	15	15
(Don't know)	25	20	21	23
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	29	30	30	29
Total bad job	27	31	31	29

(Excluding high 'don't know' values)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very good job	16	13	14	15
Good job	23	25	23	24
Neither good nor bad job	25	24	24	24
Bad job	17	18	20	18
Very bad job	19	21	19	20
Total	100	100	100	100
Total good job	39	37	37	38
Total bad job	37	39	39	38

LOCKDOWN EXPERIENCES

The government has said that we all need to stay at home, not go to school or work, not travel, and not socialise with people outside our home until the lockdown).

10. Do you think the current level of lockdown restrictions imposed on people like you right now are...?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
...too harsh,	23	20	22	22
not harsh enough,	29	33	28	30
or, about right	41	42	45	42
(Don't know)	7	5	4	6
Total	100	100	100	100

11. Do you think that people are generally taking Coronavirus lockdown... ?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
...too seriously	10	12	11	11
...not seriously enough, or	82	81	83	82
...about right	7	5	5	6
(Don't know)	1	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100

**12. What, if anything, have you been doing to protect yourself from Coronavirus?
(Select all that apply – multiple response table, cell %)**

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Nothing	2	2	1	2
Washing my hands more often	84	82	82	83
Using hand sanitizer	70	68	71	69
Keeping a physical distance from people outside my household	73	68	74	71
Staying in my house, except when going out for essential items	86	83	86	85
Stopped going to social gatherings and events	71	67	73	70
Using a face mask	41	50	64	48
Wearing gloves	30	35	34	33
Stocking up on food, medicine and other essentials	34	33	34	33
Other	8	10	8	9

13. Since the start of the lockdown (26 March 2020), have you been in a queue where people were close together (i.e no social distancing). Select all that apply (multiple response table, cell %).

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Yes, in a supermarket	43	44	47	44
Yes, at a pharmacy	7	9	12	9
Yes, at a spaza shop	16	15	21	16
Yes, by an ATM	17	19	25	19
Yes, by a pension pay point	6	7	8	7
Yes, at a clinic	11	14	14	13
Yes, by the local public toilet	3	3	5	3
Yes, by the water standpipe near me	4	4	5	4
Yes, somewhere else	8	9	10	9
No	46	42	39	44

14. If you have travelled on public transport since the start of lockdown, please tell us what best describes the transport you used. Select all that apply

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
In a taxi that had the normal number of passengers	13	15	15	14
In a taxi that carried fewer passengers than usual	28	33	39	32
On a bus that had the normal number of passengers	1	2	2	2
On a bus that carried fewer passengers than usual	3	4	7	4
On a train that carried the normal number of passengers	1	1	0	1
On a train that carried fewer passengers than usual	1	2	3	2
I have not used public transport	62	55	52	58

15. Since the start of the lockdown (26 March), have the police or army stopped to check why you are outside of your home?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Yes	23	22	26	23
No	77	78	74	77
Total	100	100	100	100

16. Have you experienced any direct harassment, conflict and/or violence at the hands of the police or army during the lockdown (since 26 March)?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
No	90	92	89	90
Yes, by the police	5	4	6	4
Yes, by the army	1	1	1	1
Yes, by both the police and army	2	2	2	2
(Refuse to say)	3	2	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100

17. Since the lockdown began, have any of the following things happened to you?
(Select all that apply – multiple response table, cell %)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
You have gone to bed feeling hungry	33	42	43	38
Someone else in your household has gone to bed hungry	21	23	26	22
You have run out of soap or hand sanitizer	31	40	40	36
You have had problems with electricity at home	22	25	28	24
You have had problems getting water	9	10	12	10
You have been unable to get public transport when you needed it	18	18	21	19
Had none of the above problems	40	25	21	31

PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT

Now we want to ask you a question about the effect of the lockdown on you emotionally.

19. Which of the following emotions have you felt often during the past week?
(Please select all that apply – multiple response, cell %)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Happy	13	10	10	12
Scared	44	47	46	45
Stressed	59	60	62	60
Bored	47	42	49	45
Sad	26	25	27	26
Depressed	34	32	34	33
Lonely	27	27	35	29
Frustrated or irritable	36	32	36	35
Angry	18	16	20	18
(None of the above)	4	5	3	4

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Now we want to ask you a few questions about the financial effects of the Coronavirus outbreak and national lockdown.

20. How concerned are you about the effect of the Coronavirus pandemic on the financial situation of all South Africans?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very concerned	85	88	89	87
Somewhat concerned	7	5	6	6
Not very concerned	2	2	2	2
Not at all concerned	1	2	1	1
(Don't know)	4	3	3	3
Total	100	100	100	100
Total very / somewhat concerned	93	93	95	93
Total not very / not at all concerned	4	4	3	4

21. And how concerned are you about the effect of the Coronavirus pandemic on your personal financial situation?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very concerned	83	87	85	85
Somewhat concerned	8	6	5	7
Not very concerned	4	3	6	4
Not at all concerned	2	2	2	2
(Don't know)	3	2	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100
Total very / somewhat concerned	91	93	90	92
Total not very / not at all concerned	5	5	8	6

22. Since the lockdown, please tell us what best explains your employment situation

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Not working before the lockdown	33	37	34	35
Working from home.	7	5	3	5
Working on an essential service	...	9	13	6
My small business could not operate	...	11	10	6
Not been able to work but my employer is continuing to pay all or some of my salary.	7	6	5	6
Not been able to work and my employer forced me to take annual leave, family responsibility leave, or something similar	4	3	3	3
Not been able to work and my employer has applied to the UIF C19 TERS scheme	4	4	4	4
Been laid off, retrenched or told no work, no pay	14	13	12	13
Other	30	13	16	22

Note: '...' indicates that coded option was not included in the first phase of interviewing.

