

The Gender Perception Towards the Future during the Pandemic*

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the consequences resulting from global emergencies cases, such as the current Covid-19 pandemic, focusing on the perceptions toward the future in a gender perspective. To this end, the analysis investigates results obtained from a web-survey, conducted in 2021, whose target group is characterized by all the Sapienza University of Rome students' that, during the last three years, have spent an academic mobility period outside Italy or inside Rome. The results obtained show how, generally, women have a more pessimistic view of the present and post pandemic with more clear implications on the emotional relationships and the working life; on the other side, men seem to be more optimistic about the imminent end of the pandemic, believing that Covid-19 period helped them in managing their time and in strengthening the relationship with own family members. This gender perspective is also confirmed by a comparison on the prevailing attitudes and feelings that people declared they experienced during the 2020 pandemic period with respect to the perception of the near future: more in detail, women claim to be more demoralized, depressed and nervous than men that, on the contrary, define themselves proactive and confident.

Keywords: pandemic, gender, covid-19, youth population, university

1. Introduction

The current Covid-19 pandemic is undoubtedly one of the most important global emergency cases in our contemporary society. Within the national and international landscape, various studies have emphasized how Covid-19 aggravated the gender gaps existing prior to the pandemic's outbreak.

In this sense, the aim of this research is to explore the consequences resulting from this health emergency. It focuses the attention on the perceptions toward the future in a gender perspective starting from a web-survey, conducted in 2021, whose target group is characterized by all the Sapienza University of Rome students' that, during the last three years, have spent an academic mobility period outside Italy or inside Rome.

The paper is organized as follows: the first section presents an overview of the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on women. The second section introduces the theoretical contextualization by explaining the relevant conceptual dimensions and their indicators. The third and the fourth sections show the working methodology followed during the survey and present the main results. Finally, the concluding sections refer to the discussion of the outcomes and their implications.

2. The Covid-19 Pandemic's Impact on Women: A Global Overview

With reference to the national and international landscape, various studies (see, by way of example, Etheridge and Spantig, 2020; Fairlie, 2021; George and Kuruvilla, 2021; Lanzoni, 2021; Ogechi, 2021) have emphasized that Covid-19 aggravated the gender gaps existing prior to the pandemic's outbreak: in fact, "even before the pandemic, women's health, safety, and economic security were under threat. Maternal and other critical health services have often been stigmatized, under researched, and underfunded; 1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime; and women were already less likely than men to work, to be employed full-time, and to hold higher level and managerial roles" (Barnes, Ramanarayana and Matthews, 2021, p. 1). In this regard, the differences in how women fare during the pandemic compared to men are principally due to social inequalities and long-existing disparities, which have been worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic, rather than biology. Additionally, new fragilities emerged, and other elements, strongly promoted by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, appear to have been hindered in their already persistent, slow progress towards achieving Goal 5 on Gender Equality (including the risk of losing one's job, in turn the cause of financial hardships); this is the reason why, according to the United Nations (2020), it is possible to refer to "the shadow pandemic", which is rapidly unraveling the limited, but precious, progress that the world has made toward gender parity in the past few decades.

Coming on top of the so-called "she-cession" (Profeta, 2021) is the strong impact that social distancing measures and restrictions on physical contact have had on women more than on men, triggering a full-blown deterioration of the state of mental health, especially among younger age group (Rajkumar, 2020; Voss et al., 2022): "with school closures and wider

social restrictions in place, young people have been unable to come together in physical spaces, affecting their ability to learn and for peer interaction. Furthermore, young people are more likely to become unemployed during and following economic crises than older people” (Santomauro, 2021, p. 1708).

Examining the psychological reactions to pandemic, they include maladaptive behaviors, emotional distress and defensive responses, such as fear, frustration, loneliness, anger, boredom, depression, and feelings of discomfort (UNECE, 2021). Besides this, a peculiar syndrome known as “headline stress disorder” can be observed during modern and contemporary pandemics: it is characterized by high emotional response, like stress and anxiety, to endless reports from the news media (the “infodemic”, in the words of the World Health Organization, is an overabundance of information that could be also false and/or misleading), that may cause physical symptoms including palpitation and insomnia (Kontoangelos, Economou and Papageorgiou, 2020); starting from these clinical signs, further progression to physical and mental disorders is regrettably possible (Talevi et al., 2020).

