

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT
ON GENDER INEQUALITY



ILAYDA ARAS

BOGAZICI UNIVERSITY

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THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT
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İlayda Aras

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The thesis of İlayda Aras

has been approved by:

Assoc. Prof. Sabri Arhan Ertan
(Thesis Advisor)

Assoc. Prof. Osman Sabri Kiratlı
(Internal Member)

Assoc. Prof. Burcu Düzgün Öncel
(External Member)

January 2024

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I, Ilayda Aras, certify that

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 Pandemic's Socioeconomic Impact on Gender Inequality

Women's labor-force involvement is highly variable across countries, often reflecting distinct economic, social, and cultural landscapes. As economies advance, women's participation in the labor force tends to increase, yet the specific developmental stage of each nation moderates this relationship. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified existing gender disparities in the labor market, with the economic fallout impacting women more severely than men. Our research reveals that women have been disproportionately affected economically by the pandemic. Notably, women belonging to ethnic minorities, migrants, those with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ community have faced exacerbated challenges. These factors have contributed to an increased negative economic impact, intensifying the existing inequalities. The pandemic, most acutely felt during 2020 and 2021, has necessitated widespread individual and societal adaptations. Women have been particularly vulnerable to these shifts, whether through increased engagement in remote work due to pandemic restrictions or heightened job insecurity as businesses grapple with economic strain. This study delves into the myriad ways COVID-19 has reshaped women's work lives, underlining the critical role of supportive policies such as affordable childcare and flexible working arrangements in mitigating these disparities and fostering resilience in the face of such global challenges.

ÖZET

COVID-19 Pandemisinin Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitsizliği

Üzerindeki Sosyoekonomik Etkisi

Kadınların iş gücüne katılımı, ülkeler arasında ekonomik büyüme, sosyal standartlar, eğitim seviyeleri, doğurganlık oranları ve çocuk bakımı ile diğer destekleyici hizmetlerin mevcudiyeti gibi faktörlere bağlı olarak önemli ölçüde değişkenlik gösterir. Ekonomiler geliştikçe kadınların iş gücüne katılımı doğru orantılı olarak artmıştır. Ancak COVID-19 pandemisi, iş piyasasındaki mevcut toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliklerini daha da derinleştirmiş, kadınların iş kayıpları ve azalan çalışma saatleri nedeniyle erkeklerden daha fazla etkilenmelerine yol açmıştır. Araştırma, kadınların pandemiden ekonomik olarak erkeklerden daha olumsuz etkilendiğini ortaya koymuştur. Özellikle etnik azınlıklara mensup kadınlar, göçmenler, engelliler ve LGBTQ topluluğunun üyeleri olmak, negatif ekonomik etkiyi artırmıştır. Bu faktörler, mevcut eşitsizlikleri yoğunlaştırarak artan ekonomik daralmaya katkıda bulunmuştur. Pandemi, 2020 ve 2021 yıllarında en şiddetli şekilde hissedilmiş, yaygın bireysel ve toplumsal etkileri meydana gelmiştir. Kadınlar, bu değişimlerden özellikle etkilenen gruplardan biri olmuşlardır. Pandemi nedeniyle evden çalışmak zorunda kalan kadınların ev hayatında aktif olmaları ya da şirketlerin ekonomik darboğaza girmesi nedeniyle öncelikli olarak kadın işçilerin işlerini kaybetmeleri, mali durumları üzerinde önemli bir etken olmuştur. Bu çalışmada, COVID-19'un kadınların iş hayatını ve ekonomik durumlarını nasıl etkilediğini incelendi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Women's labor force participation

Various social, economic, and cultural factors have shaped women's labor force participation rates. In many parts of the world, women have been expected to prioritize their roles as wives and mothers over participation in the labor force. However, this trend has changed recently as women's rights and gender equality have gained more attention. Economic progress is a significant driver of women's labor force participation rates, as expanding job opportunities and increased wages provide financial incentives for women to enter the workforce. Social factors such as access to education and supportive policies like parental leave and affordable childcare can significantly impact women's decision to enter the workforce. Countries that have invested in these areas have seen higher female labor force participation rates, leading to more significant economic growth and reduced gender disparities in access to resources and decision-making power. Furthermore, women's increased participation in the workforce has challenged traditional gender roles and contributed to the advancement of women's rights and gender equality.

Women's involvement in the labor sector is a complex, multifaceted topic impacted by politics, religion, and patriarchy. Women are expected to adhere to conventional gender roles, which frequently prioritize home duties more than employment in many nations where patriarchal attitudes and practices are well rooted. As a result, women may encounter social stigma and cultural impediments while finding work in these regions, resulting in lower percentages of female labor force participation.

Additionally, because women's unpaid domestic work is frequently underestimated and unseen in economics, patriarchal ideas and behaviors can maintain a cycle of gender inequity. This indicates that women's contributions to society and the economy, such as looking after children and elderly relatives, are not regarded, or recognized as labor deserving of payment. This, in turn, leads to the overall gender employment gap by reinforcing the idea that women's work is less valuable than men's labor. Ultimately, to advance gender equality and raise the participation rates of women in the labor market, it is imperative to address the intricate web of social, cultural, and economic elements that sustain patriarchal ideas and behaviors.

1.1.1 Women's participation in economic life in recent years

Over the past several years, female labor force participation has increased in most Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations. In early-industrialized countries, there was a dramatic rise in the proportion of women engaging in the job market during the 20th century (Tzvetkova et al., 2018). This is demonstrated in Figure 1 below. It depicts long-run female participation rates by combining OECD statistics with historical estimates for several early industrialized nations.

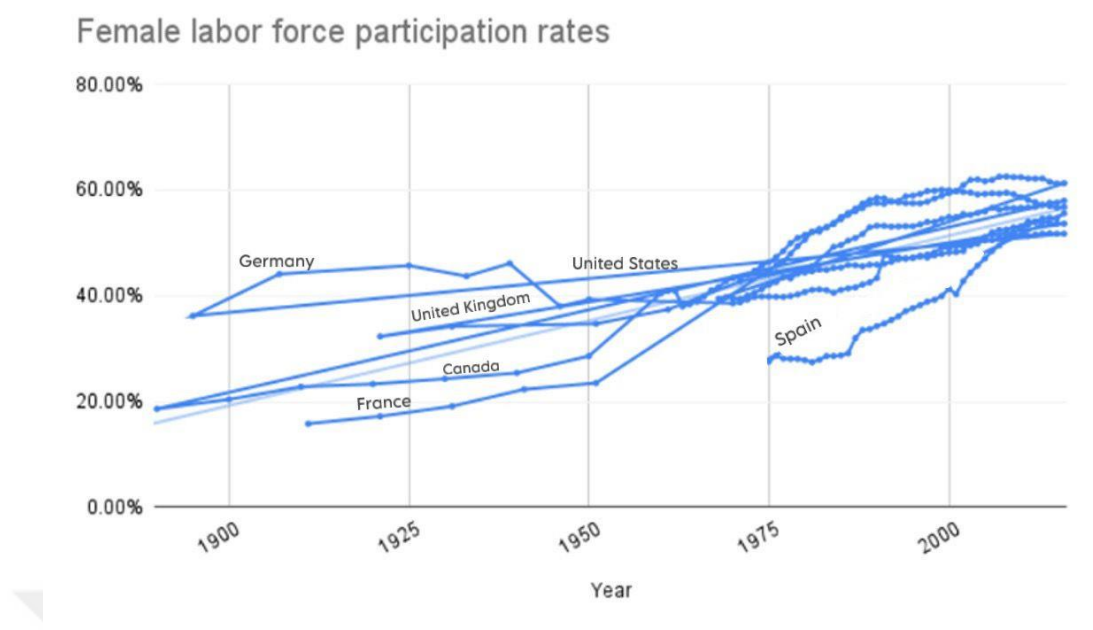


Figure 1. Female labor force participation rates

According to Thévenon (2013), various countries witnessed increased female labor force participation at different times. However, the United States and the Nordic region initiated this trend earlier. At the same time, Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg have only recently experienced a rise in female labor force participation. In the early 2000s, considerable disparities persisted in female labor force participation levels.

The workforce is greatly influenced by economic development and growth. A heightened rate of female involvement signifies an improved economic and social status for women, creating more significant potential for economic growth. As female labor force participation increases, there is a simultaneous expansion of the labor supply, fostering overall economic growth.

Gender Employment Gap Variation Across European Countries

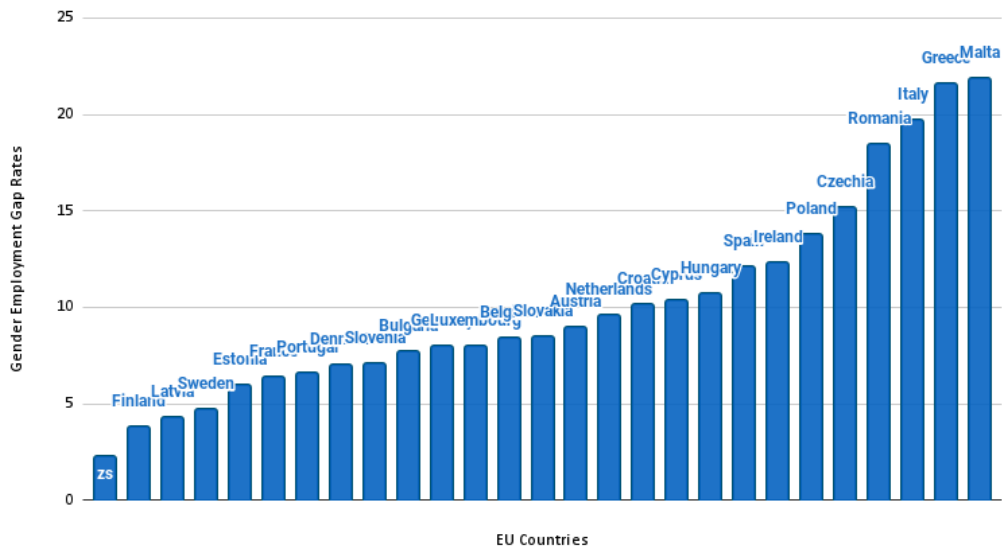


Figure 2. Gender employment gap variation across European countries

Figure 2 illustrates the gender employment gap (The World Economic Forum, 2023) and the difference between the percentage of employed men and women, which varies considerably among European countries. Nordic countries like Sweden and Finland generally have a relatively small gender employment gap, with high female employment rates. However, in Southern and Eastern Europe, the gender employment gap tends to be more significant. For example, countries like Greece and Italy have relatively low female employment rates, with a large gap between male and female employment rates. Factors such as cultural attitudes towards women's work, family policies, and the availability of part-time jobs can all contribute to these differences in the gender employment gap across European countries. While the gender employment gap varies throughout European nations, it is evident that women in many areas suffer higher job impediments than males.

Traditional gender norms and expectations around women's work and family obligations are still widespread in some nations, such as Italy and Greece, which might make it more challenging for women to pursue a job outside the house.

Women may need help managing work and family obligations due to the limited availability of inexpensive daycare and flexible work schedules in some nations.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, however, there have been measures to close the gender employment gap in Europe, including maternity leave regulations, flexible work schedules, and affirmative action programs intended to boost the participation of women in particular industries. Overall, closing the gender employment gap will help advance gender equality and guarantee everyone an equal chance to enter the workforce.

Several factors, including institutional barriers, social conventions, and cultural perceptions, impact the gender wage gap in Europe. Women's options and prospects in the work market are still shaped by traditional gender norms and expectations, prioritizing women's household duties above their professional endeavors. In addition, women are more likely to work in low-wage or part-time jobs, which contributes to a broader gender pay gap. The gender employment gap has wide-ranging effects on society, the economy, and individual women's economic security and well-being. The underrepresentation of women in the workforce can lead to losing essential talents, skills, and knowledge. Moreover, it may result in slower economic expansion, diminished competitiveness, poorer tax collections, and higher social welfare expenses. So, closing the gender pay gap is not only crucial for promoting gender equality but is also a key component of advancing social and economic growth.

1.1.2 Women in unpaid work

Women need to have the time and opportunities to engage in the workforce. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive understanding of time allocation to examine labor force participation thoroughly. As Tzvetkova and Ortiz-Ospina (2017) point out, the allocation of time is significantly influenced in the context of female labor supply due to the tendency of women worldwide to dedicate substantial time to activities such as unpaid care work. These activities, although essential, fall beyond the traditional economic output boundaries. Consequently, women often engaged in such work are not categorized as "economically active" in labor supply statistics despite their frequent involvement in various forms of work. This situation hampers their ability to engage in paid employment, a crucial aspect of their economic empowerment.

According to The World Economic Forum (2023), women dedicate over twice the duration men do to unpaid care work, encompassing responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, and attending to the needs of children and older people. This unpaid labor, estimated to constitute a share ranging from 10% to 39% of the global gross domestic product (GDP), is a testament to the significant contribution of women to the economy. As feminist economist Waring (1992) rightly pointed out, "The failure to include unpaid work in the calculation of the gross national product is an indictment of existing measures of economic growth and a serious obstacle to understanding the real economies upon which our survival depends." Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge the impact of unpaid care work on women's time allocation and their ability to participate in the labor force to comprehend the gender employment gap fully.

Women spend more time providing unpaid care than men in every part of the world. Men spend between 30 minutes and two hours a day providing unpaid care, compared to women's average of three to six hours. When the total paid and unpaid labor is considered, women typically put in 2.6 more hours per week than males across the OECD.

In addition, according to the International Labour Organization (2020), women's labor force participation rate globally in 2020 was 47.5%, while the rate for men was 74%. In the European Union, women's employment rate was 63.5% in 2020, compared to 76.1% for men. The gender pay gap is also a persistent issue, with women earning 14.1% less per hour than men in the E.U., according to Eurostat (2021). This gap varies between countries, with the most enormous gap in Estonia at 21.7% and the smallest in Luxembourg at 1.1%. These statistics highlight the continued disparities in labor force participation, unpaid care work, and gender pay gap that persist across the globe and require ongoing efforts to address. "As a result of social norms and expectations regarding gender roles, women continue to bear the brunt of unpaid care work, which in turn limits their ability to engage in paid employment, invest in education and skills development, and pursue their interests and aspirations" (U.N. Women, 2021).

1.2 Economic impact of COVID-19

Recent data indicates that the pandemic has significantly increased poverty rates and economic vulnerability, particularly among women. The International Labor Organization report 2020 showed that globally (ILO, 2020), women were more likely than men to have lost their jobs during the pandemic and were more likely to be employed in sectors heavily impacted by lockdowns and social

distancing measures. The report also highlighted the unequal burden of unpaid care work that women bear, which has increased during the pandemic due to school closures and the need for improved care for sick family members. These factors have contributed to widening gender gaps in employment and income and have disproportionately affected women in lower-income countries and those with fewer opportunities for education and professional advancement.

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered the most substantial worldwide economic downturn in over a century, creating widespread repercussions throughout the global economy. This crisis resulted in a pronounced increase in inequality at national and international levels. Initial signs suggest that the economic recovery from this crisis is anticipated to be uneven, with emerging nations and economically disadvantaged communities requiring a considerably more extended period to recover from the income and livelihood setbacks caused by the pandemic.

The crisis exerted a substantial impact on global inequality and poverty. Global poverty experienced an increase for the first time in a generation, and the unequal income setbacks faced by marginalized communities led to a notable surge in inequality within and among nations. According to findings from the study conducted by Kugler et al. (2021), individuals with only elementary education witnessed elevated rates of temporary unemployment in 70% of all countries in 2020. Furthermore, youth, women, self-employed individuals, and casual workers with lower levels of formal education encountered more pronounced declines in income. The research by Bundervoet et al. (2021) reveals that, primarily due to their involvement in industries significantly affected by lockdowns and social isolation measures, women experienced notable losses in income and employment.

1.2.1 COVID-19 effects on women in work life

The ongoing economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has far-reaching implications for gender equality in its immediate impact and the subsequent recovery period. Research by Alon et al. (2020) reveals that, in contrast to "normal" recessions, where male employment is typically more severely affected than female employment, the employment decline induced by social distancing measures disproportionately affects industries with a substantial proportion of female workers. Additionally, closing schools and daycare facilities has significantly heightened childcare demands, disproportionately impacting working mothers. Due to the significant returns to experience in the labor market, the repercussions of the crisis on working mothers are anticipated to be enduring. The study by Albanesi and Kim (2021) underscores that distinct patterns of job change during recessions for men and women result from both demand-side and supply-side factors, and these patterns have differed during the pandemic compared to previous economic downturns. The increasing disparity between genders in the labor market is a critical concern in the context of the financial impact of COVID-19. According to the International Labor Organization (2020), global female employment experienced a 4.2% decline in 2020 compared to the previous year, surpassing the 3% decrease observed in male employment. The Americas recorded the most rapid reduction at 9.4%, followed by Arab countries (4.1%) and Asia/Pacific (3.8%). The reduced participation of women in the workforce and the downturn in female employment constitute a significant setback to the progress made in the last two decades toward promoting gender equality.

According to Barua and Barua (2021), in the initial half of 2020, when the impact of the pandemic on the labor market was most pronounced in many prominent countries, female employment experienced a more rapid decline compared to male jobs. In the United States, from February to April 2020, female employment dropped by 17.9%, whereas male employment decreased by 13.9%. Likewise, in Canada, the rate of decline in women's employment was two percentage points higher than that of men during the same period. Moreover, the research by Ham (2021) investigates gender disparities in the South Korean labor market amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings indicate that women, particularly those in the caregiving and hospitality sectors, faced higher rates of leave of absence and unemployment compared to men.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Amidst the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, a complex interplay of global shifts across economic, political, and social realms has unfolded. Rather than solely a health-related epidemic, COVID-19 is a phenomenon that constrains access to social structures, results in economic income losses, and profoundly impacts power dynamics across institutions. As Adams (2020) suggested, examining women's workforce involvement suggests a possible correlation between job exposure and COVID-19 vulnerability. Like past crises, COVID-19's rapid spread has thrust humanity into grappling with a new epidemic reminiscent of historical challenges. Initially perceived as a seemingly innocuous epidemic, COVID-19 has, however, inflicted substantial and challenging-to-recover losses on different economic parameters and continues to do so. Yu et al. (2020) explores the impact of epidemics on a country's labor force participation rate, revealing a robust connection between epidemic outbreaks, changes in human behavior, and a negative effect on labor force participation. The study highlights that countries with a higher uncertainty avoidance index experience a more significant decline in the labor force participation rate. At this juncture, a critical focus lies on understanding how cultural influences shape gender roles during the COVID-19 era. During this period, questions arose about shifts in the work participation rates of women and men, the delineation of gender roles in the domestic and public spheres, and how societal expectations assigned responsibilities to gender roles in the face of epidemics and disasters.

The correlation between economic growth and women's participation in the workforce generally exhibits a positive trend. However, it must be noted that this relationship may need to be more consistently straightforward at the national level. In developing nations, women's engagement in labor tends to vary more significantly than men. This variability can be attributed to diverse economic and social factors, including societal norms, economic development, and educational opportunities. Verick's (2014) research is particularly insightful in this context, as it quantifies the percentage of a nation's working-age population actively involved in the labor market through employment or job-seeking activities. This metric, known as the labor force participation rate, reflects the labor available for producing goods and services, comprising both the employed and those actively seeking employment. Consequently, the presence of female labor contributes to and is also a consequence of development. As the number of women participating in the workforce increases, the potential for economic expansion grows as labor inputs become more abundant.

2.1 Effects of COVID-19 on women's labor force participation

The COVID-19 pandemic, a global crisis of unprecedented scale, has significantly altered the dynamics of gender roles and workforce participation. This is a timely and relevant topic, as the pandemic has led to a surge in remote work, affecting both paid and unpaid labor for women and men (Craig & Churchill, 2021). A survey conducted in Australia during the May 2020 lockdown reveals a stark increase in domestic work burdens, primarily borne by women. Leung et al. (2020) explore the impact of gender equity on public health outcomes during the pandemic, finding strong evidence for relationships between equity, women's representation in the legislature, public health expenditure, and various critical public health indicators.

In a retrospective analysis by Madgavkar et al. (2020), it is initially observed that jobs held by women are 1.8 times more vulnerable to the crisis than men.

Despite constituting only 39% of the global workforce, women are disproportionately affected, accounting for 54% of job losses.

The study by Dang and Nguyen (2021) comprehensively examines the gender disparities in economic outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic, drawing from a cross-country survey. The research reveals alarming statistics: women are 24% more likely to experience permanent job loss compared to men and anticipate a 50% greater decline in labor income. The pandemic is exacerbating the burden of unpaid care, primarily borne by women, leading to a more pronounced impact on them. A key argument across various studies is that the increased time spent on domestic responsibilities and the heightened workload on women during the pandemic are compelling factors leading to their forced withdrawal from business activities, whether temporarily or in the long term. According to key findings from Madgavkar et al. (2020), women comprised 46% of the workforce in the United States before the pandemic. When considering the effects of industry mix, women contribute to 43% of employment losses. However, unemployment data indicates that women constitute 54% of all job losses reported to date, underscoring the severity of the impact. The rate at which individuals, both men and women, experience job losses during a pandemic can be influenced by the gender-based division between public and private spheres of life. As Carli (2020) outlined, historical patterns indicate that women have traditionally shouldered a more significant share of childcare and household tasks responsibilities, a situation exacerbated by school closures and the absence of essential social services like daycare and eldercare. The ongoing pandemic may exacerbate these obligations. Gender-related disparities permeate various aspects of

daily life and are believed to stem from societal perceptions of gender roles. Petts et al. (2021) use data from 989 partnered US parents to investigate the pandemic's impact on employment, focusing on mothers. The study finds that the loss of full-time childcare increased unemployment risk for mothers of young children. Homeschooling was linked to adverse employment effects for mothers with school-age children. The negative consequences of this imbalance are predominantly borne by women, as highlighted by Ersöz (2016). A prevalent distinction places men in positions of authority within the public domain, while women are associated with roles within the private sphere.

Drawing on surveys conducted in 129 countries (ILO, 2020) and an analysis of employment trends in OECD nations, there is an indication that the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on employment is anticipated to be more pronounced for women compared to men (The World Economic Forum, 2023). Notably, in countries such as the USA (U.N. Women, 2021), the U.K., Australia, Colombia, Canada, Japan, and South Korea (Blundell et al., 2020), unemployment rates have increased to a greater extent for women than for men (ILO, 2020). According to Fukai et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted female employment in Japan, particularly affecting married women with children. The employment rate for this demographic decreased by four percentage points, driven by increased childcare responsibilities. In contrast, the employment rate for married men with children remained unaffected, hindering progress in narrowing the employment gender gap. The existing financial vulnerability of women to job losses is compounded by the fact that they earn less than men on a global scale (Carli, 2020).

Furthermore, Graeber et al. (2021) explore the economic ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic with a specific focus on gender disparities in Germany.

Analyzing real-time survey data, the authors find that self-employed women in Germany are approximately one-third more likely to experience income losses compared to their male counterparts. This gender gap is attributed to the overrepresentation of women in industries more severely affected by the pandemic, mainly due to government-imposed restrictions such as regulations on opening hours.

Despite progress in promoting gender equality in the workplace, many societies persist in practicing gender-based discrimination, a phenomenon that is expected to decline as the proportion of women in the workforce rises. Women continue to bear the primary responsibility for household chores, and gender-based discrimination endures, even in the face of advancements toward achieving gender equality in paid employment (Hans-Peter & Drobnic, 2003).

Fathers have more time to dedicate to their professions than mothers do since the epidemic has increased men's home obligations, but more is needed than women's. In comparison to dads, the epidemic has hampered mothers' performance and productivity and prevented gender equality in the workplace (Carli, 2020). However, the gendered division of labor in the house may change over time due to men's growing involvement in childcare and other domestic tasks.

