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Abstract: The Covid-19 pandemic has changed our lives. The first and unexpected lockdown in Italy has seriously upset people daily routine, working organisation, socialisation and interactions with colleagues and relatives. To overcome the physical isolation and collect impressions, the "How are you?" online questionnaire was created and shared as a conversation among friends. Text mining techniques have been applied to almost one hundred replies, to highlight similarities and differences in the experiences lived during the lockdown, changes in daily actions, thoughts and reflections. Our findings show that the lockdown period was experienced as a moment of physical and relational confinement, provoking feelings such as fear, sadness and restlessness concerning the near future. However, it appears that many respondents accepted this lockdown as an opportunity to reorder their own lives, in terms of physical activities such as daily habits, and personal relationships and priorities. The fresco on which the paper is based is unique in terms of time, space, gender and professions. The written conversations took place from mid-March to the end of May 2020, i.e. during a period in which Italy was the first country in Europe to confine people home for all but essential reasons. Selected testimonies have been chosen among women professionals in science, mainly higher education professors and researchers. Since the questionnaire was aimed to collect free narratives, explicitly asked "from a few syllables to pages", it allows to hear researchers' voices, which often risk to remain unheard, and to collect them in a direct, fresh manner, without the constraints of structured questions. Topics covered in the conversations are highly gendered, including working conditions, work-life balance, family care. Moreover, since the initiative stemmed from a women scientists' association, respondents provided interesting inputs regarding both gendered visions of the pandemic before and during it and their expectations afterwards centring on the roles that women play.

Keywords: Covid-19, emotion analysis, women in science, text-mining techniques

1. Introduction

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, thousands of archives have been collected to classify, monitor for sharing pieces of information on Covid-19 and its impacts. Curators are mainly scientific institutions and the archives contain scientific and medical data; however, many universities and other organizations such as museums, libraries, scientific and cultural associations of various kinds, as well as individuals, have begun to collect "a bit of everything" potentially useful to describe the period: from tweets to videos diaries, from masks in all their declinations to recordings of common songs: everything has become a matter of study and conservation (Spinney 2020).

In the United States, the (Library of Congress 2020) collected photos - related to Covid-19 - with street scenes from New York, New Jersey and California by photographer Camilo Jose Vergara and a disparate amount of documentation on home life, different styles of face masks, daily lives of healthcare professionals, economic impact and the way people help each other, through web content, data and maps. The (Smithsonian's National Museum of American History 2020) has created a Quick Collection Task Force to chronicle the pandemic.

In the United Kingdom, countless initiatives have contributed to the creation of Covid-19-related collections, such as those aimed at collecting stories by professionals (Health & Care Professions Council 2020) and records from local communities often hosted by Universities; the (Library of Cambridge University 2020) "particularly wants to reflect the response of its community of staff and students to the present situation, as people adjust to new patterns of work, socialisation, and leisure"; (Plymouth City Council 2020) requested residents to leave diary pages, video blogs, videos, poems, songs and writings of all kinds in a memory box on the Council website, to contribute to the archives of the municipality. Similarly, the (Museum of London 2020) collected "both objects and first-hand experiences to reflect Londoners' lives during the COVID-19 pandemic".