This negative repercussion on women’s emotional states may be explained by the increased unpaid domestic and caregiving workload they have had to take on (i.e., mandatory school closures and requirements for home schooling, mainly of primary age children, impact on women’s earnings and their financial autonomy), along with having experienced cases of illness/death of loved ones and family members (UN Women, 2020). Indeed, in the words of Simba and Ngcobo (2022), “surviving a pandemic for women means more than just surviving the disease, as there are threats beyond the risk of infection. It is true that during crises, epidemics and pandemics, women tend to take up more caregiver responsibilities than usual, often at the expense of their health. Particularly in the Covid-19 crisis, wherein some instances families have to stay at home while self-isolating or during movement restrictions, women can be overworked and overstretched as they take on more domestic care. This increasing burden of care can also take time away from paid work” (p. 61).

Not least, the domestic violence rate, during a time moment of forced physical confinement, has increased dramatically in the context of the Covid-19 health emergency both in Italy (Istat, 2021) and in the other European countries (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2021). In this sense, according to Bradbury-Jones and Isham (2020), the lockdown imposed to deal with Covid-19 has granted greater freedom to abusers and the isolation policies put women at a higher risk of sexual abuse.

Overall, then, are issues that “reinforce the understanding that men and women prioritize, experience, and report on issues differently. The gaps these findings reveal illustrate the vital importance of listening to many voices and giving diverse groups of women equal opportunity to influence people who make decisions about Covid-19 support” (CARE, 2020, p. 2). In fact, while on the one hand women are more likely not only to suffer reduced well-being but also to report general and enduring poor mental health, men, to the contrary, also in correspondence with global relaxing of government restrictions, have turned out to be less concerned over Covid-19’s effect on their lives (Borrescio-Higa and Valenzuela, 2021).

Therefore, it can be stated that there are major gender differences in individual perception relating to the severity of Covid-19 as a health problem (Galasso et al., 2020): this finding will also emerge from the results of the administered survey, which will be presented in the following paragraphs.

3. Theoretical Contextualization: Identifying the Relevant Conceptual Dimensions and Their Indicators

This work's setting takes account of two fundamental aspects. The first one, drawing from Sorokin's (1962) still essentially valid proposal, rests upon the idea of studying "meaningful interactions" between the constituents of the "super-organic level" in such a way as to allow the intervening dynamics that influence and change the micro-dimension to be identified. This connects to Coleman's Boat (1990), the well-known representation that aims to emphasize a path of influence, in certain ways "circular," between the micro and the macro dimensions (Elster, 2007b; Sonzogni, 2011). The intensely Coleman's perspective makes it possible for the model to include the analysis levels that – also for Pitirim Sorokin and with specific reference to studying disasters – are to be taken into consideration: *macro*, relating to social systems; *micro*, relating to individuals and their actions; *meso*, relating to the interactions between social system and cultural system ⁽¹⁾.

In greater detail, the second aspect leads to the belief that, in states of pandemic and those corresponding with certain natural disasters, pain and tragedy can take on unequalled levels of emergency ⁽²⁾, generating powerful effects as relates to the rhythms of a daily life that sociology normally describes in terms of an "ordinary state of the social", a "condition of collective life" of an "ordinary" kind. However, these profound changes can also register movements in terms of energies and actions (individual and collective) that can take place when an "ordinary state of the social" dominated by ordinary life (with its annoyances and pettiness) transitions to become an "extraordinary" state that "inspires" people towards an attitude aimed at defeating fear and torment over something that destabilizes and frightens (Elster, 2007a). This may bring a number of different and at times unforeseeable effects: not only "destruction" but also so-called conditions of "rebirth" (Mangone, 2018).

From this perspective, the role of the imagination, like that of the cognitive processes, carries significant weight. Experiences represent a sort of limit for the future, because we draw from them our dispositions in terms of possibility, desires, fears, and concerns. To an even greater extent, deliberative cognitive processes of a different kind are activated in situations of uncertainty. The aim, then, is to understand how, in emergency conditions like the one experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic in recent years, the flow of individual daily life has suffered suspension and re-direction towards possible routes in terms of destruction/rebirth.

Considering this framework, following the classic Coleman's Boat scheme in which beliefs, desires, opportunities influence and condition attitudes, behaviors, actions, a map was made to represent the dimensions of relevance for the purposes of the planned investigation (Figure

1).