The choice made by numerous U.S. states and other countries to close schools and daycare centers amid the pandemic stands out as a significant contributor to the disparate impacts experienced by women and men. Over 1.5 billion children worldwide are not attending school, leading to a considerable surge in the demand for daycare services.

The heightened mortality rates among older adults have discouraged relying on grandparents for childcare, and social distancing measures have made sharing childcare with friends and neighbors exceptionally uncommon. Consequently, most families found themselves compelled to personally care for them (Alon et al., 2020).

Compared to men, women allocate significantly less time to “work and associated activities.” However, diverging from male patterns, women dedicate more time to the “creation of commodities for personal eventual use,” aligning with prior indications of their involvement in unpaid economic labor (Deshpande, 2022). The engagement of women in “unpaid domestic service” is nearly four times higher than that of men, with women spending approximately three times the duration. Moreover, women invest almost twice as much time in providing unpaid care as their male counterparts.

Bluedorn et al. (2021) conceptualized the damage in the women's workforce during COVID-19 with one word, “She-cessions.” They state that she-sessions were driven mainly by diminishing women's shares in employment within sectors in nations where sectoral employment by gender was tracked. This is especially essential in industries where women comprise a more significant workforce. As we mentioned, women are the group most affected by this economic change because of women's role in the home. When motherhood was added to this role, the responsibilities of mothers at home during the day increased even more as children could not go to school during the COVID-19 period and stayed at home. At this point, women working from home had to undertake the one-to-one care of their children, who were compulsorily homeschooled. Zamarro and Prados (2021) state that those who remained employed faced rapid changes in their working conditions, with many being compelled to work from home.

Furthermore, the closure of schools and daycare institutions has resulted in greater time demands at home for families with children. Married or partnered women are more likely than men to be responsible for home production and childcare tasks (Aguilar & Hurst, 2007).

When we divide women into two business groups in the broadest framework, we can divide them into homemakers and those who participate in business life. We make this distinction to see in which areas the “duties” of women are concentrated. Because of COVID-19, women who had a business life outside the home were either forced to terminate their employment (due to restrictions and the closure of most businesses in the service sector) or started to work remotely from home, depending on the business group they work for. However, married women with children especially had to undertake the burden of childcare and domestic labor, including working from home and having children at home. Heggeness (2020) investigates the immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on parental labor supply, utilizing monthly panel data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) and employing a difference-in-difference estimation. The study focuses on areas with early school closures and stay-in-place orders, comparing them with areas with delayed or no pandemic closures. The findings reveal that mothers in early-closure states were 68.8 percent more likely than those in late-closure states to have a job but not work due to the early shutdowns.

Despite an initial rise in male involvement in household chores, a decline in August 2020 has replaced this surge, resulting in a higher percentage of domestic workload carried by women. This escalation in responsibilities has also manifested numerous mental and physical effects on women.

In the context of their research on the gender impact of COVID-19, Albanesi, and Kim (2021) found that women within marriages are 23% more likely than men to report being the sole caregivers for their children and 14% less likely to state their partner serves as the sole caregiver. Conversely, men are 14% more likely than women to claim sole caregiving responsibilities, with women being 14% less likely to mention their partner as the sole caregiver. Additionally, holding a college diploma increases the likelihood of both partners sharing childcare responsibilities by 12% while reducing the probability of seeking external assistance by 14%. This outcome suggests that working mothers are more inclined than fathers to integrate childcare responsibilities with their professional commitments.

2.2 Various economic crises' effects on women

In recent recessions, such as the one in 2008, a notable shift has been observed where men experienced a more significant job loss than women. Alon et al. (2020) offer two explanations for this phenomenon. Firstly, women's employment tends to be concentrated in less cyclical fields like healthcare and education, less affected by typical economic downturns. In contrast, men often work in industries more vulnerable to the cyclical nature of downturns, such as manufacturing and construction. However, the crisis has significantly impacted service industries, such as hotels and restaurants, with a substantial female employment presence. For instance, according to Cho et al. (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges to the food sector, impacting worker health and productivity. Due to the pandemic, there was a significant reduction in the likelihood of continued active employment for workers in both industries.

Coskun and Dalgic (2020) note that manufacturing and home building typically face more severe impacts during recessions than the more resilient education and healthcare industries. Specifically, industries with a higher representation of female workers, such as hospitality, retail, the arts and entertainment, and tourism, are experiencing substantial job losses due to the pandemic (ILO, 2020). Additionally, working remotely is crucial for job retention, and men are more likely to be employed in positions that facilitate telecommuting.

The recession triggered by the COVID-19 outbreak stands apart from traditional economic downturns in several aspects. Firstly, due to the mitigation measures implemented to curb the pandemic and the altered behavior of consumers responding to the infection risk, there has been a noticeable reduction in service demand (Chetty et al., 2020). This decline in demand has disproportionately affected women through associated job losses, given their higher representation in service-related professions. Secondly, the necessity for on-site childcare and the limited availability of educational options have compelled many mothers to exit the workforce (Alon et al., 2020). Consequently, the pandemic has adversely impacted both the demand for and supply of female labor, removing a crucial source of household security and an automatic stabilizer for the entire labor market (Albanesi & Kim, 2021).

The impacts of the COVID-19 recession on various industries diverge for at least four reasons. Firstly, different industries experienced distinct effects based on restrictions, relaxations, and cautious consumer behavior variations. Secondly, specific industries inherently exhibit cyclical patterns.

Thirdly, industries currently in a growth phase typically demonstrate better resilience and a faster recovery than those experiencing contraction. Lastly, the pandemic has changed needs and trade patterns for certain goods and services, potentially permanently (Groshen, 2020).

Jobs were most severely impacted in four industries: retail trade, professional and commercial services, healthcare and social services, and leisure and hospitality. These are the broad industries where numerous businesses have shut down because they were no longer necessary and had much touch with the public.

The pattern of job shifts during recessions differs for men and women for supply-side and demand-side factors, and these patterns have not held throughout the pandemic as they did in other recessions. The gender inequalities in the distribution of jobs on the demand side, where men are engaged mainly in production occupations, and women are concentrated in service occupations, help to explain some of the imbalance. Married women are less likely to leave the work market during recessions, according to Ellieroth (2019).

In every family group during the Great Recession (and the ones that came before it), women's employment decreased far less than men. Men's employment declined by 6% during the crisis, whereas women's employment declined by just 2% among single, childless workers. Men see a decrease of 6.1% points, and women experience a decline of 2.7% points among single parents. Compared to women in this group, married males without children see a 2%-point reduction in employment. The employment-to-population ratio falls by 2.4% for married males with kids but climbs by 0.2% for women (Albanesi & Kim, 2021). Those still working saw a sudden shift in working circumstances, with many required to work from home.

Additionally, families with children now must spend more time at home due to the shutdown of schools and daycare facilities. The COVID-19 crisis and its social distance restrictions substantially impacted more female-dominated sectors, specifically the service industry. In contrast, past recessions impacted traditionally male-dominated industries like manufacturing, construction, or commerce (Mongey et al., 2020).



CHAPTER 3

HYPOTHESES

The most critical factor in this article's formation is understanding the effects of the current COVID-19 epidemic, mainly focusing on gender identities. For this purpose, we have developed various hypotheses to explore this issue comprehensively and from multiple perspectives. Additionally, to gain insights into potential variations by country and gender, we have incorporated two distinct country groups characterized by their gender employment gap. The argumentations behind these hypotheses were influenced by prevailing social norms and their potential impact on shaping the outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic on different gender groups.

H1: The Coronavirus pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the financial well-being of women. This hypothesis aims to explore gender-specific economic effects arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. This hypothesis arises from the recognition of evolving gender roles within society. Traditionally, women have been associated with domestic responsibilities like caregiving and household management, impacting their historical labor force participation. This hypothesis assesses if the pandemic's economic impact differs between genders.

H2: The labor force participation of women during the COVID-19 era is influenced by their marital status, encompassing categories of being single, married, or divorced. This hypothesis examines the potential influence of women's marital status (single, married, and with children) on their participation in the labor force during the COVID-19 era. In formulating this hypothesis, the societal position of women and prevailing gender roles were considered. Women, particularly in traditional societies, have been traditionally associated with domestic roles. Tasks

like childcare, household chores, elder care, and cooking have historically been ascribed to women, reflecting evolving societal norms. As such, this hypothesis seeks to elucidate how women engaged in the workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic are impacted by their marital status. The central notion is that economic repercussions may differ between married and single women. A perspective suggests that domestic and childcare responsibilities take precedence over economic pursuits, especially for married women and those with children, particularly in scenarios involving remote work or job loss due to the pandemic.

H3: In the COVID-19 era, the presence of children within a woman's household correlates with fluctuations in her participation in the labor force. This hypothesis postulates that the female labor force participation rate varies based on whether the woman has children. Society attributes distinct responsibilities to married women with children compared to single women. Specifically, they are tasked with caregiving for children and elderly family members living at home who cannot care for themselves independently. During the pandemic, there was an assumption that women with children might disengage from economic activities due to their escalating responsibilities, prompting an inquiry into the validity of this assumption. The shift to remote education has placed additional demands on women, who often balance working during the day while attending to their children's needs. This hypothesis seeks to discern the impact of a woman's parental status on her commitments and preferences in her economic pursuits during the pandemic, aiming to uncover the nuances that shape her choices and obligations.

H4: The COVID-19 pandemic has elicited varying shifts in women's labor force participation, contingent upon their social class categorizations. This hypothesis explores the potential interrelation between women's labor force

participation changes attributed to COVID-19 and the specific class groups they are affiliated with. Within this hypothesis, we delve into the complex interplay between women's engagement in the labor force amid the COVID-19 pandemic and their membership in distinct class categories. The hypothesis posits that the influence of COVID-19 on women's labor force participation could exhibit notable variations contingent upon their social and economic class differentiations.

H5: A potential inverse relationship exists between a country's level of development and its susceptibility regarding the gender employment gap to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This hypothesis delves into the intricate interplay between a country's level of development and the extent to which it is vulnerable to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, explicitly concerning the gender employment gap. This hypothesis postulates a potential inverse relationship, suggesting that nations with higher levels of development may exhibit a relatively lower susceptibility to gender-based employment disparities during the pandemic. In contrast, less developed countries might be more exposed to these disparities.

H6: Women who self-identify as being part of an ethnic or religious minority are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened susceptibility to experiencing economic ramifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories. This hypothesis examines the potential correlation between a woman's identification with an ethnic or religious minority and her susceptibility to the economic impact caused by COVID-19 compared to the majority. Within this hypothesis, the focus is on the supposition that women from disadvantaged ethnic backgrounds may encounter heightened economic consequences due to COVID-19 when contrasted with the majority., including times of conflict, natural disasters, crises, and political instability.

H7: Women who self-identify as migrants, asylum seekers, or displaced persons are hypothesized to face a greater likelihood of experiencing heightened economic impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories. This hypothesis proposes that the rate of economic impact resulting from COVID-19 is potentially higher for women who self-identify as migrants, asylum seekers, or displaced persons compared to the majority population. This hypothesis underscores the presumption that individuals belonging to minorities, particularly those facing inherent disadvantages due to their migrant status, could encounter more pronounced economic consequences because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the research aims to identify potential measures that could ameliorate disparities in labor force participation and economic stability, particularly within the unique circumstances presented by these critical times.

H8: Women who self-identify as individuals with disabilities are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened likelihood of encountering amplified economic repercussions from the COVID-19 pandemic when compared to individuals not identifying as such. This hypothesis investigates the possible elevated economic vulnerability of women with disabilities in comparison to the majority during the COVID-19 pandemic. This hypothesis highlights that minority groups, who already confront disadvantages due to their disabilities, might encounter intensified difficulties and economic strains stemming from the COVID-19 crisis. By conducting a thorough analysis, our objective is to examine the correlation between women with disabilities and their economic standing within the context of the pandemic, thereby illuminating potential discrepancies.

H9: Women who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex, or queer (LGBTQ) are hypothesized to demonstrate an increased likelihood

of encountering amplified economic repercussions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic compared to individuals not identifying within this spectrum. This hypothesis aims to investigate the plausible effects of COVID-19 on the economic circumstances of women identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex, or queer (LGBTQ), in contrast to the majority population. This hypothesis underscores the presumption that minority groups grappling with inherent challenges due to their sexual orientation or gender identity might encounter an increased probability of economic impact resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic when compared to the majority. Through a comprehensive analysis, we aim to unveil any potential variations in economic outcomes among LGBTQ individuals.

H10: Women residing in small-sized towns are expected to exhibit a higher probability of experiencing greater susceptibility to economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic than those residing in larger towns. This hypothesis examines the potential influence of an individual's residential context (rural area or village / small or medium-sized town / large town) on the economic repercussions resulting from COVID-19. This hypothesis investigates the interrelation between the extent to which individuals' physical surroundings impact their vulnerability to COVID-19. Within this connection, it is presumed that individuals residing in small-sized towns may experience a higher degree of susceptibility to COVID-19. This supposition is grounded in the concept that significant cities often serve as economic hubs, with the service sector playing a prominent role.

H11: The pandemic has adversely affected women's work-life balance. This hypothesis addresses the potential disruption in women's work-life balance caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This hypothesis delves into the intricate dynamics between women's professional commitments and their personal lives, highlighting the

potential repercussions that the pandemic might have on this balance. As workplaces transitioned to remote arrangements and caregiving responsibilities increased, the traditional boundaries between work and personal life have become blurred for many women. This hypothesis seeks to investigate the extent of this disruption, examining how the pandemic's multifaceted effects may have impacted women's ability to maintain a harmonious equilibrium between their work and personal spheres. Through this exploration, we aim to gain a nuanced understanding of how women's work-life balance has been challenged by the ongoing pandemic, contributing to the broader discourse on the pandemic's impact on women's well-being and societal roles.

H12: The pandemic has led to a negative impact on women's position within the job market. This hypothesis focuses on the potential detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's standing within the job market. This hypothesis centers around the notion that the pandemic's multifaceted disruptions may have contributed to a decline in women's positions within the workforce. Factors such as job losses, reduced working hours, and shifts in employment opportunities have all been linked to the pandemic's impact. By exploring this hypothesis, we aim to uncover how the ongoing pandemic has influenced women's roles, status, and opportunities within the job market. This analysis contributes to understanding the intricate interplay between global crises and gender-based disparities in employment and career trajectories.

H13: The pandemic has negatively impacted women's income, potentially leading to decreased earnings and financial disparities compared to pre-pandemic levels. This hypothesis delves into the potential adverse ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's income. This hypothesis underscores the possibility that

the pandemic's multifaceted effects contributed to reduced women's earnings. As sectors faced disruptions and economic activities were constrained, women's income sources and earning capacities may have been compromised. Through this hypothesis, we seek to ascertain how much the pandemic has affected women's financial stability and explore any resulting disparities in earnings and economic well-being. By investigating this relationship, we aim to illuminate the intricate interplay between global crises and gender-specific economic outcomes.

H14: The pandemic has led to women doing less paid work because of increased work at home. The global pandemic has brought about a decline in women's engagement in paid labor, potentially resulting in reduced financial contributions and heightened economic disparities when compared to the pre-pandemic era. This hypothesis explores the adverse consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's employment. Emphasizing the multifaceted impact of the pandemic suggests that the surge in remote work and disruptions across various sectors may have led to a decrease in women's involvement in paid work. Through this hypothesis, we aim to examine how much the pandemic has influenced women's economic participation and income, seeking to unravel any resulting imbalances in financial well-being.

CHAPTER 4

DATA & METHODOLOGY

This chapter elaborates on the applications of data sources within the research framework. The selection of data was executed with meticulous consideration due to the multifaceted nature of this study. The curated dataset aims to address our research inquiries and facilitate the generation of discernible findings. The primary data source chosen for this investigation is the Eurobarometer, a survey initiative that encompasses European Union member states. Eurobarometer employs survey and interview methodologies to explore various subjects, disseminating the outcomes for analysis. To improve the breadth of our study, we incorporated a variable indicating country classification within the framework of our hypotheses. This classification was established using data from The World Economic Forum (2023), explicitly focusing on the Gender Employment Gap and Gender Earning Gap within the European Union. This data enabled the categorization of countries into two distinct groups: those with low gender employment gaps and those with high gender employment gaps. This classification serves as a valuable tool to explore the disparities in the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on labor force participation across different country clusters, providing insights into regional nuances. Through this approach, we endeavor to scrutinize the interplay between gender dynamics and national contexts in shaping the pandemic's economic effects on women's participation in the labor force.

4.1 Sample

In examining women's labor force participation during the COVID-19 era, a sample of European countries was carefully selected to ensure a diverse representation of economic, cultural, and geographical contexts. This chosen set of countries, including Austria, Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Greece, Malta, Czechia, Ireland, Spain, Iceland, Estonia, Slovakia, Poland, Serbia, France, Hungary, Romania, Norway, Belgium, Latvia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Portugal, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Bulgaria, and Sweden, collectively reflects a broad spectrum of economic development, labor market structures, and governmental responses to the pandemic. The inclusion of Western and Eastern European nations aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the varied impacts on women's labor force participation across the continent amid the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Achieving gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (The World Economic Forum, 2023) requires overcoming pervasive gender bias and undervaluing women's capabilities and rights, thereby restricting their choices and opportunities by regulating societal behavior. The Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) is a crucial tool in quantifying these biases globally across political, educational, economic, and physical integrity dimensions, covering 85% of the world's population, as depicted in Figure 3. Startlingly, nearly 9 out of 10 individuals exhibit fundamental biases against women, with widespread beliefs persisting, such as the notion that men excel as political and business leaders.

This ingrained gender bias transcends geographic, economic, and cultural boundaries, presenting a formidable obstacle to achieving gender equality on a global scale. Introduced in the 2019 Human Development Report, the Gender Social Norms Index provides a unique perspective on gender equality by focusing on social beliefs rather than objective outcomes. This index delves into the root causes of gender inequality, offering insights into the biases and prejudices that hinder progress for women and girls. The GSNI tracks attitudes across four key dimensions—political, educational, economic, and physical integrity—and reveals persistent disadvantages and systematic discrimination, as illustrated in Table 1. Through indicators measuring beliefs about political participation, educational opportunities, economic rights, and physical integrity, the GSNI highlights areas where women face invisible barriers.

Benchmarking Gender Gaps			
Political Empowerment	Educational Attainment	Economic Participation & Opportunity	Health And Survival

INDICATORS			
Women in parliament	Literacy rate	Labor-force participation rate	Sex ratio at birth
Women in ministerial positions	Enrolment in primary education	Wage equality for similar work	Healthy life expectancy
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)	Enrolment in secondary education	Estimated earned income	
	Enrolment in tertiary education	Legislators, senior officials, and managers	
		Professional and technical workers	

GENDER GAP INDEX			
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Figure 3. Benchmarking gender gaps

Table 1. Gender Differentiations According to Gender Employment Gap, Social Norms, Index, Development Index, and Inequality Index

GENDER DIFFERENTIATIONS					
Abbr	Countries	Gender Employment Gap	Gender Social Norms Index (share of people	Gender Development Index	Gender Inequality Index
AT	Austria	8.6	-	0,980	0,053
NL	Netherlands	8.2	30,64	0,968	0,025
SE	Switzerland	7.9	54,86	0,967	0,018
IT	Italy	19.2	61,58	0,970	0,056
DE	Germany	7.3	37,45	0,978	0,073
GR	Greece	19.8	64,00	0,969	0,119
MT	Malta	16.4	-	0,980	0,167
CZ	Czechia	15.4	77,69	0,989	0,120
IE	Ireland	10	-	0,987	0,074
ES	Spain	10.6	50,74	0,999	0,057
SK	Slovakia	8.5	86,53	1,008	0,180
PL	Poland	14	80,43	0,999	0,109
SR	Serbia	14.9	76,11	0,982	0,131
IC	Iceland	7.4	-	0,976	0,043
EE	Estonia	3.7	76,77	1,021	0,100
FR	France	6.2	56,47	0,990	0,083
HU	Hungary	10.6	67,23	0,987	0,221
RO	Romania	20.1	85,84	0,994	0,282
NO	Norway	4.8	40,93	0,983	0,016
BE	Belgium	7.7	-	0,978	0,048
LV	Latvia	4.8	-	1,025	0,151
CY	Cyprus	12.2	80,48	0,972	0,123
LT	Lithuania	1.4	-	1,030	0,105
LU	Luxembourg	7.4	-	0,993	0,044
SI	Slovenia	6.7	58,77	0,999	0,071
PT	Portugal	5.9	-	0,994	0,067
HR	Croatia	10.5	-	0,995	0,093
DK	Denmark	6.9	-	0,980	0,013
FI	Finland	2	51,63	0,989	0,033
BG	Bulgaria	8.4	76,37	0,995	0,210
SE	Sweden	5.3	27,91	0,988	0,023
UK	UK	-	29,60	0,987	0,098

4.2 Data sets

We examined gender inequalities using two separate sets of data. One set included information about men and women, while the other exclusively focused on women. By comparing the data, we highlighted areas where gender inequalities were most pronounced. This initial analysis was crucial for understanding the overall landscape of gender disparity. Subsequently, we delved deeper by scrutinizing the dataset, specifically on women. This approach allowed us to grasp the distinct challenges faced by women and how they differed in more nuanced ways from those faced by men.

4.2.1 Data set 1

The primary data source, the Eurobarometer 94.3 (2021) dataset, derived from in-person interviews, provides valuable insights into the opinions and attitudes of individuals residing in European nations regarding COVID-19.

Incorporating a diverse array of perspectives from across Europe, our study garnered responses from participants in Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Croatia, Turkey, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, totaling 38,718 observers. This extensive dataset was collected from 02/12/2021 to 03/18/2021, capturing a snapshot of opinions and experiences during a critical timeframe.

According to the most recent Standard Eurobarometer performed in February-March 2021, sentiments about the EU have not changed despite the coronavirus pandemic's influence on daily life in Europe for more than a year. The perception of the EU has improved, and trust in the EU has risen to its highest point in more than a decade. Health and the state of the economy are the two main issues on the minds of Europeans at the EU and national levels.

We used data from the Eurobarometer 2021 to verify a portion of our hypotheses. Detailed information regarding the correlation between the employed datasets and research inquiries, along with the systematic classification and nomenclature of the data, is available in Appendix B. The following is a list of the hypotheses we examined with this data set.

H1: The Coronavirus pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the financial well-being of women.

H2: The labor force participation of women during the COVID-19 era is influenced by their marital status, encompassing categories of being single, married, or divorced.

H3: In the COVID-19 era, the presence of children within a woman's household correlates with fluctuations in her participation in the labor force.

H4: The COVID-19 pandemic has elicited varying shifts in women's labor force participation, contingent upon their social class categorizations.

We used the inquiries we discovered in the Eurobarometer data set to investigate these hypotheses. We first figured out the values the hypothesis corresponds to. These variables allow us to analyze these hypotheses statistically and make it simpler to decide whether they are accurate or incorrect.

4.2.2 Variables of data set 1

In this section, we meticulously defined the variables extracted from the first dataset, aligning them with the respective hypotheses; the questionnaire utilized for the variables extracted from the dataset is included in Appendix A. To comprehensively explore the nuances of our research questions, the “gender (gender)” variable was systematically included across all hypotheses. This deliberate integration allows for a nuanced examination of gender differences for each question, contributing to a more thorough understanding of the study's findings. The statistical summary of dependent variables, including “personal finances (perfin)” and “employment status (employed),” is detailed in Table 2, and the control variables are shown in Table 3. Additionally, we have assessed the impact of education levels by introducing an education variable for all hypotheses. The education variable is categorized based on respondents' answers to the question, “*How old were you when you stopped full-time education?*” The ages corresponding to no full-time education, completion of primary school, high school, bachelor's degree, and still studying are specified according to the age ranges for each education category. The education categories are grouped into age groups: “up to 15 (primary school),” “16-19 (high school),” “20+ (bachelor's),” and “still studying,” as illustrated in Appendix C.