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Due to my financial situation, I have difficulties paying for my expenses”

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Strongly agree	56	64	63	60
Agree	19	16	19	18
Neither agree nor disagree	12	8	8	10
Disagree / Strongly disagree	6	7	7	7
(Don't know)	7	5	3	6
Total	100	100	100	100
Total agreement	74	80	82	78
Total disagreement	6	7	7	7

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY / COHESION

Now we want to ask you a question about the effects of the Coronavirus outbreak on the relationship between South Africans.

24. In the immediate future, the Coronavirus pandemic is more likely to make South Africans...more united and supportive of each other, or more suspicious and less trusting of each other?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
More united and supportive of each other	45	51	49	48
More suspicious and less trusting of each other	29	26	28	28
Neither	9	8	7	8
(Don't know)	17	15	16	16

Total	100	100	100	100
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POLICY OPTIONS

Now we want to ask you a few questions about your views on different policies that have proposed to help the country in its fight against Coronavirus.

25. The president has announced that the lockdown will continue until the end of April. What best expresses your opinion on this?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
I agree with the extension (unconditional support)	49	52	49	50
I only support a lockdown if there are major changes to regulations (conditional support)	42	42	45	43
I am against the lockdown (opposition)	6	4	3	5
(Don't know)	3	3	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100

26. Which of the following measures that have been proposed would you support?
(Select all that you would support – multiple response table, cell %)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Increasing the value of the social grants (e.g. Old age pension, disability grant, child support grant) to help poorer households	52	68	70	61
Creating a special grant that all South Africans would receive each month to help them cope during the Coronavirus crisis (Basic Income Grant)	56	64	65	60
Guaranteeing that all workers receive wages for the full duration of the lockdown	52	62	65	57
Providing unemployment benefits (UIF) to casual and informal-economy workers	44	52	59	50
Removing all restrictions on movement	6	10	10	8
Allowing informal street traders and spaza shop owners to remain open during lockdown	35	34	41	36
Allowing people to stop paying their accounts, rent and taxes for 3 months to help them cope during the Coronavirus crisis	54	56	62	56
Providing free cellphone data	51	48	54	50
Allowing cigarettes to be bought	17	18	23	19
Allowing alcohol to be bought	12	9	12	11
Food parcels to be given to everybody who needs it	71	74	78	73
Making rich people pay more taxes	16	19	22	18
(None of the above)	12	3	2	7

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Now we want to ask you a few questions about your views on the future of the country's fight against Coronavirus.

27. When thinking about the Coronavirus here in South Africa, which of the following do you think is most likely to happen over the next month?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
The worst is yet to come	51	54	53	53
The situation will remain largely the same as it is now	18	15	18	17
We are over the worst of it - things will begin to improve	17	19	19	18
(Don't know)	13	12	9	12
Total	100	100	100	100

28. How concerned are you that the coronavirus situation will have a negative impact on your child's education?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very concerned	76	82	79	79
Moderately concerned	7	5	7	6
Not too concerned	2	2	3	2
Not concerned at all	1	1	1	1
(Not applicable - no children)	14	10	10	12
Total	100	100	100	100
Total very / somewhat concerned	83	87	86	85
Total not very / not at all concerned	3	3	3	3

(EXCLUDING 'NOT APPLICABLE' CATEGORY)

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very concerned	88	91	89	89
Moderately concerned	8	6	8	7
Not too concerned	2	2	3	2
Not concerned at all	1	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100
Total very / somewhat concerned	96	97	96	97
Total not very / not at all concerned	4	3	4	3

29. How likely is it that you will get infected with Coronavirus in the next few months?

	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very unlikely	25	26	24	25
Unlikely	23	20	21	22
Likely	16	18	21	18
Very likely	9	10	10	9
It has already happened	0	1	1	1
(Don't know)	27	24	23	25
Total	100	100	100	100
Total very unlikely/unlikely	48	46	45	47
Total likely / very likely	25	28	30	27


30. And how likely is it that your personal situation will get worse in the next few months due to the economic consequences of coronavirus?


	Phase 1 (13-18 Apr)	Phase 2 (18-27 Apr)	Phase 3 (27 Apr - 11 May)	All Phases (13 Apr - 11 May)
Very unlikely	19	18	16	18
Unlikely	9	9	8	9
Likely	21	22	24	22
Very likely	30	30	32	30
(Don't know)	22	21	20	21
Total	100	100	100	100
Total unlikely/ very unlikely	28	26	24	27
Total likely / very likely	50	53	56	52


Presentation documents can be accessed here: <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/events/seminars/webinar-covid-pandemic>

For more information or to set up interviews, please contact Adziliwi Nematandani, 0827659191, email: anematandani@hsrc.ac.za

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