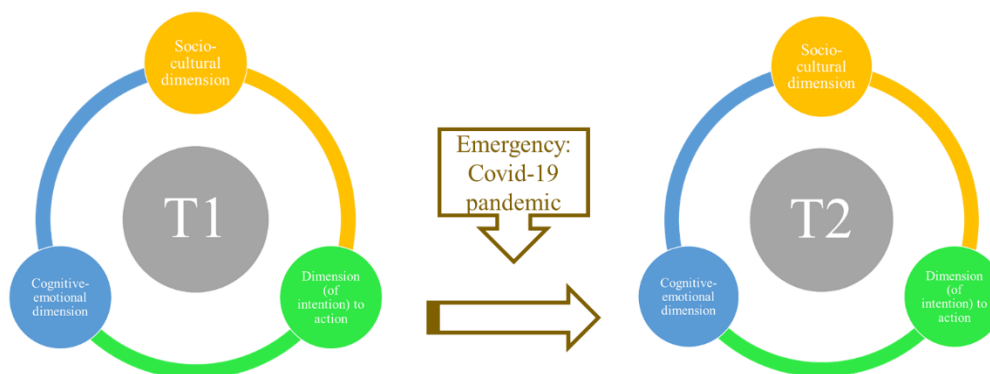


Figure 1. Relevant Conceptual Dimensions

In this conceptual framework, an additional element comes into play, with a significant role for explaining the predispositions towards the future, in terms both of emotions, beliefs, and perceptions, and of propensity for action. The concept of time (Bourdieu, 1997; Nowotny, 1992) takes on a dual value: first in connection with the more general space-time dimension, in fact, expressing oneself on events perceived as they occur, where experience and life lived coincide, is not the same as talking about events perceived as the object of later reflection, in which life lived and experience do not coincide. Further, time understood as temporality, in its social dimension, lies precisely in its absence, in being left pending, which takes on even more significant meanings, changing with respect to the instant prior to the explosiveness of lived experience, and reverberating on the perceptions that the parties have of future trajectories.

For this reason, the outlined conceptual scheme proposes a longitudinal view, identifying “time 1” and “time 2”, is starting precisely from this effect, derived from the pandemic emergency, on the content of the identified dimensions that any individual variations (cognitive-emotional dimension) and the effects of the dispositions towards the future (dimension of action in terms of intentions) may be determined. With respect to this last point, it bears specifying, as discussed above, that in the investigation that was done, in time 1 (which corresponds to the pre-pandemic) life lived and experience do not coincide, while in time 2 (which corresponds to the initial post-pandemic period: summer of 2021), life lived, and experience coincide.

Therefore, after having articulated the theoretical framework in conceptual dimensions, the related indicators could be identified in the survey that was done, as represented below.

Starting from what was discussed with respect to the theoretical traditions in the context of which this work is channeled, and with respect to the aims in terms of objectives, what we expect is the possibility to specify characterizing dynamics consequent to the pandemic experience, in terms of change as relates to the perception of the future. All this is in light of the conditioning exerted on these dynamics by the parties’ resources in terms of individual

properties, of which this work will take into consideration a specific focus on gender differences. In this perspective, did the break in ordinary life (time 1) bring about a situation of adaptation to the new, extraordinary conditions of the post-pandemic arrangement (time 2)? Did changes occur in terms of beliefs, hopes, and feelings felt? Are the expectations that may be glimpsed on the horizon oriented towards the individual or collective dimension? And does all this point to a difference with respect to gender?