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of employment dynamics, we augmented our variable set with the “country groups (country_gr)” variable. This addition is motivated by investigating disparities between countries with “low (LowGenEmpGap)” and “high employment gaps (HighGenEmpGap).” By introducing this variable, we intend to capture and analyze the diverse socio-economic landscapes within our study, providing a broader context for interpreting the results and drawing meaningful conclusions.

In this data set, several vital variables were identified to explore the multifaceted impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on individuals, as illustrated in Appendix C. For investigating the first hypothesis, centered around the “personal finances (perfin)” variable, responses to whether the coronavirus pandemic has serious financial consequences for you were initially categorized into five distinct options. To facilitate hypothesis testing, these responses were consolidated into four categories: totally agree, agree, totally disagree, disagree. Subcategories of tend to disagree and disagree were amalgamated into the disagree category to enhance the understanding of disagreement. The same is true for the agreed category, with responses marked as not known recategorized as missing. The numerical representations from this categorization process provide a basis for statistical analysis, executed using Stata software.

The second hypothesis centered around two variables, “marital status (maritalstatus)” and “employment status (employed)”. The “employment status (employed)” variable measures the responses to the question, “*Which of the following best corresponds to your current situation? And what is your current occupation?*”. Concurrently, responses to the occupation status question, with around 19 options, were categorized into unemployed (responses 1-4) and employee (responses 5-18). This categorization emphasizes the distinction between employed and not employed individuals, facilitating subsequent analyses. Responses of participants correspond with “1. Responsible for shopping and looking after the home, without any current occupation, not working”, “2: student”, “3. Unemployed or temporarily not working”, “4. Retired or unable to work through illness”, “5. Self-employed farmer”, “6. Self-employed fisherman”, “7. Self-employed professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, etc.)”, “8. Owner

of a shop, craftsmen, other self-employed people”, “9. Business proprietors, the company’s owner (full or partner)”, “10. Employed professional”, “11. Employed position, general management”, “12. employed position, middle management”, “13. Employed position, working mainly at a desk”, “14. Employed position, not at a desk but traveling”, “15. Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job”, “16. Employed position, supervisor”, “17. Employed position, skilled manual worker”, “18. Other employed (unskilled) manual workers”, “19. I never did any paid work”. The responses to the marital status variable, initially comprising 15 options, the categories were streamlined into single, married, and divorced to enable meaningful statistical analysis. Responses of participants correspond with “Married or remarried: Living without children,” “Married or remarried: Living with the children of this marriage,” “Married or remarried: Living with the children of a previous marriage,” “Married or remarried: Living with the children of this marriage and of a previous marriage,” Single living with a partner: Living without children,” “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of this union,” “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of a previous union,” “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of this union and a previous union,” “Single: Living without children,” “Single: Living with children,” “Divorced or separated: Living without children,” Divorced or separated: Living with children,” “Widow: Living without children,” “Widow: Living with children and others.”

The third hypothesis centered around the two variables “employment status (employed)” and “child count (childyes)” on the impact of COVID-19. The employment status variable measures the responses to the question, “Which of the following best corresponds to your current situation? What is your current occupation?”. Occupation status responses were again categorized into unemployed

(responses 1-4) and employee (responses 5-18). For the child count variable, the responses to the question “*How many children live in your household?*”

Simultaneously, the two questions about child count, “*How many children less than ten years old live in your household?*” and “*How many children aged 10 to 14 years old live in your household?*” were combined. This amalgamation facilitated an analysis of how employment status during the COVID-19 period correlates with individuals having children, further activating the gender variable for nuanced insights.

Lastly, the fourth hypothesis centered around the dependent variables of “employment status (employed)” and “class belonging (class)”. The employment status variable measures the responses to the question, “*Which of the following best corresponds to your current situation? What is your current occupation?*”.

Occupation status responses were again categorized into unemployed (responses 1-4) and employee (responses 5-18). The class belonging variable measures the responses to the question, “*Do you see yourself and your household belonging to...?*” participants’ responses correspond with 1= working class, 2= lower middle class, 3= middle class, 4= higher middle class, and 5= higher class.

Table 2. Statistical Summary of Dependent Variables of Data Set 1

stats	perfin	employed
mean	1,260853	.5634072
sd	.4391083	.4959696
min	1	0
max	2	1

Table 3. Statistical Summary of Control Variables of Data Set 1

stats	country	age	education	gender	maritalstatus	childyes	class
mean	1,480789	48,44916	2,530822	1,516065	1,469344	.2872307	2,552677
sd	.4999505	17,09949	.7904681	.4997483	.7144484	.452476	.9489654
min	1	15	1	1	1	0	1
max	2	98	4	2	3	1	5

4.2.3 Data Set 2

Our data source, the Flash Eurobarometer 2712 (Women in Times of COVID-19) dataset, obtained through in-person interviews, offers a unique lens into individuals' sentiments in European nations. Unlike the first dataset, this study focused exclusively on women participants, exploring gender-related variables to understand specific aspects of women's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We were drawing insights from a diverse array of European countries, including Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden, Croatia, Turkey, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, our study engaged with a substantial participant pool of 26,741 observers. This data collection initiative spanned from 01/25/2022 to 02/03/2022, capturing the dynamic opinions and attitudes prevalent during this crucial timeframe.

It is essential for us that this data set only covers women. Examining women's participation in the workforce during COVID-19 in the research allowed us to compare minor categories.

We used data from the Flash Eurobarometer 2712 to verify other parts of our hypotheses. The following is a list of the hypotheses we examined with this data set.

H5: A potential inverse relationship exists between a country's level of development and its susceptibility regarding the gender employment gap to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

H6: Women who self-identify as being part of an ethnic or religious minority are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened susceptibility to experiencing economic ramifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories.

H7: Women who self-identify as migrants, asylum seekers, or displaced persons are hypothesized to face a greater likelihood of experiencing heightened economic impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories.

H8: Women who self-identify as individuals with disabilities are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened likelihood of encountering amplified economic repercussions from the COVID-19 pandemic compared to individuals not identifying as such.

H9: Women who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex, or queer (LGBTQ) are hypothesized to demonstrate an increased likelihood of encountering amplified economic repercussions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic compared to individuals not identifying within this spectrum.

H10: Women residing in small-sized towns are expected to exhibit a higher probability of experiencing greater susceptibility to economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic than those residing in larger towns.

H11: The pandemic has adversely affected women's work-life balance.

H12: The pandemic has led to a negative impact on women's position within the job market.

H13: The pandemic has negatively impacted women's income, potentially leading to decreased earnings and financial disparities compared to pre-pandemic levels.

H14: The pandemic has led to women doing less paid work because of increased work at home.

4.2.4 Variables in data set 2

In the second dataset, exclusivity to women participants allows for a focused exploration of gender-specific experiences without needing a distinct “gender” variable. Unlike the first dataset, where gender was a significant variable for comparative analysis, the second dataset uniquely concentrates on women, eliminating the need to differentiate responses based on gender. In this context, the absence of a “gender” variable aligns with the specific research objective to exclusively understand and compare experiences among women. The statistical summary of dependent variables, including “financial dependency (findep),” “work-life balance (worklife),” impact on the “job market (jobmarket),” “impact on income (impactincome),” and “less paid work (lesspaidwork)” is presented in Table 4, along with the control variables, shown in Table 5. Additionally, we have assessed the impact of education levels by introducing an education variable for all hypotheses. We compared analyses conducted without the education variable and those considering education levels. The education variable is categorized based on respondents' answers to the question, *“How old were you when you stopped full-time education?”* The ages corresponding to no full-time education, completion of

primary school, high school, bachelor's degree, and still studying are specified according to the age ranges for each education category. The education categories are grouped into age groups: “up to 15 (primary school),” “16-19 (high school),” “20+ (bachelor's),” and “still studying.” This approach streamlines the analysis by avoiding gender-related distinctions within the dataset, allowing for a more direct examination of factors affecting women across various hypotheses, as illustrated in Appendix D.

In hypothesis 5, we employed the variables of “nationality (country_gr)” and “financial dependency (findep)”. To measure the variable "nationality," we investigate the economic impact of COVID-19 on women based on their geographical location. The dataset includes responses from 30 countries, all of which are European Union members. To differentiate according to the level of development, we utilized two features: the gender overall earnings gap and the gender employment gap. These features allowed us to categorize countries into groups based on the median values of these gaps. The resulting classification sheds light on how women's economic circumstances during COVID-19 vary according to the development levels of their residing countries. Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual?*”. Participants' responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.

For hypothesis 6, the variables “ethnicity (ethnicity)” and “financial dependency (findep)” were employed. Ethnicity variable measures the question, “*Would you describe yourself as belonging to an ethnic minority?*”—

participants' responses grouped as 0= not mentioned and 1= ethnic group. Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual?*”. Participants' responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude. These two variables allowed us to examine the financial impact of COVID-19 on women who identify as part of an ethnic group.

For hypothesis 7, the variables “migrant (migrant)” and “financial dependency (findep)” were employed. Migrant variable measures the question, “*Would you describe yourself as a migrant, asylum seeker, or displaced person?*”. Responses of the participants grouped as 0= not mentioned and 1= migrant. Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual.*” Participants' responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude. These two variables allowed us to examine the financial impact of COVID-19 on women who identify as migrants.

For hypothesis 8, the variables “disability (disability)” and “financial dependency (findep)” were employed. Disability variable measures the question, “*Would you describe yourself as a person with disability/ disabilities?*”. Responses of the participants grouped as 0= not mentioned and 1= w/disability. Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual?*”. Participants'

responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude. These two variables allowed us to examine the financial impact of COVID-19 on women who have/disabilities.

For hypothesis 9, the variables “LGBTQ (lgbtq)” and “financial dependency (findep)” were employed. LGBTQ variable asks, “*Would you describe yourself as LGBTQ?*”—participants' responses grouped as 0= not mentioned and 1= lgbtq.

Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual?*”. Participants' responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude. These two variables allowed us to examine the financial impact of COVID-19 on women who identify as LGBTQ.

For hypothesis 10, the variables “community (comm)” and “financial dependency (findep)” were employed. Community variable measures the question, “*Where do you live? Rural, Small Town, Big Town?*”. Participants' responses correspond with 1= rural area or village, 2= small or middle-sized towns, and 3= large towns. Financial dependency variables measure the question, “*Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual?*”. Participants' responses correspond with 1= much more dependent, 2= somewhat more dependent, 3= no change, 4= somewhat less dependent, 5= much less dependent. We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude. These variables facilitated an assessment of the economic impact of COVID-19 on women, considering the scale of their residential environments.

For hypothesis 11, the variable “work-life balance (worklife)” was employed. The work-life balance variable measures the question, “*The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance.*” The participants' responses correspond with 1= totally agree, 2= somewhat agree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= totally disagree.

For hypothesis 12, the variable “impact on job market (jobmarket)” was employed. Impact on the job market variable measures the question, “*Because of the pandemic’s impact on the job market, I could do less paid work than I wanted to.*” The participants’ responses correspond with 1= totally agree, 2= somewhat agree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= totally disagree.

For hypothesis 13, the variable “impact on income (impactincome)” was employed. Impact on income variable measures the question of “*The pandemic had a negative impact on my income.*” The participants’ responses correspond with 1= totally agree, 2= somewhat agree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= totally disagree.

For hypothesis 14, the variable “less paid work (less_paid_work)” was employed. Impact on job market variable measures the question of “*Because of the increase in work at home (such as household tasks, care for family members, home-6 schooling), I could do less paid work than I wanted to*” Responses of the participants correspond with 1= totally agree, 2= somewhat agree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= totally disagree.

Table 4. Statistical Summary of Dependent Variables of Data Set 2

stats	findep	worklife	jobmarket	impactincome	lesspaidwork
mean	2,797579	2,556489	2,818343	2,657677	2,952815
sd	.7764955	1,044946	1,115526	1,118482	1,049758
min	1	1	1	1	1
max	5	4	4	4	4

Table 5. Statistical Summary of Control Variables of Data Set 2

stats	country	age	education	ethnicity	migrant	disability	lgbtq	comm
mean	1,492301	46,26977	2,556936	.0298792	.0127893	.063311	.0412101	2,09076
sd	.4999505	16,78183	.5644907	.1702572	.1123666	.2435261	.1987796	.7771688
min	1	15	1	0	0	0	0	1
max	2	91	3	1	1	1	1	3

4.3 Empirical Methodology

Fourteen bar charts were created for each hypothesis to examine the gathered data. These visual representations serve as tools for interpreting the research findings. The initial set of charts presents responses concerning the impact of COVID-19 on financial consequences across genders and country groups. Following this, the second set of bar charts offers insights into the interaction between marital and occupational status for both genders, incorporating country groups.

Continuing, the third set of graphics explores the connection between having children and occupational status for both genders, considering country groups. Progressing to the fourth set, social class categorization for both genders is depicted in conjunction with occupational status and country groups.

Shifting the focus specifically to women, the fifth bar chart outlines financial dependency during the COVID-19 pandemic, encompassing country groups. Subsequent charts, the sixth through tenth, delve into distinct subgroups within the female population. These include financial dependency during the pandemic and factors like ethnicity, migrant status, disability, membership in an LGBTQ group, and residence in larger or smaller areas, with country groups providing a contextual framework.

The remaining bar charts focus on specific aspects exclusive to women. The eleventh chart examines work-life balance, followed by the twelfth chart, which explores women's positions in the job market. The thirteenth chart concludes the visual analysis by addressing income levels for women, providing comprehensive insights within the context of country groups. The fourteenth chart delves into women's positions in lower-paid work. By incorporating these visual aids into the analytical toolkit, this comprehensive approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic within various contextual parameters.

Following the visual analysis, t-tests are employed to assess statistical significance. The t-test, a well-established statistical method, determines whether a significant distinction exists between the means of two datasets. It calculates a t-value based on the respective groups' means, standard deviations, and sample sizes. The derived t-value is then compared to a critical value in a t-distribution table, helping to establish the significance level and confirm whether the disparity between the means achieves statistical significance at a specified confidence level.

Our specific analysis incorporates a set of control variables to address potential confounding factors within the individual data. These variables include individuals' financial dependency, work-life balance, position in the job market, income, age, gender, marital status, community, ethnicity, migrant status, disability, LGBTQ identification, community left-right spectrum, and other characteristics. We employ a multivariable regression approach tailored to our research objectives to extract meaningful insights from this data.

Multivariable regression discerns the intricate relationships between our dependent and multiple independent variables. This statistical model aims to estimate the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable while meticulously controlling for the influence of all other independent variables within the model. The mathematical expression for this multivariable regression is denoted as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \varepsilon$$

Where Y is the dependent variable, $X_1, X_2, X_3, \dots, X_n$ are the independent variables, β_0 is the intercept, $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \dots, \beta_n$ are the coefficients of the independent variables, and ε is the error term. These coefficients convey how a one-unit change in a specific independent variable influences the dependent variable, all while keeping all other independent variables constant. The term ε encapsulates any unaccounted error or variability in the model. This multivariable regression framework, tailored to our study, ensures a meticulous assessment of the interplay between various factors while considering the influence of control variables, providing a robust and tailored approach to data interpretation within our research context.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSES & RESULTS

A comprehensive evaluation has been conducted to analyze the influence of COVID-19 on women's labor force participation, and the outcomes are depicted through bar charts, two-way graphs, t-tests, and regression analyses. Two distinct samples were utilized, differing in that one set of data encompasses responses from both genders, while the other exclusively focuses on responses from women. This approach enables the comparison of disparities between men and women and within the subset of women. For each examination, bar charts, two-way graphs, and t-tests were employed to determine statistical distinctions regarding the impact. Subsequently, regression analyses were used to consolidate multiple variables within a unified framework, facilitating comprehensive measurement.

To better elucidate the impact of the pandemic on personal finances across different age groups, we present a detailed two-way graph below. Figure 4 captures the general trajectory of financial changes and provides confidence intervals to gauge the reliability of our predictions. The curve visually represents the U-shaped response observed in our data, emphasizing the unique challenges and adaptations experienced by various age brackets during this global crisis.

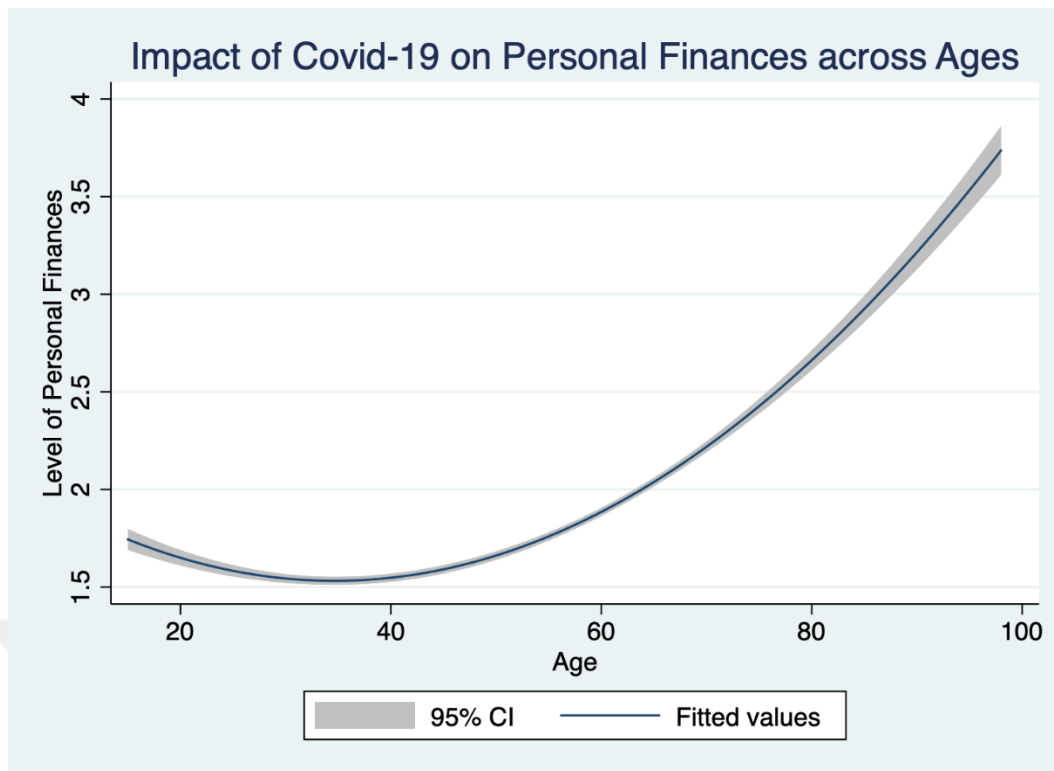


Figure 4. Two-way graph of personal finances and age ¹

Figure 4 presents an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on personal finances across various age groups, as indicated by age on the x-axis. The "fitted values" curve provides insight into the trend of personal finances during the pandemic across these age brackets. A U-shaped response suggests that the youngest and oldest populations might have experienced different financial implications from the pandemic compared to the middle-aged groups.

The displayed graph offers a profound understanding of how perceptions regarding the negative financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic evolve with age. At a younger age, around the early 20s, there is a noticeable inclination towards strongly agreeing that the pandemic has adversely affected personal finances, hovering near the "totally agree" benchmark. However, this sentiment

¹ Perfin (personal finances), and age variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

diminishes as one progresses into mid-life, indicating a phase where individuals may feel less vulnerable or have more financial cushions or stability.

However, a pivotal shift emerges post the 60-year threshold. As individuals approach their senior years, there is an evident upswing in the sentiment that the pandemic has less negatively affected their financial well-being, with perceptions gravitating closer to the "totally disagree" end of the spectrum once again. Though broadening, the accompanying 95% confidence interval supports this trend, suggesting a consistent pattern. This pronounced change amongst the elderly may reflect increased financial burdens, such as medical expenses or limited income avenues during the pandemic's peak.

In essence, the graph underscores a U-shaped trajectory, with the young and the middle-aged expressing heightened concerns about the pandemic's detrimental impact on their personal finances. At the same time, elderly individuals have been relatively insulated or optimistic during this period.

Following our examination of the age-based impact of COVID-19 on personal finances, it becomes pertinent to delve into another significant dimension: political orientation. Recognizing that personal beliefs and societal affiliations could affect economic outcomes, especially during unprecedented global crises, we explore how self-reported left-right political positioning correlates with financial well-being during the pandemic. The ensuing analysis provides insights into whether the pandemic's economic ramifications displayed any differential effects across the political spectrum.

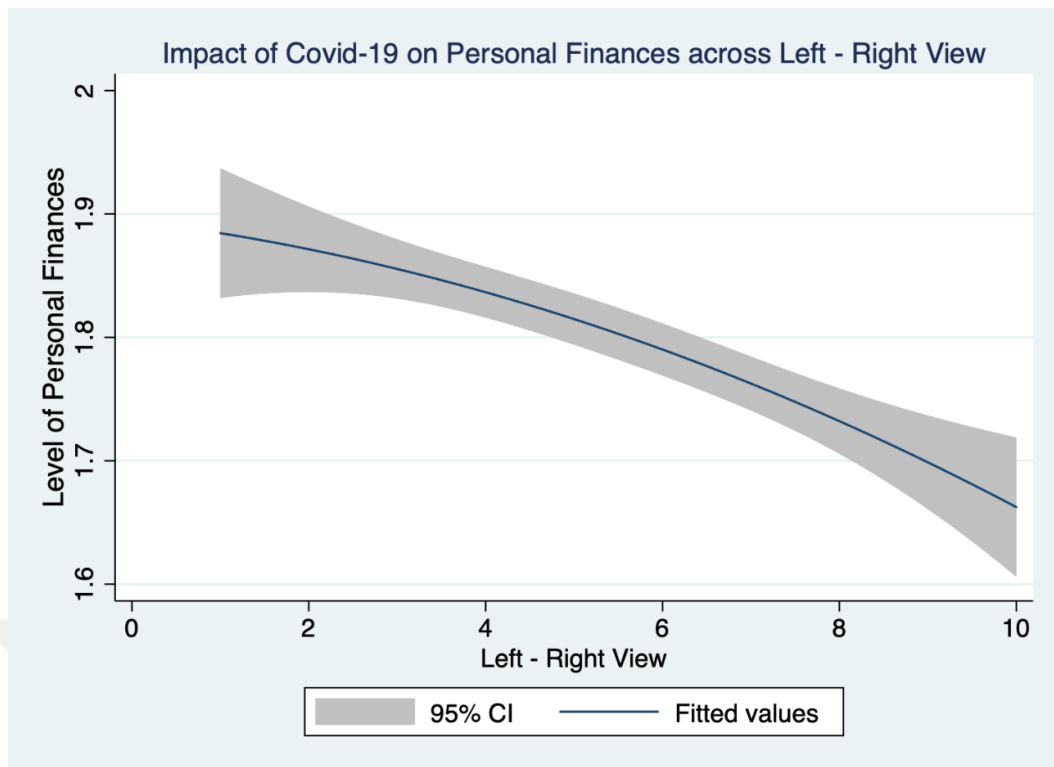


Figure 5. Two-way graph of personal finances and left-right view²

Figure 5 depicts the relationship between individuals' political left-right placement and their perceptions regarding the financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The horizontal axis represents a spectrum from left (0) to right (10) political leanings. In contrast, the vertical axis indicates the extent to which people agree that the pandemic has adversely impacted their personal finances, with one symbolizing "totally agree" and values approaching 4 indicating more robust disagreement.