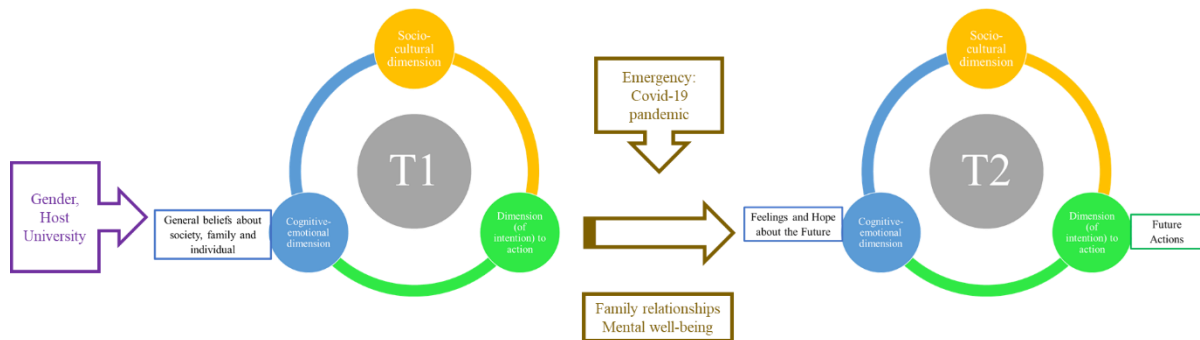


Figure 2. Relevant Conceptual Dimensions and Reference Indicators

4. Methodology

This research analyses the results of a web survey conducted in 2021, whose purpose was to collect suggestions for the study of social issues connected to the living conditions, ideas, and problems of our historical time, with the objective of exploring a perspective both national and extra-national in scope. Therefore, the investigation targeted all students at Sapienza University of Rome who, over the past three years, spent a period of academic mobility outside of Italy (all the Sapienza students who went abroad for study and/or research are referred to by the term “outgoing”) or at Rome’s leading university (with the term “incoming” referring to all students who, originating from other European or extra-European universities, went to Italy to spend their academic mobility period at Sapienza).

Overall, the questionnaire is structured according to the scheme of construction of indicators identified by the sociologist Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (1958): so, the first phase consists in identifying the various dimensions constituting the concept; then, the dimensions are broken down into variables, some of which will be retained as indicators, either because they seem to be particularly pertinent or because they are easier to measure.

The dimensions considered, in addition to the information related to the socio-demographic variables, have been the following: *a)* general beliefs about society, family and individual; *b)* Covid-19 information; *c)* family daily life; *d)* pandemic policy management and information; *e)* mental health, free time, lifestyles; *f)* present and future projections. As mentioned before, the present research focuses the attention on part of these dimensions, in the light of the research’ objective. Furthermore, the questionnaire that is divided into 56 questions, is structured in the following way: *i)* closed-ended questions, in which a range of possible answers is presented within the respondent is invited to choose the one appropriate to his/her

way of seeing; *ii*) hierarchical questions, where the respondent indicates several answers, according to his or her own order of importance; *iii*) semi-open-ended questions, in which involves the inclusion of the answer mode ‘other’ (specify), giving the respondent the possibility of including alternatives not considered. The empirical basis constructed following the compiling of the questionnaire always constitutes raw material, which must be further processed, organized, elaborated and analyzed. Therefore, this stage involved the constitution of the information collected within a data matrix (cases by variables) and the operations performed on it were basically two-way analyses to estimate the relationships between the respondents’ features.

The set of operations relating to this step of the research design was carried out using the statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science), which enabled the most significant variables to be related on the basis of a system of assumptions.