From the visual data, it can be inferred that as individuals identify more with the right end of the political spectrum, there is a trend of diminishing agreement that COVID-19 has negatively influenced their financial situation.

² Perfin (personal finances), and leftright variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

The fitted values line portrays a downward slope, suggesting that right-leaning individuals are progressively less likely to believe that the pandemic has been detrimental to their personal finances compared to their left-leaning counterparts.

The 95% confidence interval shadows the main trend line, reinforcing the observed pattern and indicating a degree of variability in the data, especially as one moves further to the right.

The graph illuminates a potential correlation between political orientation and perceptions of financial distress due to the pandemic. Those on the left seem more inclined to perceive negative financial impacts than those aligning more to the right. This divergence could be attributed to various factors, including differences in policy beliefs, economic situations, or information sources that influence individual perceptions of the pandemic's effects on their finances.

Hypothesis 1

As established within the literature review, the COVID-19 era adversely influenced women's financial status. Various parameters suggest that the impact of COVID-19 was more pronounced on women's financial status, owing to the predisposition of women to encounter economic disadvantages compared to men.

As depicted in Figure 6, the impact of COVID-19 on the personal financial situation is notably more pronounced in countries with high employment gap than in countries with low employment gap. This trend is consistently reflected in the graphs about both genders, where the numerical scale assigns 1 to "totally agree" and 2 to "totally disagree."

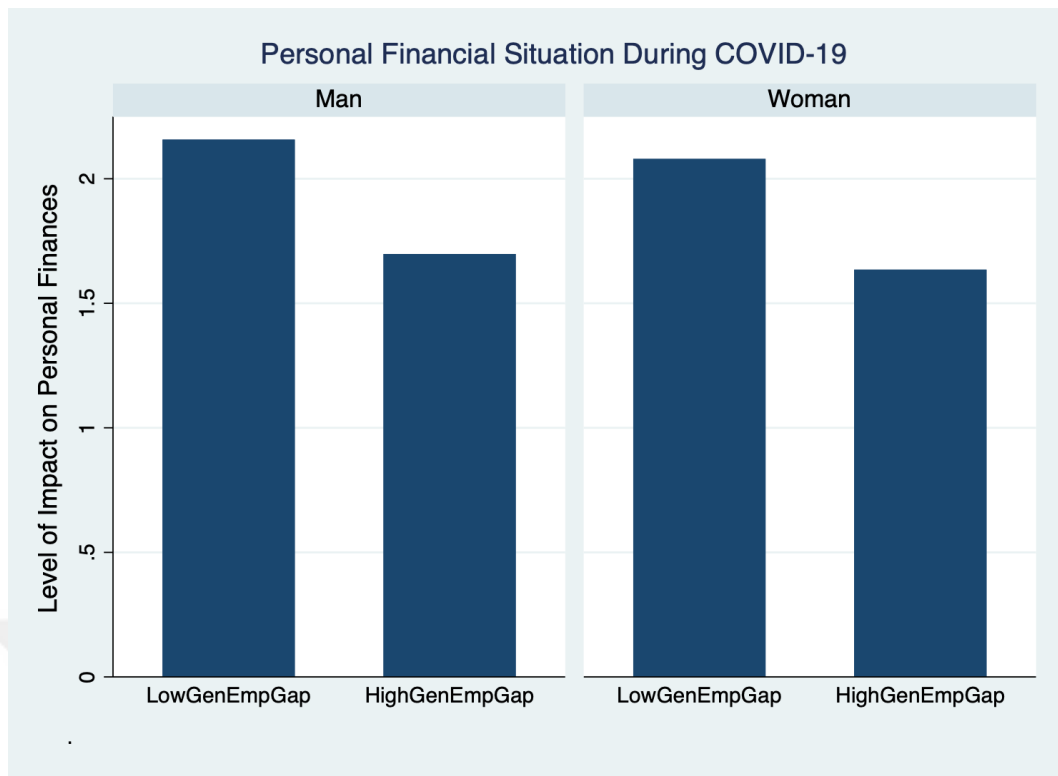


Figure 6. Exploring how COVID-19 has shaped personal finances³

The detailed t-test analyses provide compelling evidence supporting the hypothesis that the COVID-19 pandemic had a more substantial impact on women's personal finances compared to men.

Firstly, examining the low employment gap countries, the t-test showed a significant difference in mean personal finances between men and women ($p = 0.0000$). This indicates that women experienced a substantial decline in personal finances during the pandemic, even in countries with a lower employment gap. Similarly, in countries with high employment gaps, the difference in mean personal finances between men and women remains significant ($p = 0.0000$). This consistency across different employment gap levels underscores the robustness of the observed trend. The overall t-test across all countries confirms a substantial gender disparity in

³ Perfin (personal finances), gender, and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

the impact on personal finances, with a highly significant difference ($p = 0.0000$).

This overarching result reinforces the conclusion that women, on average, experienced a more pronounced negative impact on their personal finances because of the pandemic. In essence, the comprehensive analysis across different contexts consistently supports the notion that women were more adversely affected in terms of personal finances by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Table 6. Regression Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on Personal Finances:
Examining the Role of Gender, Age, Marital Status, Children, and Social Class

VARIABLES	(1) perfin	(2) perfin	(3) perfin	(4) perfin	(5) perfin	(6) perfin
HighGenEmpGap	-0.4528*** (0.0199)	-0.4516*** (0.0199)	-0.4245*** (0.0196)	-0.4258*** (0.0196)	-0.4275*** (0.0196)	-0.4069*** (0.0191)
woman		-0.0702*** (0.0200)	-0.0714*** (0.0196)	-0.0264 (0.0241)	-0.0155 (0.0288)	0.0590 (0.0543)
age			-0.0396*** (0.0032)	-0.0350*** (0.0034)	-0.0348*** (0.0034)	-0.0292*** (0.0034)
age#age			0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0004*** (0.0000)
single				0.1725*** (0.0383)	0.1533*** (0.0396)	0.2338*** (0.0389)
divorced				-0.0579 (0.0510)	-0.0596 (0.0514)	0.0227 (0.0501)
woman#single				-0.0980** (0.0499)	-0.0985* (0.0507)	-0.1488*** (0.0497)
woman#divorced				-0.0804 (0.0620)	-0.0820 (0.0628)	-0.0688 (0.0615)
childyes					-0.0468 (0.0345)	-0.0524 (0.0333)
woma#childyes					-0.0339 (0.0439)	-0.0131 (0.0425)
class						0.3613*** (0.0138)
woman#class						-0.0240 (0.0194)
Constant	2.1171*** (0.0151)	2.1535*** (0.0184)	2.6235*** (0.0747)	2.4382*** (0.0848)	2.4712*** (0.0863)	1.3909*** (0.0922)
Observations	18,406	18,406	18,396	18,341	18,341	18,187

Table 7. Regression Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on Personal Finances: Including Education and Country-Fixed Effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
VARIABLES	perfin	perfin	perfin	perfin	perfin	perfin
HighGenEmpGap	-1.4014*** (0.0666)	-1.3841*** (0.0699)	-1.2587*** (0.0692)	-1.2629*** (0.0693)	-1.2635*** (0.0692)	-1.2866*** (0.0683)
woman	-0.0509* (0.0261)	-0.0041 (0.0285)	-0.0098 (0.0282)	0.0036 (0.0308)	0.0150 (0.0338)	0.0353 (0.0575)
age			-0.0370*** (0.0037)	-0.0376*** (0.0039)	-0.0379*** (0.0039)	-0.0352*** (0.0038)
age#age			0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0005*** (0.0000)	0.0005*** (0.0000)
single				0.0239 (0.0393)	0.0157 (0.0409)	0.0800** (0.0408)
divorced				-0.0642 (0.0473)	-0.0633 (0.0478)	-0.0165 (0.0472)
woman#married				0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
woman#single				-0.0663 (0.0534)	-0.0695 (0.0543)	-0.0958* (0.0540)
woman#divorced				0.0190 (0.0577)	0.0147 (0.0586)	0.0128 (0.0581)
childyes					-0.0143 (0.0335)	-0.0192 (0.0330)
woman#childyes					-0.0347 (0.0418)	-0.0239 (0.0414)
class						0.2217*** (0.0142)
woman#class						-0.0050 (0.0186)
education		0.0493*** (0.0154)	0.1233*** (0.0152)	0.1233*** (0.0153)	0.1235*** (0.0153)	0.0348** (0.0158)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included	included	included
Observations	18,406	15,975	15,969	15,941	15,941	15,821

Table 6 presents a regression analysis exploring the determinants of individuals' perceptions regarding the negative impact of COVID-19 on their personal finances. The variable HighGenEmpGap, which consistently shows a negative coefficient across all models, underscores the urgency and importance of the gender employment gap in the context of COVID-19's financial impact. As this

gap widens, individuals are more likely to agree that COVID-19 adversely affects their personal finances. This relationship, stable across various model specifications, highlights a potential systematic issue where gender employment disparities correlate with negative financial perceptions during the pandemic. The coefficient for the variable woman is negative in each model, suggesting that women are more inclined than men to perceive COVID-19 as having a negative effect on their financial situation. This consistent finding across models underscores the gendered financial impact of the pandemic. In the context of this analysis, age has a negative coefficient, suggesting that older individuals are more likely to view COVID-19 as having a detrimental effect on their finances. However, the positive coefficient for age squared indicates that this negative perception diminishes somewhat as age increases, implying a nonlinear relationship.

Moreover, the positive coefficient for single reveals that single individuals are less likely to agree that COVID-19 negatively impacts their personal finances, suggesting a perceived financial resilience among the unmarried population. However, when considering gender interactions, single woman (woman#single) and 'divorced woman' (woman#divorced/separated) have negative coefficients, highlighting that within these subgroups, women are more likely to feel that COVID-19 has a negative financial impact.

The variable childyes (having a child) has negative coefficients, indicating that individuals with children are more likely to agree that COVID-19 has negatively affected their personal finances. The interaction term woman#childyes (woman with child) needs to present consistent significance across the models, suggesting that the additional perceived financial impact of COVID-19 on women with children is not conclusively different from that of men with children. The class variable exhibits a

positive coefficient, suggesting that individuals from higher socioeconomic classes are less likely to perceive COVID-19 negatively influencing their finances. This could reflect a greater degree of financial security or resilience in the face of economic challenges posed by the pandemic.

According to Table 7, after adding education and country-fixed variables, we have reinterpreted the results of our regression analysis to assess the impact of these factors on perceptions of COVID-19's negative influence on personal finances.

The coefficient for the variable indicating gender (woman) is not consistently significant across the models where it is included. This suggests that simply being a woman does not have a stable nor uniform impact on personal financial outcomes in the models presented. Age was found to have a negative relationship with personal finances, suggesting that older individuals may experience less favorable financial conditions; however, the quadratic term for age introduces a non-linear element to this trend, implying that the effect of age could diminish or potentially reverse at older ages.

Marital status, with indicators for being single or divorced, did not consistently impact personal finances; only 'single' status showed significance in one model, hinting at varied financial implications for singles. Furthermore, the interplay between gender and marital status did not reliably affect financial outcomes. Similarly, having children and its interaction with being a woman (woman#childyes) lacked significant effects on personal finance assessments, indicating that parenthood and gender, in combination, do not substantially influence financial standings.

Social class emerged as a significant variable in one model, where a higher social class was positively correlated with better personal finance outcomes. This

finding aligns with the broader socioeconomic narrative that social class can be a substantial determinant of financial security and opportunity.

The examination of the relationship between education levels, ranging from no full-time education to possessing a bachelor's degree, and personal finances (perfin) revealed a consistently positive correlation. A higher level of educational attainment was found to be associated with better personal finance outcomes, emphasizing the value of education in enhancing financial stability and resilience.

The country fixed shows the countries of Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, the UK, Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, and Sweden show positive coefficients.

While the gender gap in employment continues to affect financial perceptions, introducing country-fixed effects negatively diminishes the gender coefficient, suggesting that cross-country variations partly explain the perceived economic vulnerability among women. Similarly, the positive coefficients for single and divorced statuses in later models indicate that these individuals are less likely to perceive a negative financial impact from COVID-19 once country-specific factors are accounted for. The persistence of a negative coefficient for 'childyes' emphasizes the perceived financial burden of parenting during the pandemic. The class remains a strong positive predictor, indicating that higher socioeconomic status is consistently associated with less agreement that COVID-19 negatively impacts personal finances.

Hypothesis 2

There is an anticipation that married women may experience a comparatively higher negative impact from COVID-19 compared to married men. To assess this hypothesis, we employed marital status as the primary variable and overlaid it with employment status to examine the potential relationship between these two factors.

Figure 7 visually presents the connection between employment and marital status among a particular gender subgroup and country groups.

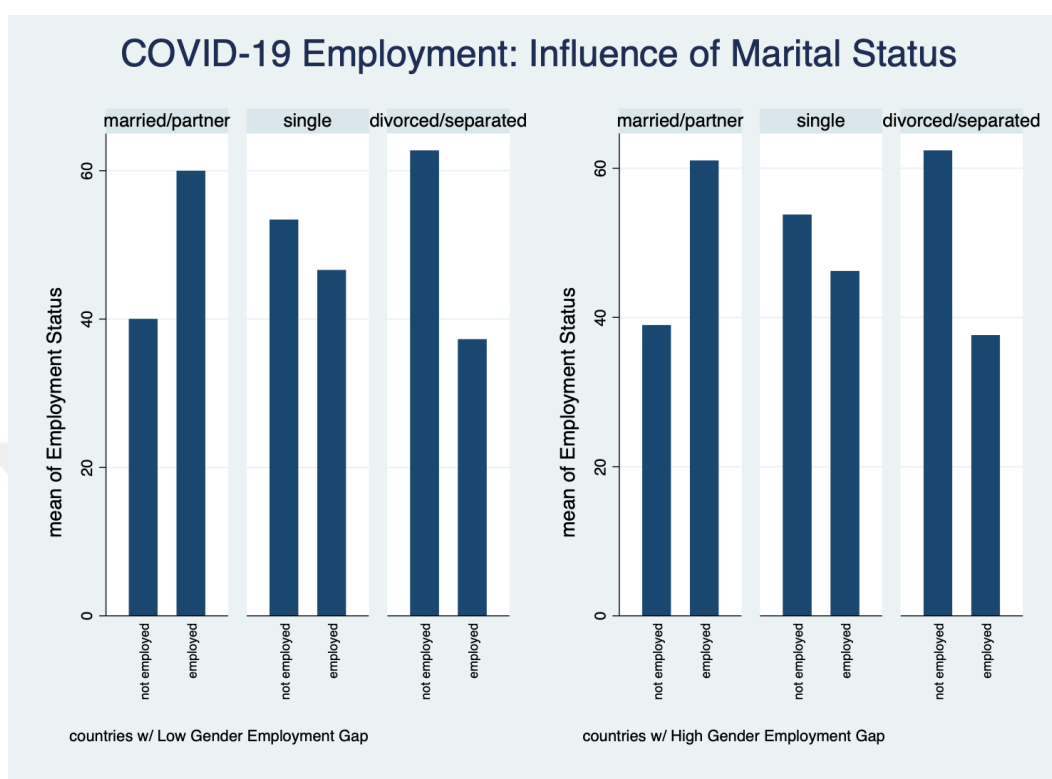


Figure 7. Exploring the influence of marital status on employment patterns amidst the COVID-19 pandemic⁴

The t-test analyses were conducted to investigate whether women's employment status is influenced by marital status in the context of varying employment gap levels during the COVID-19 era. In high employment gap countries, the first t-test comparing employed women who are married to those who are single resulted in a significant difference ($p = 0.0000$), suggesting that married women in these countries exhibit a lower likelihood of employment compared to their single counterparts. Similarly, the second t-test comparing employed married women to divorced women also yielded a significant difference ($p = 0.0123$),

⁴ Employed (employment status), maritalstatus, and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

indicating that, on average, divorced women are more likely to be employed than their married counterparts. In countries with low employment gaps, the t-test comparing employed married women to single women was highly significant ($p = 0.0000$), implying that married women are less likely to be employed in these countries. However, the comparison between employed married women and divorced women did not reach statistical significance ($p = 0.0224$), suggesting a more nuanced relationship between marital status and employment in countries with low employment gaps.

The t-test analyses were performed to scrutinize the impact of marital status on employment status for both men and women in the context of varying employment gap levels during the COVID-19 era. For women in high employment gap countries, the t-tests revealed significant differences based on their marital status. Employed married women exhibited a notably lower likelihood of employment than single women. Similarly, the comparison between employed married women and divorced women also showed a significant difference, indicating that, on average, divorced women are more likely to be employed than their married counterparts. In countries with low employment gaps, the t-test results for employed women indicated similar trends. Employed married women had a significantly lower likelihood of employment than single women ($p = 0.0002$) and divorced women ($p = 0.0000$), reinforcing the influence of marital status on women's employment status in countries with lower employment gaps. For men, the t-tests in countries with high employment gaps showed consistent patterns. Employed married men exhibited a significantly lower likelihood of employment than single men ($p = 0.0003$) and divorced men ($p = 0.0000$). Similarly, in countries with low employment gaps, employed married men had a significantly lower likelihood of employment

compared to single men ($p = 0.0002$) and divorced men ($p = 0.0000$). These findings highlight the nuanced relationship between marital status and employment status, indicating that, in both countries with high and low employment gaps, married individuals, whether men or women, are less likely to be employed compared to their single or divorced counterparts.



Table 8. Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Marital Status and Personal Financial Impact in the Context of COVID-19

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	employed	employed	employed	employed
HighGenEmpGap	0.0234*** (0.0059)	0.0243*** (0.0058)	0.0091* (0.0048)	0.0081* (0.0048)
woman		-0.0665*** (0.0058)	-0.0672*** (0.0048)	-0.0988*** (0.0057)
age			0.0707*** (0.0009)	0.0654*** (0.0010)
age#age			-0.0008*** (0.0000)	-0.0008*** (0.0000)
single				-0.1713*** (0.0097)
divorced				-0.0553*** (0.0123)
woman#single				0.0934*** (0.0128)
woman#divorced				0.0767*** (0.0151)
Constant	0.5544*** (0.0041)	0.5891*** (0.0051)	-0.6932*** (0.0205)	-0.5005*** (0.0233)
Observations	28,707	28,707	28,697	28,6

Table 9. Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Marital Status and Personal Financial Impact of COVID-19 Including Education and Country-Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1) employed	(2) employed	(3) employed	(4) employed
HighGenEmpGap	0.2045*** (0.0226)	0.2369*** (0.0227)	0.0793*** (0.0194)	0.0736*** (0.0194)
woman	-0.0626*** (0.0080)	-0.0591*** (0.0085)	-0.0575*** (0.0067)	-0.0883*** (0.0073)
age			0.0377*** (0.0011)	0.0362*** (0.0011)
age#age			-0.0005*** (0.0000)	-0.0005*** (0.0000)
single				-0.1152*** (0.0103)
divorced				-0.0495*** (0.0120)
woman#single				0.1112*** (0.0144)
woman#divorced				0.0838*** (0.0148)
education		0.1513*** (0.0048)	0.0574*** (0.0041)	0.0565*** (0.0041)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included
Constant	0.4652*** (0.0161)	0.1528*** (0.0195)	0.0038 (0.0324)	0.0842** (0.0332)
Observations	28,707	24,827	24,821	24,776

Table 8 presents a regression analysis that sheds light on the employment dynamics during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on marital status. The high gender employment gap (HighGenEmpGap) variable exhibits slightly positive coefficients in the models, suggesting a somewhat counterintuitive result: countries with higher gender employment gaps may see a marginal increase in the likelihood of employment during the pandemic. However, this effect is inconsistent across all models, indicating that the relationship between the gender employment gap and employment status may be influenced by other factors not captured in the simpler models. The gender variable (woman) consistently shows negative coefficients across all models, indicating that women were significantly less likely to be employed than men during the pandemic. The coefficients are positive for age, implying that the employment likelihood increases.

Nonetheless, the negative coefficient for age squared (age#age) suggests a diminishing return effect, where the rate of increased employment likelihood decreases as individuals get older. Regarding marital status, the coefficients for 'single' are negative; being single or divorced corresponds to a lower likelihood of employment than their married counterparts. The negative coefficients for single woman (woman#single) and divorced woman (woman#divorced) indicate that single and divorced women are less likely to be employed than single and divorced men.

After adding education and country-fixed variables, depicted in Table 9, we have reinterpreted the results to provide a more layered understanding of employment trends during the COVID-19 pandemic. The adjusted model reveals that a higher gender employment gap, paradoxically, correlates with a greater likelihood of employment.

The introduction of country-fixed effects has elucidated the significant role national contexts play in employment, as evidenced by the consistent positive coefficients for the country variable. According to the country fixed variable, the countries of Albania, Austria, Bosnia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Cyprus, and Czech Republic have positive coefficients.

The coefficient for age is positive and significant, indicating that older individuals are more likely to be employed. The negative coefficient for the age squared term suggests that this likelihood increases at a decreasing rate as one gets older or may even start to decrease after reaching a certain age, reflecting a non-linear relationship.

According to the marital status, being single is negatively correlated with employment status in one model, while being divorced is negatively associated in all models where it appears. This could suggest that singles and divorced individuals may be at a disadvantage in terms of employment compared to their married counterparts. The interaction term `woman#single` is significant in one model, suggesting that single women are less likely to be employed. However, the `woman#divorced` interaction is positive and significant across all models it's included in, implying that divorced women are more likely to be employed than divorced men or that the negative effect of being divorced on employment status is smaller for women.

Higher levels of education are positively correlated with employment across all models. This is consistent with the general understanding that higher education improves employability.

Hypothesis 3

An expectation arises that women with children might encounter a more pronounced negative impact from COVID-19 compared to men with children. To scrutinize this hypothesis, we utilized the variable representing the count of children and juxtaposed it with employment in Figure 8.

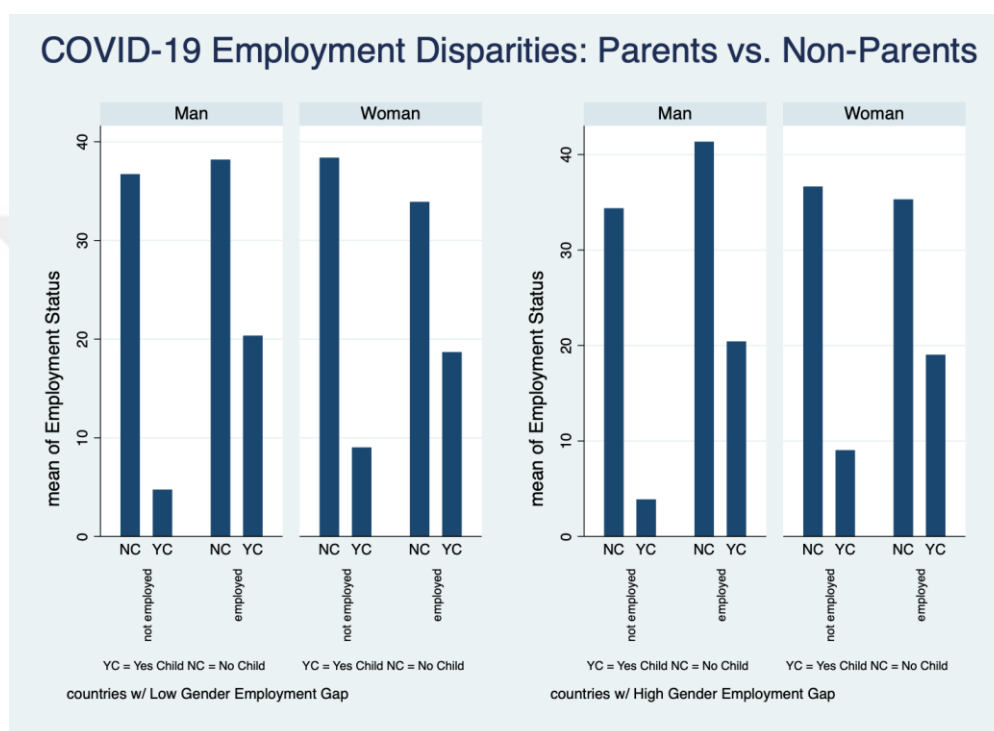


Figure 8. Exploring COVID-19 employment disparities between parents and non-parents⁵

Analyzing the t-test results to investigate the impact of having children on women's employment status during the COVID-19 era reveals compelling insights. For women, the first t-test, comparing employed status between those with and without children in high employment gap countries, yields a statistically significant result ($p = 0.0142$). The negative t-value (-2.1924) indicates that, on average, women

⁵ Employed (employment status), childyes (child count) and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

with children in countries with high employment gaps are less likely to be employed than their counterparts without children. The second t-test, focusing on countries with low employment gaps, presents an even more substantial difference ($p = 0.0000$), reinforcing that women without children in these countries are markedly more likely to be employed than those with children. These findings suggest that, during the COVID-19 era, having children may present distinct challenges for women regarding employment, with potential implications for work-life balance and societal expectations.