5. Results

5.1 The Effects of the Covid-19 on Feelings in a Gender Way

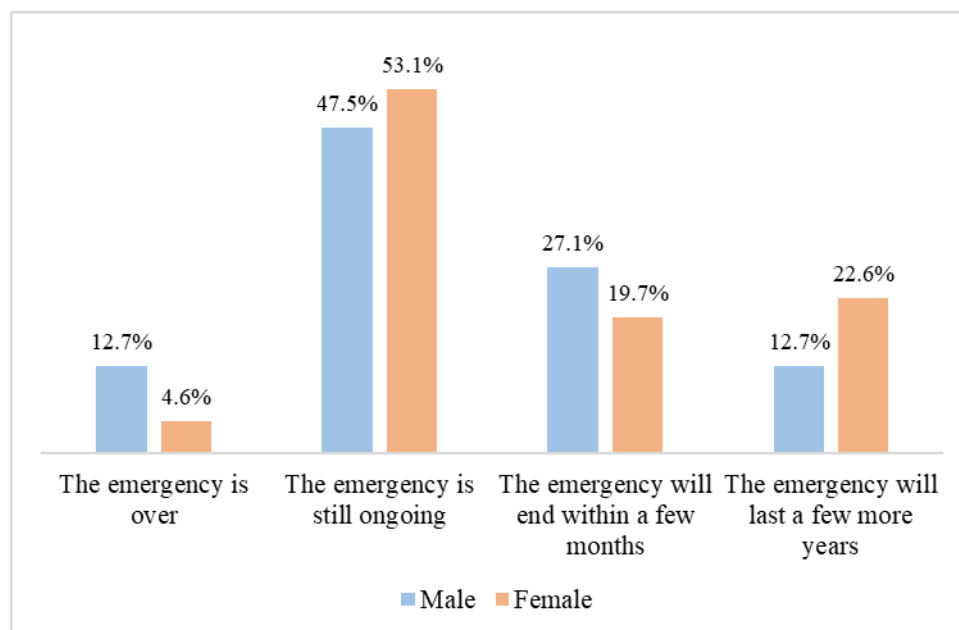


Figure 3. Feelings about the Covid-19 Scenario by Gender (%)

Undoubtedly, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the mental health and well-being of people globally. Several studies show how, all over the world, this health emergency (seen as a stressful life event) has a substantial influence on an individual’s psychological functioning, especially on the young population (UNICEF, 2022), people with low cultural and socio-economic capital (The World Bank, 2022) and, as noted above, the female component. In this respect, looking at the results that were obtained from the dedicated web survey, it is

possible to underline that, in general, women have a more pessimistic view of the present and of the post-pandemic future (75.7% of women, against 60.2% of men, believe that the emergency is still ongoing, or that it will last several more years), unlike men who appear to be more optimistic as to the pandemic's imminent end (39.8% of men, against 24.3% of women, believe that the emergency is over, or will be over in a few months) (Figure 3).

Table 1. Aspects for Which Covid-19 Pandemic Is Considered Helpful by Gender (%) (*)

| | Male | | Female | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> |
| To understand the value of freedom | 10.9 | 65.5 | 9.5 | 72.4 |
| To understand the importance of people I miss | 16.4 | 65.5 | 11.2 | 73.7 |
| To understand how to manage time better | 28.2 | 50.9 | 29.7 | 47.0 |
| To understand the value of social contacts | 11.8 | 74.5 | 6.5 | 75.9 |
| To understand the value of loneliness | 22.7 | 55.5 | 16.4 | 65.1 |
| To strengthen the relationship with my family members | 29.1 | 40.9 | 26.7 | 53.4 |
| To feel that I belong to my country | 55.5 | 28.2 | 56.5 | 26.3 |

(*) The values in Table 1 were obtained by adding together the “agree” and “strongly agree” responses for the positive side, and the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses as concerns the negative side of the axis. Therefore, the table takes no account of the values for the the “Neither agree or disagree” label. The same scheme also applies for the subsequent Table 2 and Table 3.

Especially for the female component of the investigated sample, this perception of decided pessimism holds clearer implications for emotional relations (72.4% of women state that, due to the pandemic period, they have understood the value of freedom, while 65.1% state they have understood the value of being alone) and for family relations (women, more than men, believe that the pandemic period has helped them understand the importance of absent people and/or strengthen bonds with their own family members); by way of contrast, men, more than women, believe that the period of the Covid-19 pandemic has helped them to better manage their own time (Table 1). Moreover, this result is in line with what emerges from investigating the interviewees' general opinions: in fact, additional findings emphasize how women, more than men, maintain the importance of freely expressing their feelings (94% *versus* 81.1%), along with the uselessness of having to keep their own emotions hidden (91.8% *versus* 80% of men).

In support of the above, turning our gaze to experiences that, denied due to the pandemic, the interviewees wish to have in the near future, the graphic below (Figure 4) shows that while on the one hand women aspire to travel more and to be able to study abroad (it bears recollecting that the reference target is the youthful university population), men on the other hand declare they wish to dedicate more time to themselves.