Additionally, upon closer examination of the t-test results between men and women, it appears that, in terms of statistical significance, men are more affected by the presence of children in both countries with high and low employment gaps. In countries with high employment gaps, the p-value for the t-test comparing employment status between men with and without children is lower ($p = 0.0002$) compared to women in the same context ($p = 0.0142$). Similarly, in countries with low employment gaps, the difference is more pronounced for men ($p = 0.0000$) than for women ($p = 0.0000$). These results suggest that, statistically, the impact of having children on employment status is more substantial for men in both employment gap contexts.

Hypothesis 4

An expectation emerges that women within the working class could potentially encounter a more pronounced negative impact from COVID-19 compared to those in the high class, considering the predominant inclusion of service sector individuals within the working class. To scrutinize this hypothesis, we utilized the variable denoting class belonging as the primary parameter juxtaposed with employment

status. This approach was undertaken to investigate any potential correlation between these two variables in Figure 9.

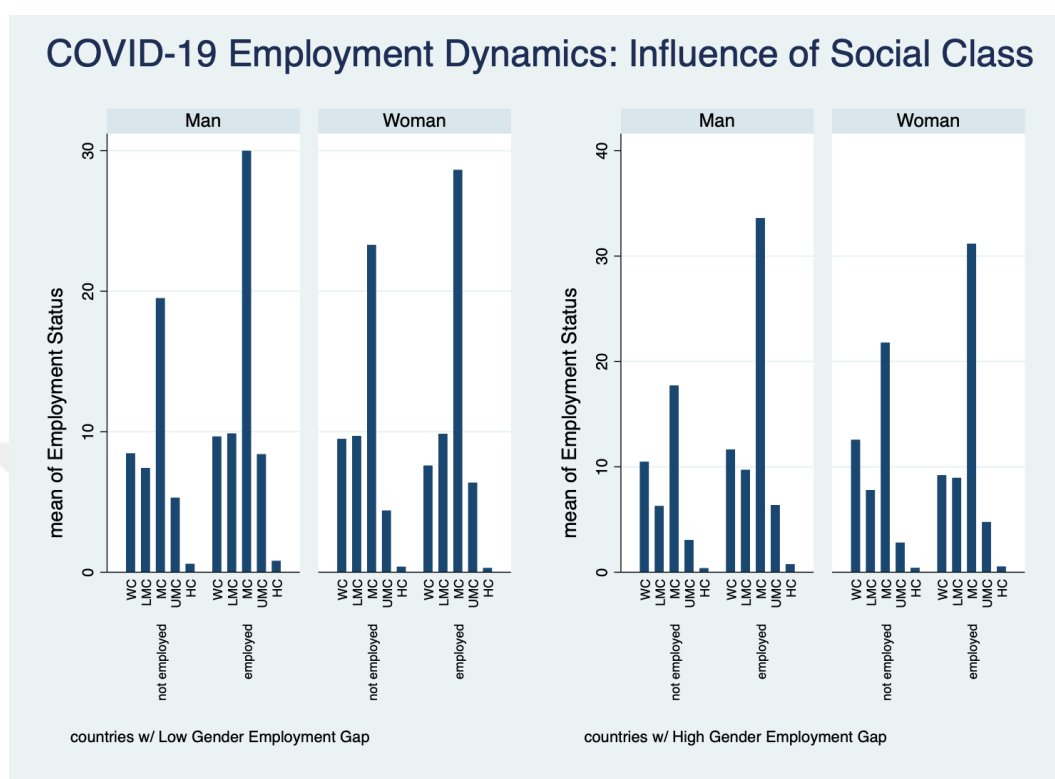


Figure 9. Examining COVID-19 employment disparities across social classes⁶

The series of t-test analyses aimed to investigate the nuanced relationship between women's employment status and social class status during the COVID-19 era, considering varying levels of regional employment gaps. The findings provide valuable insights into the disparities among different social classes regarding employment likelihood across countries with low and high employment gaps. For working-class women, the t-test result reveals a statistically significant difference in employment status between low and high employment gap countries (p-value = 0.0345). The negative t-value (-1.8180) indicates that working-class women in

⁶ Employed (employment status), gender, class (social class), and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

countries with high employment gaps are, on average, less likely to be employed than their counterparts in countries with low employment gaps. Similarly, lower-middle-class women exhibit a notable difference in employment status between countries with low and high employment gaps ($p\text{-value} = 0.0060$). The negative t -value (-2.5102) suggests that lower-middle-class women in countries with high employment gaps face a lower likelihood of employment than those with low employment gaps. The most pronounced disparities are observed for middle-class women, where a highly significant difference in employment status exists between countries with low and high employment gaps ($p\text{-value} = 0.0000$). The substantial negative t -value (-3.9728) emphasizes that middle-class women in countries with high employment gaps are markedly less likely to be employed than their counterparts in countries with low employment gaps. Even for higher-middle-class women and upper-class women, significant differences in employment status are detected between low and high employment gap countries. The negative t -values indicate that, on average, women in these higher social classes residing in countries with high employment gaps face a reduced likelihood of employment.

In summary, the t -test analyses consistently reveal significant differences in employment status among women across various social classes when comparing countries with low and high employment gaps during the COVID-19 era. Working-class, lower-middle-class, middle-class, higher-middle-class, and upper-class women all exhibit lower employment rates in countries with high employment gaps, emphasizing a pervasive trend.

To compare men and women, the last t -test results to discern the effects of social class on employment status changes during the COVID-19 era reveal noteworthy gender-specific patterns. For women, the impact is particularly salient

across various social classes in high employment gap countries. The p-values associated with t-test comparisons consistently demonstrate statistical significance. Specifically, working-class women exhibit a p-value of 0.0219, lower-middle-class women have a p-value of 0.0000, middle-class women show a p-value of 0.0000, higher-middle-class women display a p-value of 0.0000, and upper-class women register a p-value of 0.0000. In contrast, the corresponding p-values for men) in the same social classes are slightly higher respectively. This consistent trend underscores that the influence of social class on employment status during the pandemic is more pronounced among women, delineating the unique challenges they face in navigating the evolving employment landscape in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Table 10. Regression Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on Employment Status:
Examining the Role of Gender, Age, Marital Status, Children, and Social Class

VARIABLES	(1) employed	(2) employed	(3) employed	(4) employed	(5) employed	(6) employed
HighGenEmpGap	0.0234*** (0.0059)	0.0243*** (0.0058)	0.0091* (0.0048)	0.0081* (0.0048)	0.0085* (0.0048)	0.0141*** (0.0048)
woman		-0.0665*** (0.0058)	-0.0672*** (0.0048)	-0.0988*** (0.0057)	-0.0731*** (0.0069)	-0.1008*** (0.0154)
age			0.0707*** (0.0009)	0.0654*** (0.0010)	0.0652*** (0.0010)	0.0656*** (0.0010)
age#age			-0.0008*** (0.0000)	-0.0008*** (0.0000)	-0.0008*** (0.0000)	-0.0008*** (0.0000)
single				-0.1713*** (0.0097)	-0.1549*** (0.0101)	-0.1442*** (0.0101)
divorced				-0.0553*** (0.0123)	-0.0457*** (0.0123)	-0.0371*** (0.0122)
woman#single				0.0934*** (0.0128)	0.0773*** (0.0130)	0.0723*** (0.0131)
woman#divorced				0.0767*** (0.0151)	0.0603*** (0.0152)	0.0652*** (0.0152)
childyes					0.0667*** (0.0073)	0.0667*** (0.0073)
woman#childyes					-0.0790*** (0.0103)	-0.0770*** (0.0103)
class						0.0383*** (0.0035)
woman#class						0.0109** (0.0052)
Constant	0.5544*** (0.0041)	0.5891*** (0.0051)	-0.6932*** (0.0205)	-0.5005*** (0.0233)	-0.5254*** (0.0235)	-0.6373*** (0.0259)
Observations	28,707	28,707	28,697	28,6	28,6	28,356

Table 11. Regression Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on Employment Status: Examining the Role of Gender, Age, Marital Status, Children, Class, Education and Country-Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	employed	employed	employed	employed	employed	employed
HighGenEmpGap	0.2045*** (0.0226)	0.2369*** (0.0227)	0.0793*** (0.0194)	0.0736*** (0.0194)	0.0738*** (0.0194)	0.0637*** (0.0193)
woman	-0.0626*** (0.0080)	-0.0591*** (0.0085)	-0.0575*** (0.0067)	-0.0883*** (0.0073)	-0.0529*** (0.0084)	-0.0753*** (0.0168)
age			0.0377*** (0.0011)	0.0362*** (0.0011)	0.0357*** (0.0011)	0.0363*** (0.0011)
age#age			-0.0005*** (0.0000)	-0.0005*** (0.0000)	-0.0005*** (0.0000)	-0.0005*** (0.0000)
single				-0.1152*** (0.0103)	-0.1085*** (0.0108)	-0.0961*** (0.0107)
divorced				-0.0495*** (0.0120)	-0.0397*** (0.0120)	-0.0311*** (0.0119)
woman#single				0.1112*** (0.0144)	0.0901*** (0.0147)	0.0871*** (0.0146)
woman#divorced				0.0838*** (0.0148)	0.0635*** (0.0150)	0.0652*** (0.0149)
childyes					0.0417*** (0.0072)	0.0414*** (0.0071)
woman#childyes					-0.1080*** (0.0105)	-0.1062*** (0.0104)
class						0.0425*** (0.0038)
woman#class						0.0087 (0.0053)
education		0.1513*** (0.0048)	0.0574*** (0.0041)	0.0565*** (0.0041)	0.0571*** (0.0041)	0.0358*** (0.0043)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included	included	included
Constant	0.4652*** (0.0161)	0.1528*** (0.0195)	0.0038 (0.0324)	0.0842** (0.0332)	0.0883*** (0.0330)	0.0256 (0.0342)
Observations	28,707	24,827	24,821	24,776	24,776	24,607

The regression analysis in Table 10 suggests various insights into the relationship between employment status and demographic and social variables. The high gender employment gap (HighGenEmpGap) shows a consistent positive association with the likelihood of being employed across all models, suggesting that in contexts with higher gender employment disparities, the probability of employment is more significant. However, this effect diminishes when controlling for other variables. Gender plays an important role, where being a woman is negatively associated with employment, indicating that women are less likely to be employed than men. Age positively affects employment, revealing that older individuals are more likely to be employed. Still, this effect tapers off at higher ages (as shown by the negative coefficient on the age-squared term), pointing to a non-linear relationship. Marital status also influences employment; being single or divorced/separated is generally linked to a lower likelihood of employment compared to their married counterparts. However, interaction terms show that the negative impact of being single or divorced/separated is less pronounced for women than for men. Surprisingly, having a child (childyes) is associated with a higher likelihood of employment, possibly due to a need or motivation to work when one has dependents. Yet, the negative interaction term between being a woman and having a child (woman#childyes) suggests that motherhood is less positively correlated with employment for women, perhaps reflecting challenges like childcare responsibilities. Social class emerges as a significant positive factor, with individuals from higher social classes more likely to be employed; this effect is even more pronounced for women, as indicated by the positive interaction term (woman#class).

After adding education and country-fixed variables, as depicted in Table 11, we reinterpreted the results, revealing nuanced insights into employment determinants. The high gender employment gap (HighGenEmpGap) continues to show a positive association with employment. However, the effect size diminishes slightly, indicating that while gender disparities in employment remain significant, their impact is moderated when educational attainment and country-specific factors are considered.

The country-fixed effects highlight how geographic context can influence employment outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The country-fixed effects further suggest that the impact of the pandemic on employment has been uneven across countries, influenced by various socioeconomic and policy factors. According to the country fixed variable, countries of Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Montenegro, and the Netherlands show positive coefficients.

The coefficient for women is consistently negative and significant across all models, indicating that women are less likely to be employed than men. This supports the notion that COVID-19 has had a differential impact on employment by gender. The age variable shows a positive coefficient, implying that employment likelihood increases with age. However, the negative coefficient for the age-squared term in all models indicates that this effect diminishes as age continues to increase, showing a nonlinear relationship.

Single status is negatively correlated with employment in all models, suggesting that single individuals may be less likely to be employed. The negative impact is smaller in models. Divorced status also has a negative coefficient across all models, but this negative impact lessens in the latter models. The positive

coefficients for the interaction terms “woman#single” and “woman#divorced” indicate that the negative employment effects of being single or divorced are less for women compared to men. The positive and significant coefficients for education across all models. A positive coefficient for social class implies that individuals from higher social classes are more likely to be employed. This is consistently observed across all models suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with a higher likelihood of employment, aligning with the general expectation that education improves job prospects. The positive and significant coefficients for education across all models suggest that higher educational attainment is associated with a higher likelihood of employment, aligning with the general expectation that education improves job prospects.

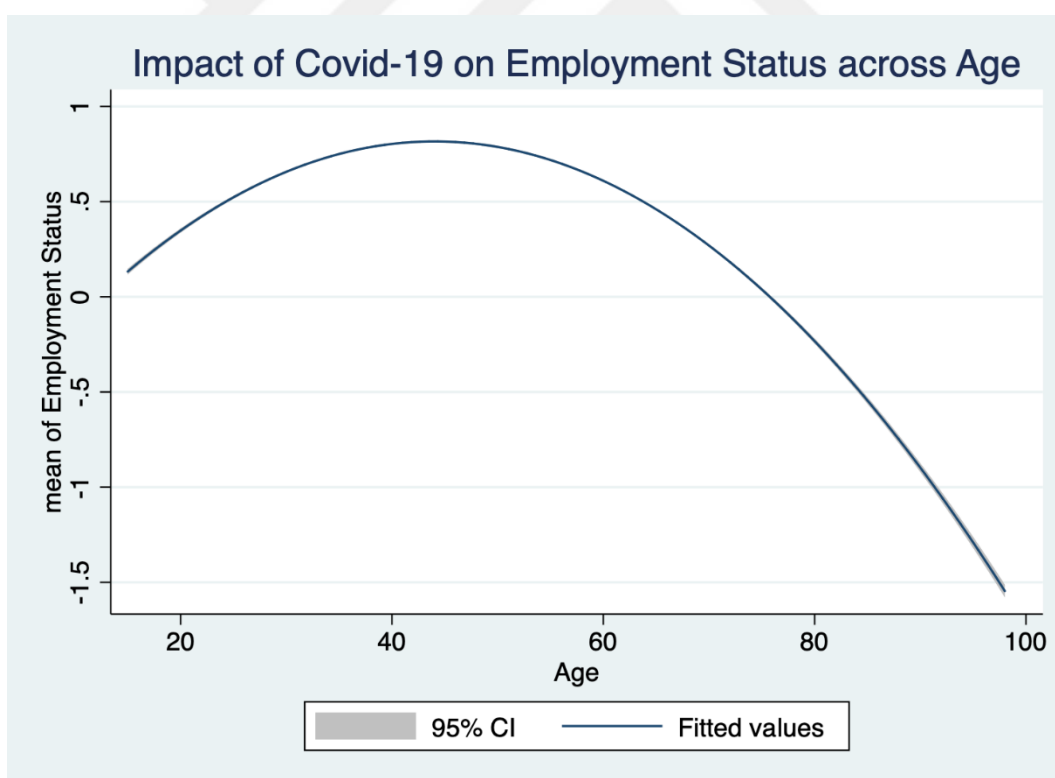


Figure 10. Two-way graph of employment and age⁷

⁷ Employed (employment status), and age variables are used for this graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

Figure 10 provides a comprehensive visualization of the impact of COVID-19 on employment status across varying age groups, with ages ranging from 20 to 100 years. Within this context, "employed" is defined as those who have a job, denoted by the value 1, and those without a job are represented by the value 0. A precise observation from the graph indicates that individuals in their 20s progressing to their early 40s experienced a higher rate of employment during the COVID-19 period, with employment status gradually increasing from age 20 and reaching a peak around the mid-40s. However, as individuals transition from their late 40s to their 60s, there is a noticeable decline in employment. This downward trend could be attributed to voluntary retirement, health-related concerns associated with the pandemic, or job reductions. More starkly, individuals aged 60 and beyond faced a dramatic drop in employment, with rates nearing zero by age 80. This decline is likely due to standard retirement ages, increasing health vulnerabilities, or a potential hesitation by employers to hire senior individuals during such unprecedented times.

Furthermore, the 95% confidence interval, represented by the shaded region, adds another layer of understanding. While it indicates a range within which the actual employment status likely falls, it also shows increasing variability in employment predictions for the older age bracket, suggesting a higher degree of uncertainty for these age groups.

Following the discussion on age-related employment patterns, it becomes imperative to dissect further how self-perceived social class has shaped employment outcomes amidst the COVID-19 era. The subsequent visualization illustrates this relationship, segmenting the data across five distinct social class categories.

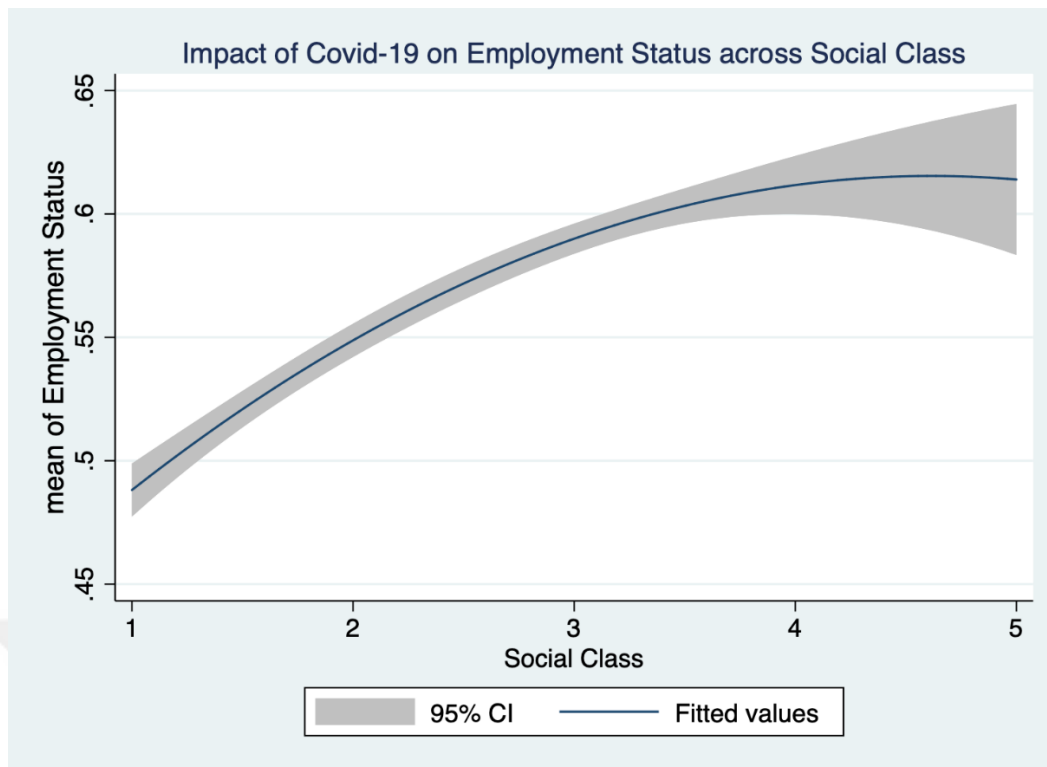


Figure 11. Two-way graph of employment and social class⁸

Figure 11 provides a visual representation of the influence of COVID-19 on employment status across different social classes. On the x-axis, we see a categorization from working class to high class, segmented into five distinct groups: 1) working class, 2) low middle class, 3) middle class, 4) high middle class, and 5) high class. The y-axis represents the employment status, where 0 signifies 'not employed' and one denotes 'employed.'

The curve shows a discernible upward trend in employment status as we move from the working class towards the high class. This suggests that individuals in the high class were least affected in employment due to COVID-19, while those in the working class faced the most employment challenges.

⁸ Employment (employment status), and class (social class) variables are used for this graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

The shaded area, representing the 95% confidence interval (CI), indicates the potential variability or uncertainty surrounding these fitted values. The narrower this interval, the more confident we can be about the presented data.

In essence, the aftermath of COVID-19 seems to have exacerbated employment disparities across social classes, with the working class bearing the brunt of its economic impact. In contrast, the high class appeared relatively insulated.

Hypothesis 5

Building upon the insights extracted from the literature review, an expectation has emerged, suggesting that countries with high gender employment gaps could potentially experience more prominent economic repercussions from COVID-19 than countries with low gender employment gaps. Considering this premise, the hypothesis aims to ascertain whether countries with higher employment gaps exhibit an elevated financial dependency compared to those with lower employment gaps.

We employed the variable denoting countries' employment gap to examine this hypothesis and investigated its potential relationship with financial reliance, as depicted in Figure 12.

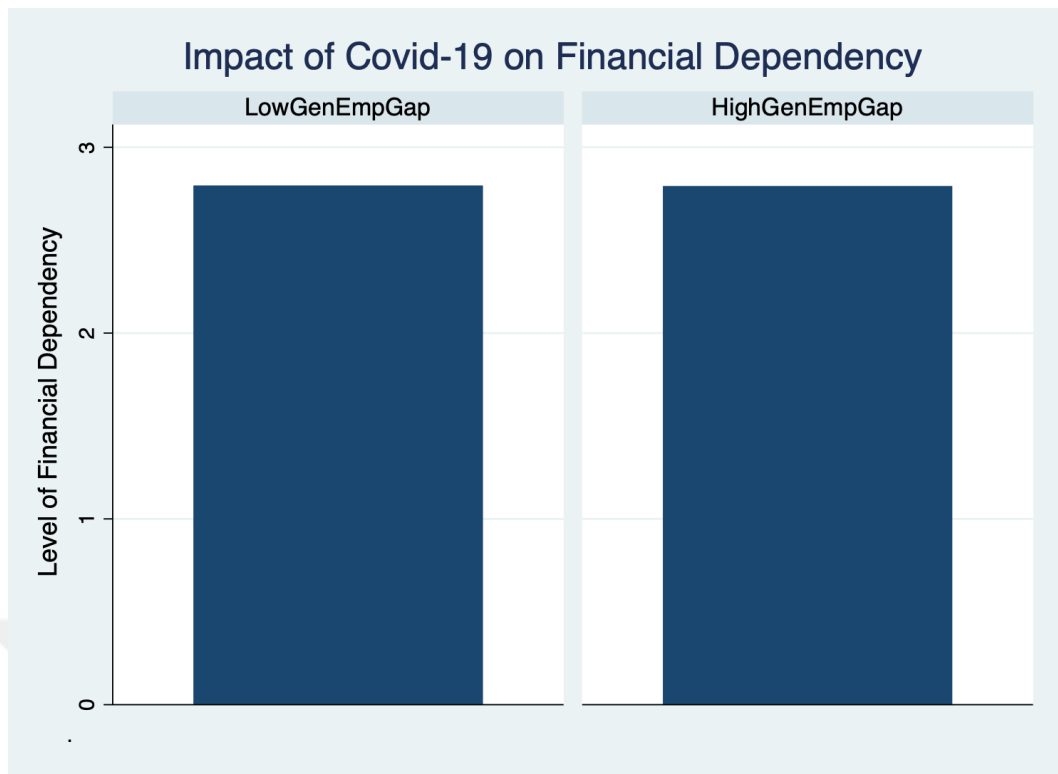


Figure 12. Assessing impact of COVID-19 on financial dependence⁹

The t-test analysis was conducted to investigate whether countries with higher employment gaps demonstrate a higher level of financial dependency than those with lower employment gaps. The calculated difference in means was negligible (0.3132), and the associated t-value was 0.3132. However, the result did not reach statistical significance ($p = 0.3771$), suggesting that, based on the collected data, there is insufficient evidence to support the hypothesis that countries with higher employment gaps exhibit a significantly elevated degree of financial dependency compared to those with lower employment gaps.

⁹ Findep (financial dependency), and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

Hypothesis 6

In alignment with the literature review, an expectation has been outlined suggesting that certain disadvantaged groups may experience more pronounced economic impacts from COVID-19 than others. Within this context, the hypothesis explores whether women affiliated with an ethnic group exhibit more financial dependency than their counterparts. To investigate this hypothesis, we employed the variable indicating belonging to an ethnic group and analyzed its relationship with financial dependency. In Figure 13, the primary objective of this approach was to ascertain any potential associations between these variables.

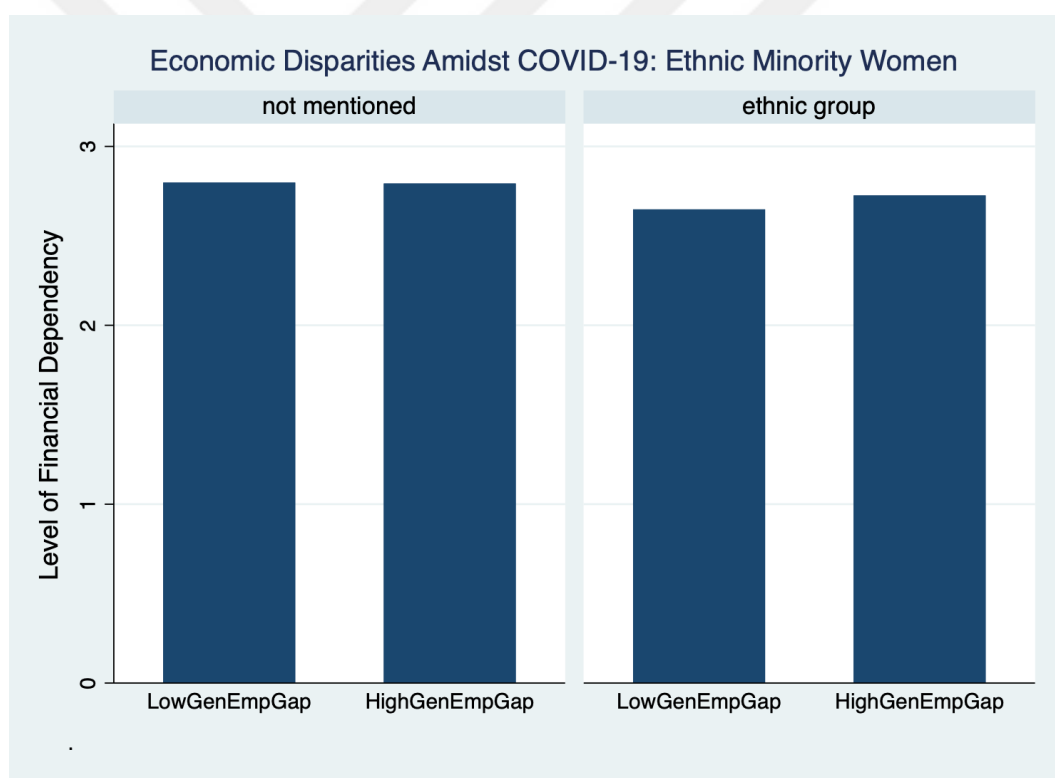


Figure 13. Exploring economic disparities of COVID-19 on ethnic minority women¹⁰

The t-test analyses examining financial dependency (findep) among women during the COVID-19 era in countries with different employment gaps (country_gr) and

¹⁰ Findep (financial dependency), ethnicity, and country_gr variables are used for this graph

ethnic identity (ethnicity) yielded insightful findings. In countries with a low employment gap, a statistically significant difference emerged, indicating that women in ethnic groups exhibited higher financial dependency than those not in ethnic groups. The calculated t-value of 3.826 and the associated p-value of 0.0001 provide robust evidence supporting this difference. Conversely, in countries with a high employment gap, the observed difference lacked statistical significance ($p = 0.0617$), implying a more nuanced relationship between financial dependency and ethnic identity in these contexts. Overall, the comprehensive analysis across all countries affirmed a significant difference, with women in ethnic groups showcasing higher financial dependency ($p = 0.0002$). These results highlight the intricate interplay of ethnic identity and employment gap in shaping the economic dynamics of women during the COVID-19 era.,

Hypothesis 7

Following the literature review, an anticipation has been identified indicating that specific migrant groups might undergo more noticeable economic consequences due to COVID-19 than others. Considering this, the hypothesis seeks to determine whether women linked with a migrant group demonstrate a heightened level of financial reliance compared to their counterparts. To probe this hypothesis, we utilized the variable signifying affiliation with a migrant group and scrutinized its correlation with financial dependency in Figure 14. The primary intent of this methodology was to explore any conceivable connections between these variables.

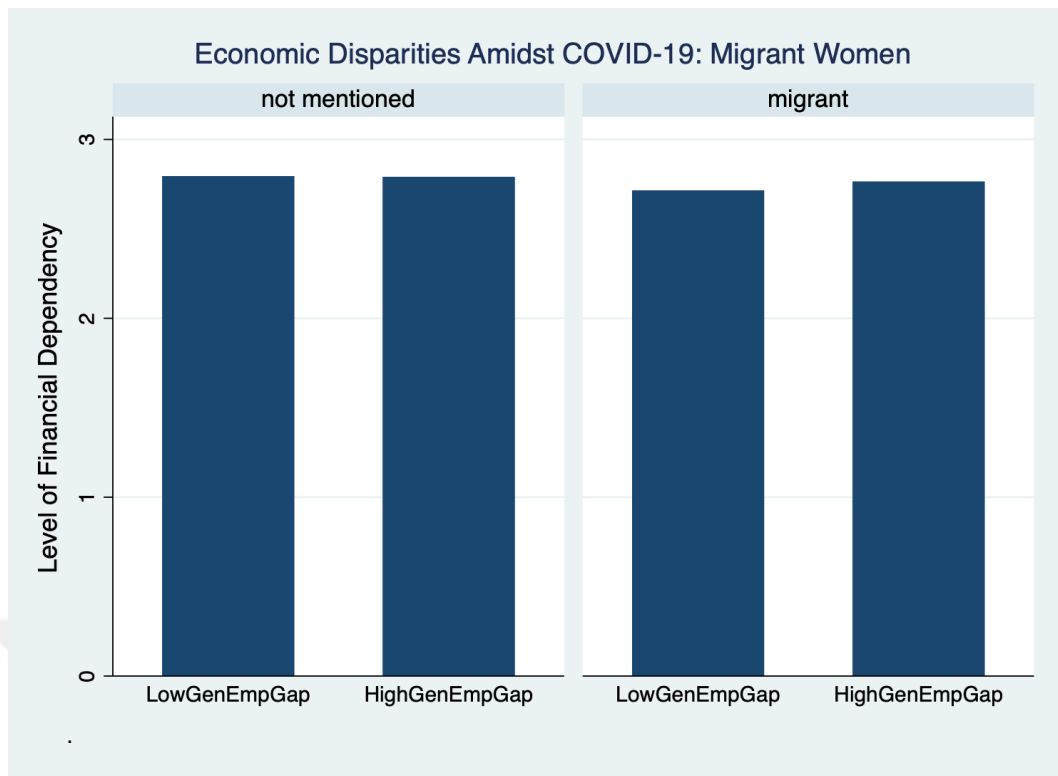


Figure 14. Exploring economic disparities of COVID-19 on migrant women¹¹

The t-test analyses were conducted to explore whether women associated with a migrant group exhibit increased financial dependence compared to their counterparts in different employment gap contexts. For women in countries with a low employment gap, the t-test result yielded a slight difference in means, with a t-value of 1.3267. However, the p-value 0.0923 did not reach statistical significance at a 10% threshold, suggesting limited evidence to support the hypothesis that women linked with a migrant group in countries with a low employment gap demonstrate a significantly heightened level of financial reliance. Similarly, in countries with a high employment gap, the t-test produced a minor mean difference with a t-value of 0.4013. The associated p-value of 0.3441 did not reach statistical significance at the 10% level, indicating insufficient evidence to support the hypothesis in countries

¹¹ Findep (financial dependency), migrant, and country_gr variables are used for this graph

with high employment gaps. Finally, the overall t-test (across all countries) showed a moderate mean difference with a t-value of 0.8149. However, the p-value of 0.2076 did not achieve statistical significance at the 10% level like the other cases. These results suggest that, based on the available data, there is limited support for the hypothesis that women associated with a migrant group have a significantly heightened level of financial reliance compared to their counterparts.

Hypothesis 8

Consistent with insights from the literature review, anticipation has arisen, suggesting that individuals within disabled groups could potentially experience more pronounced economic ramifications from COVID-19 than other population segments. Within this context, the hypothesis investigates whether women with a disabled group exhibit an elevated degree of financial dependency compared to their counterparts. To examine this hypothesis, we employed the variable that indicates affiliation with a disabled group and assessed its potential correlation with financial reliance, as depicted in Figure 15.

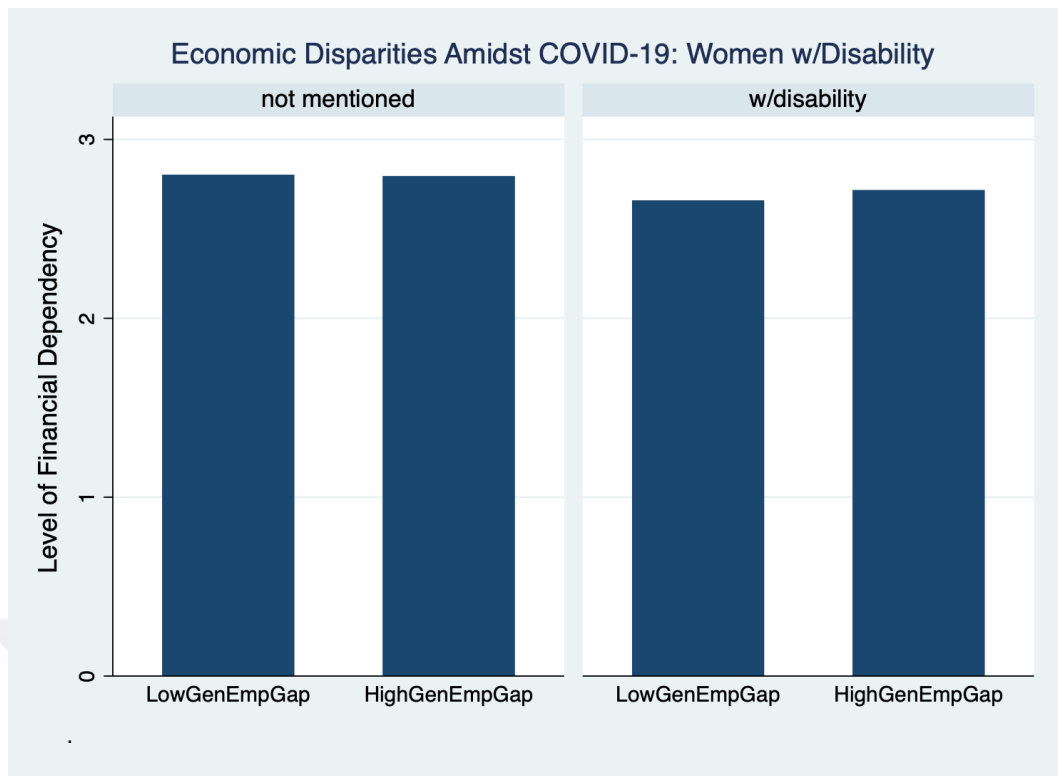


Figure 15. Exploring economic disparities of COVID-19 on women with disability¹²

The hypothesis aims to investigate whether women associated with a disability group exhibit a heightened level of financial dependence compared to their counterparts. The t-test analyses were performed based on different employment gap contexts and disability status. For women in countries with a low employment gap, the t-test showed a substantial difference in means with a t-value of 5.2483. The p-value of 0.0000 is less than the 1% significance level, providing strong evidence to support the hypothesis. This indicates that women linked with a disability group in low employment gap countries demonstrate a significantly heightened level of financial dependency.

Similarly, in countries with a high employment gap, the t-test produced a notable difference in means with a t-value of 2.4658. The p-value = 0.0068 is below

¹² Findep (financial dependency), disability, and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

the 1% significance level, indicating strong evidence to support the hypothesis in countries with high employment gaps. The overall t-test (across all countries) showed a substantial mean difference with a t-value of 5.1031. The associated p-value of 0.0000 is below the 1% significance level, providing strong evidence to support the hypothesis. These results suggest that, based on the available data, women associated with a disability group have a significantly heightened level of financial reliance compared to their counterparts, regardless of the employment gap context.

Hypothesis 9

In line with insights gleaned from the literature review, an expectation has surfaced, suggesting that individuals within LGBTQ groups might confront more pronounced economic consequences arising from COVID-19 than other population segments. In this context, the hypothesis examines whether women affiliated with an LGBTQ group exhibit a heightened level of financial dependency compared to their counterparts. To explore this hypothesis, we employed the variable signifying affiliation with an LGBTQ group and scrutinized its potential association with financial reliance, as illustrated in Figure 16. The primary objective of this analytical approach was to reveal potential relationships between these variables, thereby contributing to the broader investigation of their interconnection.

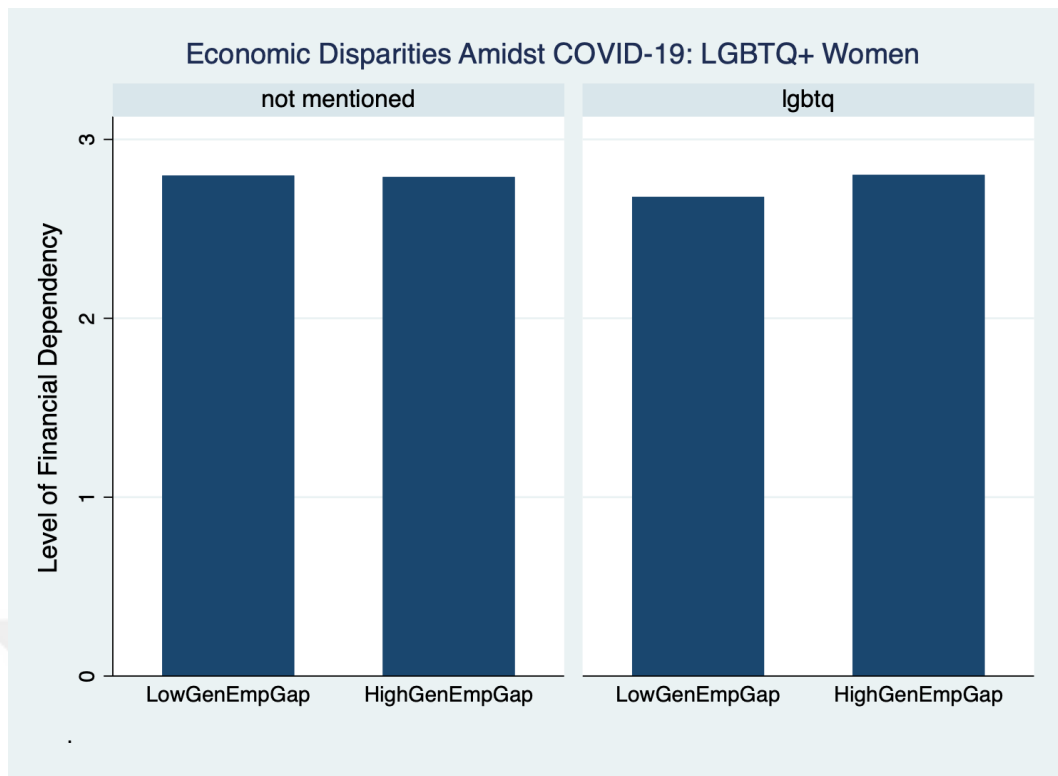


Figure 16. Exploring economic disparities of COVID-19 on LGBTQ women¹³

The hypothesis aims to investigate whether women associated with an LGBT group exhibit a heightened level of financial dependence compared to their counterparts. The t-test analyses were conducted based on different employment gap contexts (country_gr) and LGBTQ group status. For women in countries with a low employment gap, the t-test showed a substantial difference in means with a positive t-value of 3.4066. The p-value 0.0003 is below the 1% significance level, providing strong evidence to support the hypothesis. This indicates that women associated with an LGBT group in low employment gap countries demonstrate a significantly heightened level of financial reliance.

¹³ Findep (financial dependency), lgbtq, and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

In contrast, for women in countries with a high employment gap, the t-test produced a minor difference in means with a t-value of -0.3223. The p-value of 0.6264 is above the 10% significance level, suggesting some evidence to support the hypothesis in countries with high employment gaps. The overall t-test (across all countries) showed a moderate mean difference with a t-value of 2.1735. The associated p-value of 0.0149 is below the 5% significance level, providing evidence to support the hypothesis. These results suggest that, based on the available data, women associated with an LGBTQ group have a significantly heightened level of finances, regardless of the employment gap context.

Hypothesis 10

Drawing inspiration from the insights derived from our literature review, we continue to explore the multifaceted economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, extending our focus to the geographical dimension of women's living areas. Previously, our attention was directed toward LGBTQ affiliation, highlighting the potential for increased economic vulnerability. Building upon this foundation, we now turn our lens toward women residing in different locales, specifically comparing those in larger urban areas to those in smaller towns. Our hypothesis posits that women in more small towns may experience a heightened susceptibility to economic impact during the pandemic, particularly considering factors like the high employment gap. As we delve into this inquiry, Figure 17 becomes the visual cornerstone of our investigation, shedding light on women's financial dependency in small towns amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19.

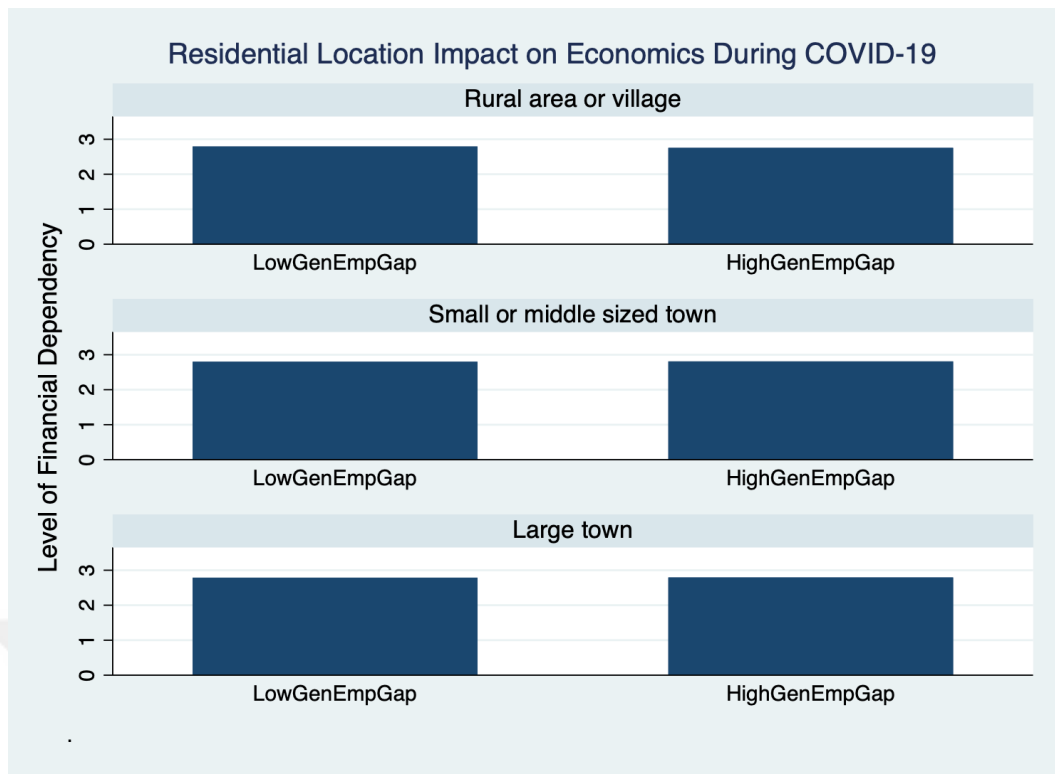


Figure 17. Exploring impact of residential location on economic consequences of COVID-19¹⁴

In pursuing a rigorous statistical understanding of our hypothesis, we employed a battery of three distinct t-tests, each targeting specific categories of women's living areas. These categories encompassed small towns, small-sized towns, medium-sized locales, and large town areas.

In the case of medium-sized and large town areas, our results indicate no significant differences in financial dependency among women residing in these localities. However, a pivotal distinction emerges when examining women's financial dependence inhabiting small towns, particularly in the context of high employment gap countries.

Specifically, our t-test analysis reveals a computed p-value of 0.0235, denoting a statistically significant divergence in financial dependency levels between

¹⁴ Findep (financial dependency), comm (community), and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

women living in small-sized town areas within high employment gap countries compared to their counterparts in low employment gap countries. This outcome attests to the substantial statistical significance of the observed disparity, as confirmed at a confidence level of 5%. Furthermore, it is worth noting that women residing in countries with low employment gaps in small-sized towns exhibit relatively lower levels of financial dependency when contrasted with their counterparts in countries with high employment gaps. These empirical findings significantly contribute to our academic understanding of the economic dynamics affecting women in different geographical settings, thereby enriching the academic discourse within our thesis.