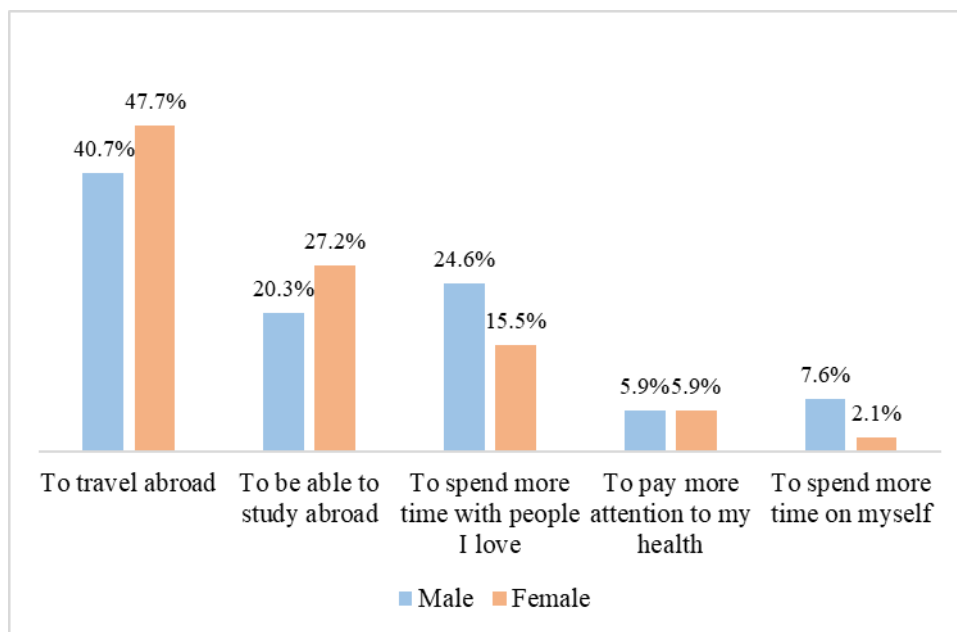


Figure 4. Experiences That, due to the Covid-19 Restrictions, the Respondents Couldn't Do, and They Want to Make in the Near Future by Gender (%) (*)

(*) The total in the Figure 4 is not = 100.0 since the category "other" is not considered.

Completing the analysis, and in order to verify whether the gender propensity was influenced by contextual factors such as, by way of example, the domestic climate experienced during the period of the 2020 pandemic, it emerges that women's wishes (see Table 1 and Figure 4) do not change even in the presence of a peaceful and relaxed family setting. These women's feelings can also influence their attitudes toward the future, as will be discussed in the next paragraph.

5.2 Post Covid-19 Scenario: The Effects on Attitudes and Future Emotions in a Gender Way

The post-Covid effects of a few have been felt on both an individual and global level, and evidently the inter-section between these two different points is tight. The effects that Covid-19 has had on the world-wide economy are not only visible for all to see, in our daily lives, but are well evidenced by numerous dedicated research studies on the subject. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to instability as the main risk to economic growth, the global economy as a whole being attacked on several fronts through the blockade imposed on many of the world's major economies (Trade Economics, 2020; ECB Economic Bulletin, 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2022; OECD, 2022). Similarly, the political sphere was also affected; both national and international balances have changed, and sometimes tilted (Aldalala'a, 2020; Biscop, 2020; Volkov, 2022).

Respondents' perceptions of these aspects were investigated in our survey and, more specifically, as concerns the assessments expressed by the interviewees as to the future impact that the Coronavirus might have on the political and economic dimensions (Table 2),

women more than men show greater concerns also with reference to their working lives (well over 70% maintain that, due to the Covid-19 emergency, more people will lose their jobs), and greater distrust as to the future allocation of funds to public health (37.9%) and to scientific research in the medical and pharmacological fields (34.5%); to the contrary, men, more attentive to the political issues that may change following the pandemic, believe that, after the health emergency, we will see a weakening of international political relationships (39.1% *versus* 35.3% of women) but a greater awareness by the national health system as relates to managing new and sudden future global emergencies (57.3% *versus* 50.4% of women).

Table 2. Feelings Concerning the Effects about the Post Covid-19 Scenario by Gender (%)

| | Male | | Female | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> |
| The emergency will worsen my economic condition and that of my family | 38.2 | 30.0 | 40.5 | 31.0 |
| The Coronavirus will undermine international political Relations | 18.2 | 39.1 | 22.4 | 35.3 |
| The Coronavirus will lead to the most severe national economic crisis | 16.4 | 48.2 | 11.6 | 50.4 |
| The Coronavirus will lead to the most severe worldwide economic crisis | 15.5 | 43.6 | 14.2 | 49.6 |
| The national health care system will learn how to deal effectively with health emergencies | 16.4 | 57.3 | 18.5 | 50.4 |
| Many people will lose their jobs | 8.2 | 62.7 | 6.9 | 72.4 |
| When the emergency ends, substantial funds will be allocated to adjust the national public health system | 27.3 | 35.5 | 37.9 | 29.7 |
| At the end of the emergency more funds will be allocated for scientific research in the medical and pharmacological fields | 24.5 | 39.1 | 34.5 | 36.6 |