Table 12. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Financial Dependency, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep
HighGenEmpGap	-0.0031 (0.0100)	0.0076 (0.0100)	0.0077 (0.0100)	0.0077 (0.0100)	0.0075 (0.0100)	0.0075 (0.0100)	0.0068 (0.0100)
age		-0.0050*** (0.0019)	-0.0053*** (0.0019)	-0.0053*** (0.0019)	-0.0048** (0.0019)	-0.0046** (0.0019)	-0.0047** (0.0019)
age#age		0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)
ethnicity			-0.0806** (0.0359)	-0.0807** (0.0361)	-0.0740** (0.0361)	-0.0746** (0.0361)	-0.0745** (0.0361)
migrant				0.0016 (0.0653)	0.0105 (0.0653)	0.0093 (0.0654)	0.0089 (0.0654)
disability					-0.1249*** (0.0233)	-0.1259*** (0.0233)	-0.1255*** (0.0233)
lgbtq						0.0188 (0.0308)	0.0187 (0.0308)
comm_midsize							0.0262** (0.0126)
comm_large							0.0113 (0.0128)
Constant	2.7937*** (0.0066)	2.7839*** (0.0431)	2.7932*** (0.0433)	2.7931*** (0.0432)	2.7885*** (0.0432)	2.7825*** (0.0441)	2.7691*** (0.0449)
Observations	24,405	24,405	24,405	24,405	24,405	24,405	24,405

Table 13. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Financial Dependency, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size Including Education & Country-Fixed Effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep	FinDep
HighGenEmpGap	-0.1793*** (0.0325)	-0.1640*** (0.0323)	-0.2011*** (0.0328)	-0.2016*** (0.0328)	-0.2063*** (0.0328)	-0.2061*** (0.0328)	-0.2142*** (0.0329)
age		-0.0029 (0.0019)	0.0002 (0.0024)	0.0001 (0.0024)	0.0009 (0.0024)	0.0010 (0.0024)	0.0010 (0.0024)
age#age		0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0000* (0.0000)	0.0000* (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)
education			0.0099 (0.0090)	0.0097 (0.0090)	0.0069 (0.0090)	0.0069 (0.0090)	0.0050 (0.0090)
ethnicity			-0.0960** (0.0410)	-0.0936** (0.0412)	-0.0861** (0.0411)	-0.0863** (0.0412)	-0.0850** (0.0411)
migrant				-0.0506 (0.0757)	-0.0420 (0.0755)	-0.0424 (0.0755)	-0.0429 (0.0755)
disability					-0.1518*** (0.0246)	-0.1521*** (0.0246)	-0.1514*** (0.0246)
lgbtq						0.0091 (0.0379)	0.0065 (0.0379)
comm_midsize							0.0385*** (0.0133)
comm_large							0.0435*** (0.0140)
country fixed effetes	included	included	included	included	included	included	included
Constant	2.8786*** (0.0208)	2.8297*** (0.0477)	2.7627*** (0.0660)	2.7663*** (0.0658)	2.7634*** (0.0658)	2.7610*** (0.0664)	2.7414*** (0.0667)
Observations	24,405	24,405	20,980	20,980	20,980	20,980	20,980

We conducted a comprehensive regression analysis to elucidate the relationships between the variables outlined in Hypotheses 5 through 10 while controlling for potential confounding effects. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 12, which offers a detailed examination of the associations between the variables under consideration. This statistical approach allows us to delve into the nuances of these relationships, shedding light on the extent and significance of each variable's impact on the outcomes.

We explored this in our study while considering financial dependency as a controlled factor. This analytical framework enhances our ability to discern the intricate interplay between the variables outlined in hypotheses 5 to 10 and their collective influence on the observed outcomes while ensuring that the potential impact of financial dependency is adequately accounted for.

To begin with, the variable country groups showcase coefficients close to zero across all models, indicating its minimal impact on financial dependency. Meanwhile, age presents a compelling case: it consistently correlates negatively with financial dependency. This suggests that individuals will likely be less financially dependent as they age. However, an interesting twist is introduced with the age-squared interaction term, which has a positive coefficient. This hints at a more complex, non-linear relationship between age and financial dependency, suggesting that specific age brackets may experience increased dependence due to retirement or health issues.

The variable ethnicity emerges with a consistent negative relationship, indicating that individuals from specific ethnic backgrounds might exhibit lower financial dependency. The narrative for the migrant variable remains somewhat ambiguous, as its coefficients are close to zero, implying a negligible impact on

financial dependency. Lastly, disability shows a pronounced negative relationship in the latter models, suggesting that people with disabilities might experience increased financial dependency. In summary, while age, ethnicity, and disability are significant predictors, other variables like country grouping and migrant status influence financial dependency less.

After adding education and country fixed effects variables, as depicted in Table 13, we reinterpreted the results to better understand financial dependency during the COVID-19 pandemic, as indicated by the *findep* (financial dependency) variable. The high gender employment gap (*HighGenEmpGap*) is negatively associated with financial dependency across all models, suggesting that individuals in areas with higher gender employment disparities reported increased financial dependence. The impact of country-group differences is also negative and significant, reflecting variations in financial dependency across different national contexts, even when controlling for fixed effects at the country level. Age does not play an essential role in determining financial dependency in this context, as its coefficients are not consistently effective, and the curvilinear relationship suggested by the *age-squared* term lacks significance in most models. The coefficient for education is small and not significant in any of the models, suggesting that the level of education does not have a strong impact on financial dependency among the women in this sample. The significant positive coefficients for community size variables indicate that women in mid-sized and large communities are more likely to experience financial dependency.

This could reflect the economic impact of COVID-19, which may be more pronounced in larger, possibly more interconnected and service-oriented communities.

Regarding the country fixed variable, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Switzerland, and Cyprus countries show positive coefficients. In contrast, migrant status does not exhibit a significant effect. Disability status has a robust negative effect, indicating that individuals with disabilities have experienced increased financial dependency. The lack of significant findings for the LGBTQ variable suggests that sexual orientation and gender identity did not distinctly affect financial dependency in the pandemic context within this sample. The significance of community size for women in the final two models indicates that the financial dependency experience may vary with community context, particularly for larger communities. The R-squared values, while modest, improve with the inclusion of additional variables, suggesting a more complete model with the consideration.

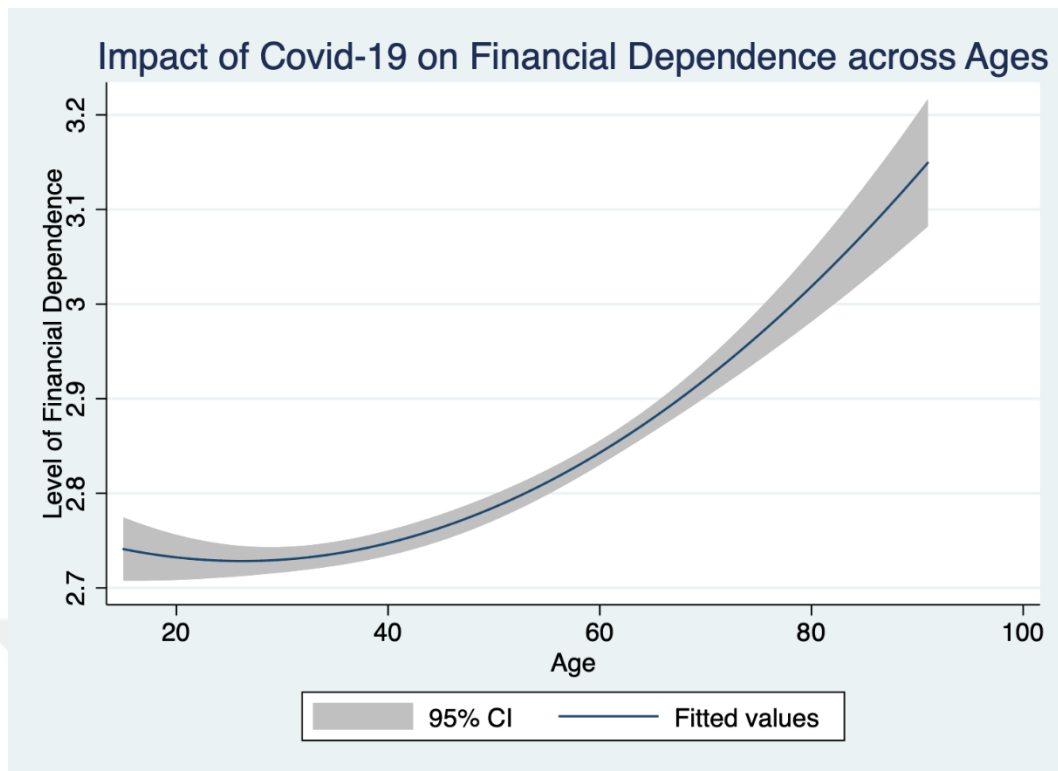


Figure 18. Two-way graph of financial dependence and age¹⁵

Following our examination of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, it is crucial to analyze its effects further through the lens of age, especially among women. Figure 18 presents the financial dependency trajectory spanning different age groups, ranging from early adulthood to the advanced years.

The graph presented depicts the relationship between age and financial dependency among women in the context of the impact of COVID-19. On the y-axis, we see the financial dependency levels, where 1 represents "much more dependent," and 5 indicates "much less dependent." The x-axis showcases the age of the women.

¹⁵ Findep (financial dependency), and age variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

From the graph, it is evident that as the age of the women increases, there is a clear trend towards them being "somewhat less dependent" financially. The curve starts with younger women, around 20, being close to "no change" in their financial dependency. As age progresses, by the time women reach around 100 years of age, the average financial dependency score trends closer to "somewhat less dependent." The 95% confidence interval (CI) depicted by the shaded region shows the range within which we can be 95% confident that the true value lies, and it widens as age increases, suggesting increasing variability in financial dependency among older women.

In interpreting this, considering the COVID-19 pandemic, it can be inferred that younger women, possibly due to challenges faced during the pandemic, did not see a significant shift in their financial dependency. However, older women have tended to be less financially dependent as they age. This could be attributed to retirement savings, pensions, or other financial planning measures that become more significant with age, especially during challenging economic times like those presented by the pandemic.

Hypothesis 11

According to insights derived from our extensive literature review, a notable expectation has emerged, suggesting that the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic may disproportionately affect specific population segments. In the context of our research, we have formulated a hypothesis to investigate whether women residing in regions characterized by varying employment gap levels exhibit divergent perspectives on the pandemic's impact, particularly concerning their work-life balance. To rigorously examine this hypothesis, we leveraged the variable

associated with the employment gap. We meticulously examined its potential correlation with attitudes toward the pandemic's influence on work-life balance, as shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19 visually represents our findings, indicating that women residing in countries with high employment gaps are more likely to agree that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted their work-life balance. Conversely, women living in low employment gap countries are more inclined to dissent from the notion that the pandemic has negatively affected their work-life balance. This striking disparity underscores the critical role of employment gap levels in shaping individuals' perceptions of the pandemic's repercussions.

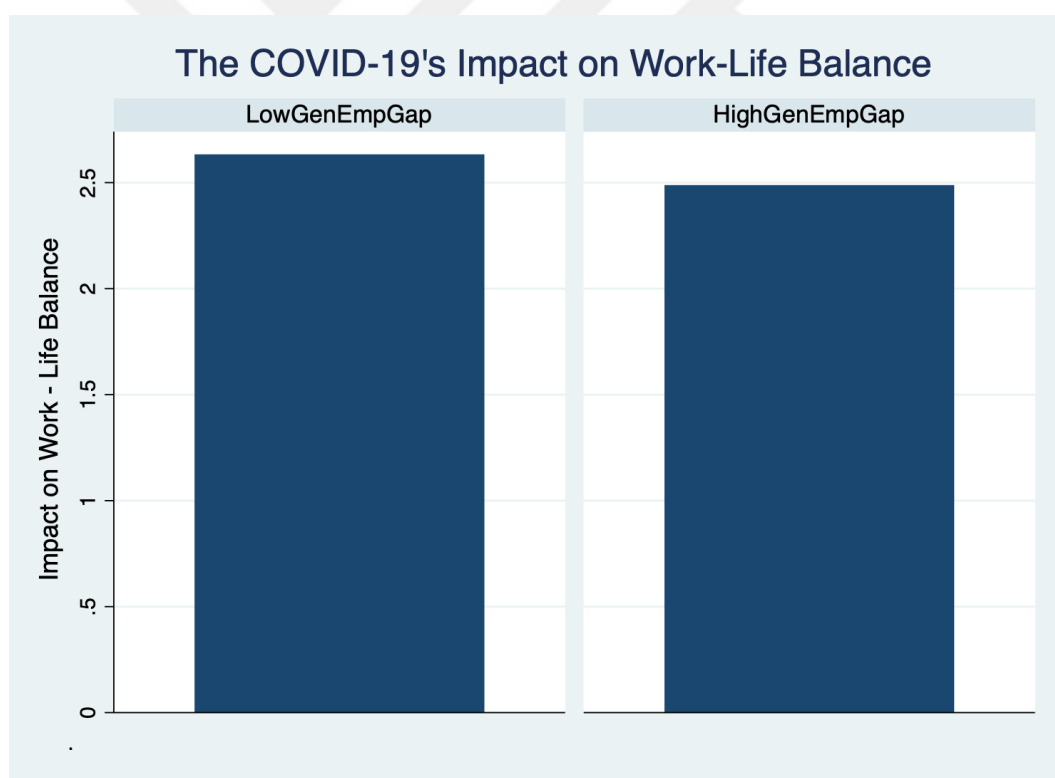


Figure 19. Exploring COVID-19's influence on work-life balance¹⁶

¹⁶ Worklife (work-life balance), and country_gr variables are used for this graph

The t-test results for "worklife" by country groups indicate a significant difference. The positive t-value of 8.2937 and the associated p-value of 0.0000 suggest a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of "worklife" between the two country groups. In this context, it implies that women in regions characterized by a low employment gap have significantly different perspectives on the pandemic's impact on work-life balance than those in regions with a high employment gap. It indicates that women in countries with high employment gaps are more affected by their work-life balance.



Table 14. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Work-Life Balance, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife
HighGenEmpGap	-0.1449*** (0.0175)	-0.1283*** (0.0174)	-0.1282*** (0.0174)	-0.1284*** (0.0174)	-0.1279*** (0.0174)	-0.1279*** (0.0174)	-0.1276*** (0.0174)
age		0.0168*** (0.0040)	0.0163*** (0.0040)	0.0161*** (0.0040)	0.0162*** (0.0040)	0.0162*** (0.0041)	0.0159*** (0.0041)
age#age		-0.0001* (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0000)
ethnicity			-0.1254** (0.0530)	-0.1197** (0.0534)	-0.1148** (0.0534)	-0.1148** (0.0534)	-0.1183** (0.0534)
migrant				-0.1004 (0.0737)	-0.0930 (0.0737)	-0.0929 (0.0737)	-0.0961 (0.0737)
disability					-0.1065** (0.0457)	-0.1064** (0.0458)	-0.1092** (0.0458)
lgbtq						-0.0013 (0.0452)	-0.0002 (0.0451)
comm_midsize							-0.0492** (0.0227)
comm_large							-0.0750*** (0.0229)
Constant	2.6332*** (0.0123)	2.0930*** (0.0829)	2.1086*** (0.0830)	2.1147*** (0.0832)	2.1163*** (0.0832)	2.1167*** (0.0845)	2.1679*** (0.0859)
Observations	14,264	14,264	14,264	14,264	14,264	14,264	14,264

Table 15. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Work-Life Balance, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size including Education & Country-Fixed Effects

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife	worklife
HighGenEmpGap	-0.1449*** (0.0175)	-0.1807*** (0.0634)	-0.1984*** (0.0654)	-0.1993*** (0.0654)	-0.2040*** (0.0655)	-0.2042*** (0.0655)	-0.1999*** (0.0656)
age		0.0197*** (0.0040)	0.0185*** (0.0047)	0.0183*** (0.0047)	0.0185*** (0.0047)	0.0184*** (0.0047)	0.0184*** (0.0047)
age#age		-0.0001*** (0.0000)	-0.0001** (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0001)
education			-0.0235 (0.0148)	-0.0244* (0.0148)	-0.0262* (0.0148)	-0.0262* (0.0148)	-0.0252* (0.0149)
ethnicity			-0.1409** (0.0572)	-0.1364** (0.0575)	-0.1305** (0.0576)	-0.1302** (0.0577)	-0.1314** (0.0577)
migrant				-0.0876 (0.0805)	-0.0787 (0.0806)	-0.0785 (0.0806)	-0.0778 (0.0806)
disability					-0.1384*** (0.0488)	-0.1381*** (0.0489)	-0.1387*** (0.0489)
lgbtq						-0.0092 (0.0508)	-0.0084 (0.0507)
comm_midsized							-0.0338 (0.0241)
comm_large							-0.0260 (0.0249)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included	included	included	included
Constant	2.6332*** (0.0123)	2.1979*** (0.0934)	2.3142*** (0.1133)	2.3224*** (0.1137)	2.3284*** (0.1137)	2.3315*** (0.1150)	2.3481*** (0.1155)
Observations	14,264	14,264	12,686	12,686	12,686	12,686	12,686

In this detailed regression analysis, Table 14 delineates the pivotal factors affecting individuals' perceptions of work-life balance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each variable within the table titled "Factors affecting work life" is meticulously examined for its influence. A notable and consistent negative relationship with "work-life" is identified with the HighGenEmpGap variable across all models, indicating that regions with more significant gender employment gaps may correlate with poorer perceptions of work-life balance. In contrast, age presents a positive correlation, suggesting that increasing age may align with improved perceptions of work-life balance. However, this positive trend is nuanced by the age-squared term, which has a subtle yet consistently negative effect, indicating a diminishing return on work-life satisfaction as age progresses. The ethnicity variable underlines a negative association with "work-life," signifying that certain ethnic backgrounds might grapple with specific challenges that adversely affect their work-life balance. The variables for migrants and individuals with disabilities similarly reveal negative correlations with work-life balance, pointing to potential difficulties faced by these groups in achieving a harmonious work-life balance. The LGBTQ variable initially thought to hold a slight negative influence, requires clarification as the analysis shows it lacks statistical significance, suggesting that its impact on work-life balance perceptions is unclear from this data. Community size, represented by the comm_midsize (mid-sized community) and comm_large (large size community) variables, shows a significant negative association in the later models, which was previously not fully captured. This suggests that individuals from midsize and large communities report worse work-life balance perceptions, contrary to the ambiguous associations initially suggested.

After adding education and country fixed effects variables, as depicted in Table 15, the results show that the negative association between HighGenEmpGap and work-life balance persists, indicating that broader gender employment gaps still correlate with a negative impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

The coefficient for education is negative in the models where it is significant, implying that higher educational attainment may correlate with a poorer work-life balance. This could reflect increased work pressures and responsibilities associated with higher educational qualifications.

The significant negative coefficient for ethnicity in all models indicates that belonging to certain ethnic groups is associated with a poorer work-life balance, potentially due to systemic inequalities that may have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The migrant variable is not significantly associated with work-life balance in any model, suggesting that within this sample, migrant status does not have a clear effect on the work-life balance of individuals. A significant negative coefficient for disability suggests that individuals with disabilities report a worse work-life balance. This finding is particularly relevant in the context of COVID-19, which may have introduced additional challenges for individuals with disabilities.

Regarding the country-fixed variable, positive coefficients in country-fixed effects denote countries where COVID-19 may have less negatively impacted the work-life balance. The countries of Belgium, Cyprus, and Finland show positive coefficients. Age continues to show a positive impact on work-life balance, while the adverse effects of ethnicity and disability remain consistent, underscoring the challenges faced by these groups.

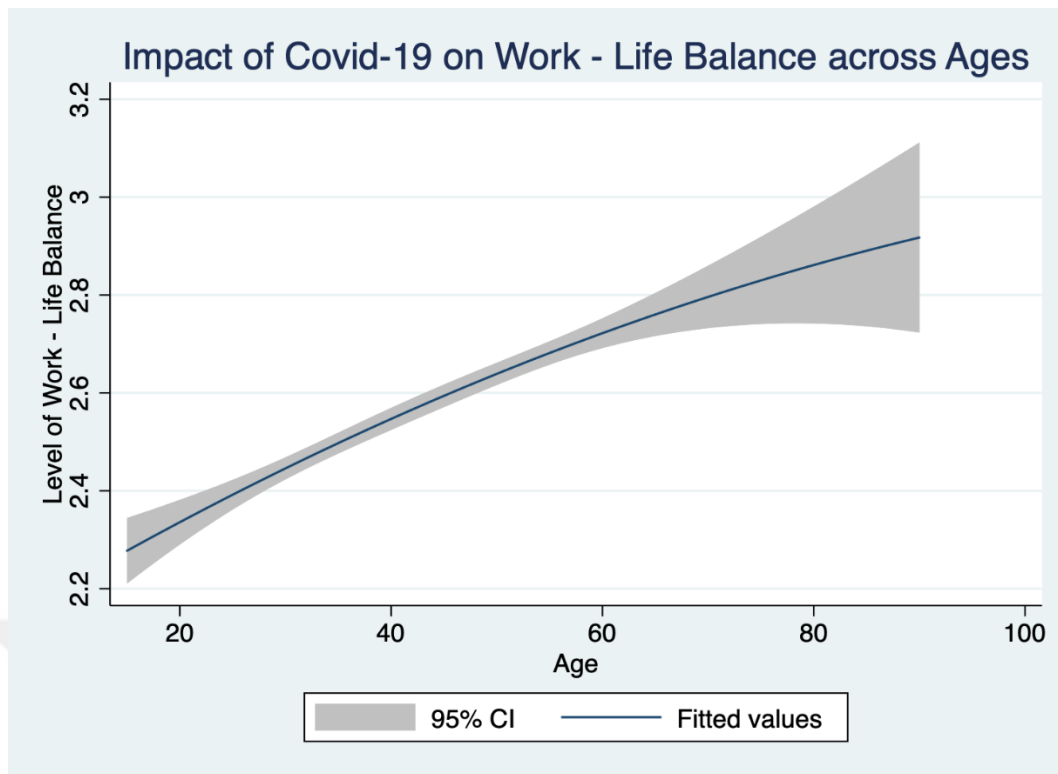


Figure 20. Two-way graph of work-life balance and age¹⁷

Figure 20 illustrates the relationship between women's age (from early twenties to nearly 100 years old) and their views on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their work-life balance. Younger women in their early twenties score slightly above 2.4, leaning towards "somewhat agreeing" about the negative effect of the pandemic on their work-life balance. This suggests that women at the beginning of their careers feel more of the pandemic's disruption. As age increases, the score gradually rises, indicating that older women tend to "somewhat disagree" with the statement about the pandemic negatively affecting their work-life balance. The time the age reaches around 100, the score is nearing 3. The widening 95% confidence interval with age shows that there is more variation in the views of older women

¹⁷ Worklife (work-life balance), and age variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

compared to younger ones. This suggests that as women age, their experiences related to work-life balance during the pandemic become more diverse. In summary, while younger women generally feel the pandemic has disrupted their work-life balance, older women's opinions vary more, slightly leaning towards disagreement with the statement.