Table 3. Expectations of Positive Change after the Covid-19 Pandemic by Gender (%)

| | Male | | Female | |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> | <i>Agree</i> |
| There will be greater individual accountability | 27.3 | 32.7 | 23.3 | 37.9 |
| More attention will be paid to human relationships | 15.5 | 50.0 | 13.8 | 59.5 |
| There will be greater solidarity among people | 30.9 | 30.9 | 28.9 | 48.7 |
| There will be a greater sense of belonging to my country | 20.0 | 49.1 | 22.4 | 53.0 |
| We will rely more on local communities for our needs | 24.5 | 30.9 | 31.5 | 35.3 |
| We will rediscover the value of faith and religions | 55.5 | 20.0 | 62.9 | 19.4 |

In keeping with what has already emerged, in response to the question “What are the aspects of life that you hope may change for the good after the Covid-19 emergency?,” women, more than men, believe that there will be growing attention to human relationships (59.5% *versus* 50%), more intense solidarity among people (48.7% *versus* 30.9%), and more individual responsibility (37.9% *versus* 32.7%) (Table 3).

On the whole, the gender perspective is also confirmed by a comparison between the prevalent attitudes and feelings that people have declared to have experienced during the 2020 pandemic period, and the perception of the near future. In fact, observing Figure 5, it may be noted that, although the perception of the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic has diminished for everyone without distinction with the passage of time, men are more pleased, proactive, confident, and happy for the future. To the contrary, women, with reference both to the 2020 pandemic period and to the near future, were found to be more angry, irritated, demoralized, depressed, frightened, nervous, and powerless, so confirming the evidence-based-literature previously analyzed.

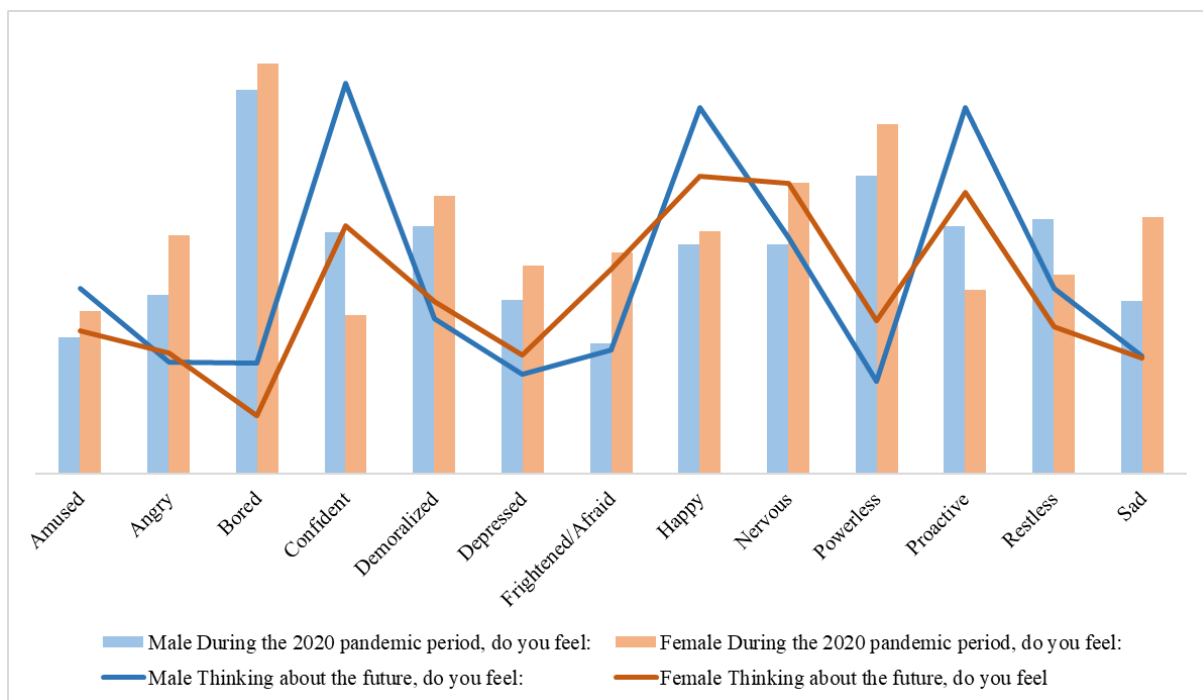


Figure 5. Comparison between the Emotional Dimension during and Post Pandemic by Gender (%) (*)

(*) The values in Figure 5 were obtained by adding the “often” and “very often” responses together.

6. Discussion

The output of the research underlines how, according to the current literature, the Covid-19 outbreak had a strong impact on women more than man. This could be observed on the

deterioration of the mental well-being, especially among the young population.

However, as mentioned in the theoretical framework, the analysis of the effects of the emergency on ordinary life can also lead to unforeseen and unpredictable consequences: so, not only destruction, but also rebirth. This last (unexpected) condition emerged most clearly with reference to women. Indeed, the female component, despite having experienced more negative feelings than men, has been able to re-orient their future dispositions towards proactive future actions.

In order to confirm this, it may be observed that the analyses that were done yield no noteworthy differentiations relating to the nationality of the persons in the examined sample. This means that the findings relating to the “gender” variable override any geographic characterization.

On the whole, this work may represent an interesting starting point for future studies who want to explore to what extent the gender differences emerged in this small sample could be generalized to larger ones. Further, in-depth studies, also following a qualitative approach, could be capable of investigating in greater detail the aspects which characterize the gender perspective emerged so far.

7. Conclusion

Returning to the conceptual map of the relevant dimensions underlying the work and its indicators (see Figure 2), the results emerging from the analyses may be read along two major axes of interpretation: the first, the destruction/rebirth distinction, indicates the interviewees’ prevailing attitude towards optimism or pessimism towards the future; the second one, on the other hand, relates to the orientation towards individuality/society. In the wake of this the proposed framework is always directed towards reconstructing both the cognitive-emotional dimension and the dimension of intention to action, yielding the following profiles:

Women. Women are characterized by a more pessimistic view of the present and of the post-pandemic future: in fact, with reference both to the 2020 pandemic period and to the near future, they have declared having experienced feelings and emotions that, on the destruction/rebirth axis, places them on the negative side. This is well confirmed by the feelings and the emotions they declare having experienced: in fact, they were more angry, irritated, demoralized, depressed, frightened, nervous, powerless, and sad. Further, on the individuality/society axis, the female component of the investigated sample registers clearer implications on the society side, with reference both to the private sphere (emotional relations and family relationships) and to the social sphere (more than men, they believe that the Covid-19 pandemic period might raise awareness of human relationships, thereby increasing solidarity among people). Overall, women’s greater pessimism is also shown by the fact that they have greater concerns over working life, in addition to an accentuated distrust as to the future allocation of funds to public health and to scientific research in the medical and pharmacological fields. In spite of this, for women as well, the future seems to have a reversal in store, due likely to their having concentrated a great deal on affections and on

others: in fact, with reference to the future, the interviewed female component still declares that it is less irritated and more confident and proactive. This opening to a positivity-rebirth front also reverberates in terms of intention to action, with a declared desire of being able to travel and study abroad in the near future.

Men. On the whole, men fall on the optimism side, in terms both of experienced emotions and of orientations towards action: in fact, with regard to the moods experienced over the course of the pandemic, they declared they were more confident and proactive than women did. As relates to the second axis, men are more oriented towards the dimension of individuality, declaring that the pandemic taught them to manage their time better. Their optimism also resides in the fact that, more than women, they maintain that the pandemic period is now on the way out, while, as relates to the social dimension, they state that, after the health emergency, the national health system will have more knowledge in handling new global emergencies. Lastly, with reference to the emotional sphere, men declare they are less irritated and powerless if they think about their near future.

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Notes

* This paper is the result of the joint work of all the authors; thus, everybody has contributed. However, Barbara Sonzogni was specifically involved in the 3rd, in the 5.2 paragraph and in the 6th paragraphs while Gabriella D'Ambrosio was involved in the 2nd, in the 4th and in the 5.1 paragraphs. The paragraphs 1st and 7th have been jointly written by the authors.

Note 1. With respect to these issues, see also: Appadurai, 2013; Napoletano & Saccucci, 2013; Dingwall, Hoffman, and Staniland, 2013.

Note 2. For more on the different ways of understanding the dimensions analysed in different emergency settings, see Bonolis, Gianturco and Sonzogni (2020).

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