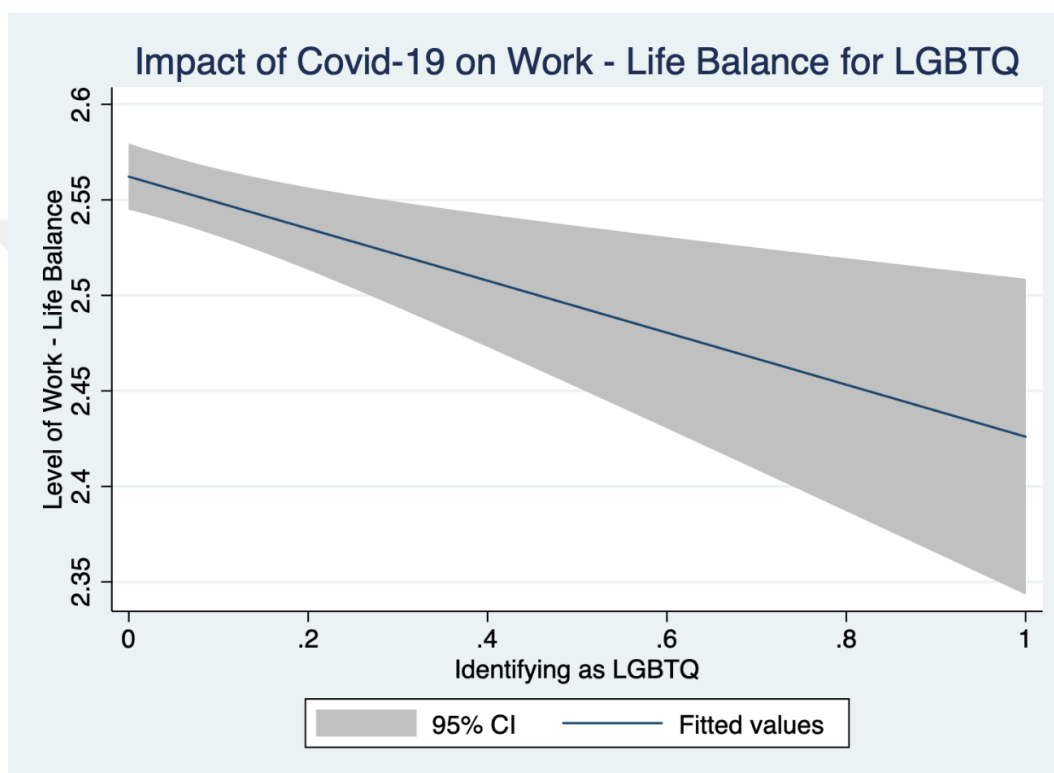


Figure 21. Two-way graph of work-life balance and LGBTQ¹⁸

Figure 21 offers a visual representation of the relationship between the identification as part of the LGBTQ community and perceptions of the pandemic's influence on work-life balance, particularly among women. The x-axis signifies the extent to which individuals identify with the LGBTQ community, with values closer to 1 representing higher identification, and the y-axis represents the sentiment

¹⁸ Worklife (work-life balance), and lgbtq variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

towards the statement "The pandemic has harmed my work-life balance," with lower values indicating more robust agreement.

From the graph, it can be discerned that as women's identification with the LGBTQ community increases, there is a trend toward somewhat agreeing that the pandemic has negatively affected their work-life balance. The shaded region around the line illustrates the 95% confidence interval, emphasizing the range within which we can be confident the actual population mean lies.

In essence, among the female participants of this study, those who more strongly identify as LGBTQ appear to be somewhat more inclined to perceive a negative impact of the pandemic on their work-life balance. However, the gradient of the relationship is gentle. This finding underlines the significance of examining specific subgroups when gauging the broader effects of global events, such as the pandemic, on work-life balance.

Hypothesis 12

In line with insights gleaned from our extensive literature review, we have uncovered a notable hypothesis about the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on women's positioning within the job market. As demonstrated in Figure 12, this hypothesis delves into the pandemic's differential impact on women's roles in the job market across regions characterized by varying employment gap levels. To comprehensively examine this hypothesis, we conducted meticulous, multifaceted analyses. Our central focus was on elucidating the potential associations between the pandemic and women's job market positions. Figure 22 visually represents our findings.

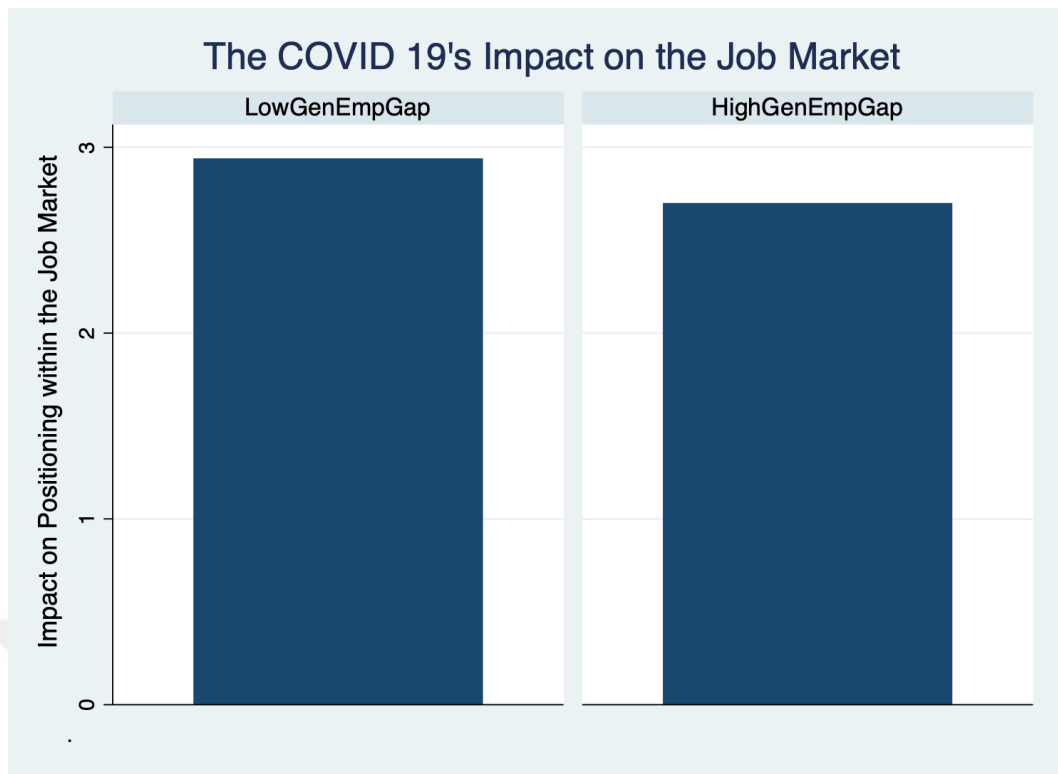


Figure 22. Exploring COVID-19's influence on job market¹⁹

Our rigorous t-test analysis has yielded a remarkably significant result, with a computed P-value of 0.000, demonstrating statistical significance at the 1% level. This compelling finding highlights a substantial disparity in the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's roles within the job market, particularly when comparing countries with high employment gaps to their low employment gap counterparts. Specifically, our analysis reveals that the pandemic has had a notably more pronounced impact on women's positions within the job market in countries with high employment gaps, starkly contrasting to women's experiences in regions with lower employment gap levels.

¹⁹ Jobmarket (positioning in job market), and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

Table 16. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Job Market, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket
HighGenEmpGap	-0.2402*** (0.0198)	-0.2327*** (0.0197)	-0.2327*** (0.0197)	-0.2327*** (0.0197)	-0.2312*** (0.0197)	-0.2310*** (0.0197)	-0.2307*** (0.0197)
age		0.0373*** (0.0046)	0.0362*** (0.0046)	0.0356*** (0.0046)	0.0357*** (0.0046)	0.0355*** (0.0046)	0.0354*** (0.0046)
age#age		-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)	-0.0003*** (0.0001)
ethnicity			-0.2937*** (0.0537)	-0.2803*** (0.0540)	-0.2671*** (0.0542)	-0.2667*** (0.0542)	-0.2678*** (0.0543)
migrant				-0.2678*** (0.0789)	-0.2508*** (0.0786)	-0.2495*** (0.0786)	-0.2500*** (0.0787)
disability					-0.2304*** (0.0479)	-0.2293*** (0.0480)	-0.2297*** (0.0480)
lgbtq						-0.0213 (0.0478)	-0.0217 (0.0478)
comm_midsized							-0.0294 (0.0256)
comm_large							-0.0210 (0.0258)
Constant	2.9396*** (0.0138)	2.0503*** (0.0930)	2.0902*** (0.0933)	2.1086*** (0.0935)	2.1115*** (0.0934)	2.1191*** (0.0953)	2.1385*** (0.0968)
Observations	12,592	12,592	12,592	12,592	12,592	12,592	12,592

Table 17. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Job Market, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size Including Education & Country-Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket	jobmarket
HighGenEmpGap	-0.2402*** (0.0198)	-0.1641** (0.0716)	-0.1664** (0.0735)	-0.1758** (0.0734)	-0.1691** (0.0735)	-0.1768** (0.0734)	-0.1783** (0.0735)
age		0.0435*** (0.0045)	0.0368*** (0.0053)	0.0366*** (0.0053)	0.0362*** (0.0053)	0.0357*** (0.0053)	0.0358*** (0.0053)
age#age		-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)	-0.0004*** (0.0001)
education			0.1005*** (0.0164)	0.0960*** (0.0164)	0.0982*** (0.0164)	0.0957*** (0.0164)	0.0950*** (0.0165)
ethnicity			-0.2637*** (0.0582)	-0.2407*** (0.0586)	-0.2545*** (0.0584)	-0.2390*** (0.0586)	-0.2384*** (0.0586)
migrant				-0.1952** (0.0913)	-0.2124** (0.0917)	-0.1929** (0.0913)	-0.1925** (0.0913)
disability				-0.2344*** (0.0519)		-0.2312*** (0.0520)	-0.2312*** (0.0520)
lgbtq						-0.0665 (0.0560)	-0.0672 (0.0560)
comm_midsized							0.0023 (0.0272)
comm_large							0.0107 (0.0280)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included	included	included	included
Constant	2.9396*** (0.0138)	1.9220*** (0.1055)	1.8502*** (0.1275)	1.8816*** (0.1280)	1.8731*** (0.1281)	1.9048*** (0.1296)	1.9022*** (0.1303)
Observations	12,592	12,592	11,171	11,171	11,171	11,171	11,171

As delineated in Table 16, our rigorous regression analysis probes into the factors shaping individuals' perceptions of the job market during the COVID-19 pandemic. The “Factors affecting job market” table presents a nuanced exploration of these influences, with "Job Market" as the dependent variable throughout various regression models. The HighGenEmpGap variable has a consistent negative association across all models, signaling that more significant gender employment gaps correlate with negative perceptions of the job market's state during the pandemic. Age presents a positive relationship with job market perceptions, suggesting that older individuals may have a more favorable view of the job market. However, the age-squared term reveals a diminishing positive impact as age increases, with this nuanced dynamic maintaining statistical significance across the board. Ethnicity exhibits a uniformly negative effect, indicating that individuals from ethnic minority groups perceive the job market more negatively, a significant trend in all models.

Contrary to the initial interpretation, the migrant status does not show a statistically significant relationship with job market perceptions, suggesting that the effect of being a migrant may not be as pronounced as suggested. Disability status is negatively correlated with job market perceptions, reflecting that individuals with disabilities face substantial challenges, a finding consistently significant across models. The LGBTQ status, while hinting at a slight negative impact, does not reach statistical significance, indicating a potentially weak or non-existent relationship with job market perceptions in this dataset. Lastly, community size, though included in the analysis, does not manifest a significant association with job market perceptions, suggesting its impact may be minimal or obscured by other factors in this study.

The analysis underscores the multifaceted nature of the job market influences. While age and gender employment gaps are significant determinants, the effects of ethnicity and disability are equally compelling.

After adding education and country-fixed effects variables, as shown in Table 17, we reinterpreted the results of the impact on the job market during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HighGenEmpGap's negative coefficient across all models suggests a more substantial perceived negative impact in areas with higher gender employment disparities.

The positive coefficients for age suggest that older individuals may have more favorable job market outcomes, which could be due to more experience or stability in employment. However, the negative coefficients for the age-squared term across all models imply that this positive trend diminishes with further aging, representing a non-linear relationship where job market outcomes may begin to decline after a certain age.

Education has positive and significant coefficients across all models, indicating that higher educational attainment correlates with better job market outcomes. This is a typical finding, as education often equips individuals with more skills and qualifications that are desirable in the job market.

Countries with substantial positive coefficients indicate a less negative or potentially positive impact of COVID-19 on the job market within these countries. The countries of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, and Montenegro show positive coefficients. Ethnicity maintains a meaningful negative relationship, highlighting that ethnic minorities have perceived a more negative impact. Disability status also indicates a negative association with job market perceptions, suggesting increased challenges for

individuals with disabilities during the pandemic—the country-fixed effects account for unobserved heterogeneity across countries, providing a more refined analysis. Notably, the number of observations decreases when additional variables are included, likely due to the listwise deletion of missing data. Overall, the model's explanatory power, as evidenced by the R-squared values, has slightly improved with the inclusion of these variables.

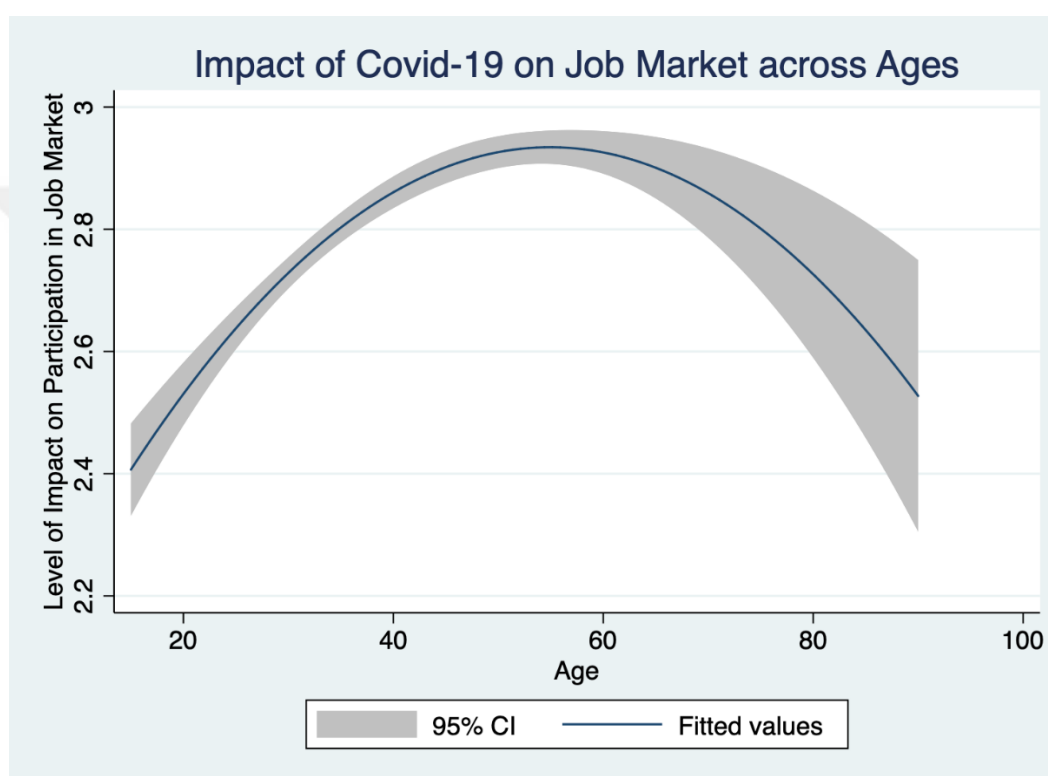


Figure 23. Two-way graph of impact on job market and age²⁰

Figure 23 illustrates the perceptions of women regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market based on age. Starting in their early 20s, young women seem to moderately agree with the pandemic's effect on the job market.

²⁰ Jobmarket (positioning in job market), and age variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

This perception intensifies, reaching a peak among women aged 40 to 60, suggesting a more substantial acknowledgment of the pandemic's impact. However, post-60, the recognition decreases, returning to a level like those in their early 20s by age 100. The graph implies varying perceptions of the pandemic's influence on employment opportunities across age groups.

Hypothesis 13

Considering our research findings, it is evident that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected women's income, potentially resulting in decreased earnings, especially in high employment gap countries in Figure 24. This observation underscores the profound economic impact of the pandemic, as women in regions characterized by more significant employment gaps.

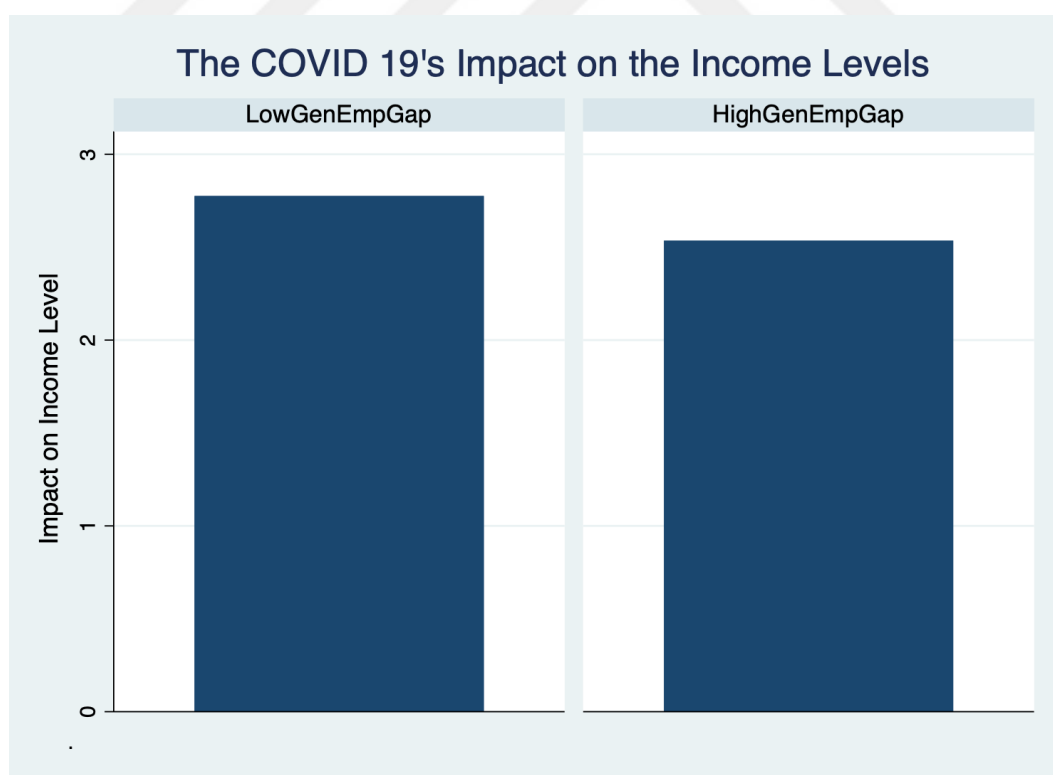


Figure 24. Exploring COVID-19's influence on income²¹

²¹ Impactincome (impact on income) and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

Our meticulous t-test analysis has unveiled a highly noteworthy result, with a computed P-value of 0.000, signifying statistical significance at the 1% level. This compelling discovery underscores a substantial disparity in the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's income, potentially resulting in reduced earnings. This divergence becomes particularly pronounced when comparing countries with high employment gaps to their low employment gap counterparts. In specific terms, our analysis reveals that the pandemic has negatively affected women's income in countries with high employment gaps, starkly contrasting the experiences of women residing in regions characterized by lower employment gap levels.

Table 18. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Income, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
VARIABLES	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income
HighGenEmpGap	-0.2404*** (0.0189)	-0.2316*** (0.0190)	-0.2315*** (0.0190)	-0.2316*** (0.0190)	-0.2306*** (0.0190)	-0.2306*** (0.0190)	-0.2306*** (0.0190)
age		0.0078* (0.0044)	0.0069 (0.0044)	0.0068 (0.0044)	0.0068 (0.0044)	0.0070 (0.0044)	0.0069 (0.0044)
age#age		-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)
ethnicity			-0.2473*** (0.0542)	-0.2417*** (0.0544)	-0.2318*** (0.0546)	-0.2321*** (0.0546)	-0.2324*** (0.0546)
migrant				-0.0964 (0.0788)	-0.0853 (0.0787)	-0.0862 (0.0788)	-0.0863 (0.0788)
disability					-0.1808*** (0.0477)	-0.1814*** (0.0477)	-0.1816*** (0.0478)
lgbtq						0.0120 (0.0475)	0.0120 (0.0475)
comm_midsized							-0.0047 (0.0248)
comm_large							-0.0060 (0.0248)
Constant	2.7756*** (0.0133)	2.5101*** (0.0898)	2.5406*** (0.0901)	2.5460*** (0.0901)	2.5489*** (0.0900)	2.5448*** (0.0917)	2.5491*** (0.0933)
Observations	13,853	13,853	13,853	13,853	13,853	13,853	13,853

Table 19. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Income, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size Including Education & Country-Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income	impact on income
HighGenEmpGap	-0.2775*** (0.0656)	-0.2825*** (0.0655)	-0.2822*** (0.0675)	-0.2832*** (0.0675)	-0.2909*** (0.0674)	-0.2916*** (0.0674)	-0.2983*** (0.0674)
age		0.0152*** (0.0043)	0.0118** (0.0049)	0.0116** (0.0049)	0.0118** (0.0049)	0.0113** (0.0050)	0.0115** (0.0050)
age#age		-0.0001** (0.0000)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
education			0.0886*** (0.0163)	0.0876*** (0.0164)	0.0856*** (0.0164)	0.0853*** (0.0164)	0.0824*** (0.0165)
ethnicity			-0.2254*** (0.0584)	-0.2210*** (0.0586)	-0.2094*** (0.0586)	-0.2078*** (0.0586)	-0.2057*** (0.0587)
migrant				-0.0853 (0.0869)	-0.0728 (0.0866)	-0.0700 (0.0867)	-0.0693 (0.0866)
disability					-0.2090*** (0.0513)	-0.2069*** (0.0513)	-0.2066*** (0.0513)
lgbtq						-0.0509 (0.0551)	-0.0532 (0.0551)
comm_midsized							0.0175 (0.0260)
comm_large							0.0476* (0.0266)
country fixed effects	included	included	included	included	included	included	included
Constant	2.8557*** (0.0467)	2.4605*** (0.0988)	2.3380*** (0.1204)	2.3461*** (0.1207)	2.3563*** (0.1206)	2.3729*** (0.1221)	2.3582*** (0.1229)
Observations	13,853	13,853	12,325	12,325	12,325	12,325	12,325

In our comprehensive regression analysis, Table 18, we explore the determinants influencing individuals' perceptions of income impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The regression models consistently show a significant negative association with the HighGenEmpGap variable, suggesting that greater gender employment gaps are perceived to correlate with more significant negative impacts on income. The age variable indicates a slight but statistically significant increase in negative income impact with rising age, although the effect is minimal. The squared age term does not display a consistent impact, signifying a possible leveling-off or non-linear relationship between age and income impact. Ethnicity emerges as a significant factor, with individuals from ethnic minorities experiencing a more substantial negative income impact consistently across all models. The migrant status does not show a statistically significant effect, implying no clear association with income impact within this dataset. Disability status is significantly related to a more negative income impact, underscoring the challenges faced by disabled individuals during the pandemic. The LGBTQ variable and community size factors (both midsize and large communities) do not demonstrate significant relationships with income impact.

After adding education and country fixed effects variables, as shown in Table 19, we have reinterpreted the results related to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on income. The HighGenEmpGap continues to show a significant negative correlation, indicating that a higher gender employment gap is perceived to exacerbate income negativity. Ethnicity remains an essential factor, with ethnic minorities consistently experiencing a more negative income impact. Introducing country-fixed effects provides a control for country-specific influences, refining the analysis. Age has a small positive coefficient, implying that income slightly increases with age, which

could reflect accumulating experience and earning potential. However, the age-squared term has a small negative coefficient, suggesting that the rate of income increase slows down as people get older, indicative of a non-linear relationship. The migrant status variable is not significantly associated with income in most models, indicating that being a migrant, per se, does not have a clear impact on income. Disability shows a consistently negative and significant association with income, suggesting that individuals with disabilities may be facing greater financial challenges, potentially exacerbated by the COVID-19 situation.

The variable of education within the regression models presents a uniformly positive relationship with income levels. Across all models, higher educational attainment is associated with increased income, a finding that is statistically significant and consistent. This relationship reinforces the conventional understanding that education serves as a vital asset in the labor market, potentially providing individuals with a wider range of employment opportunities, higher-paying positions, and the ability to adapt to economic changes, such as those imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the country fixed variable, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, and Iceland show positive coefficients. Overall, the analysis with added variables underscores the importance of education level and highlights the need for nuanced policy responses to address the diverse impacts of the pandemic on income.

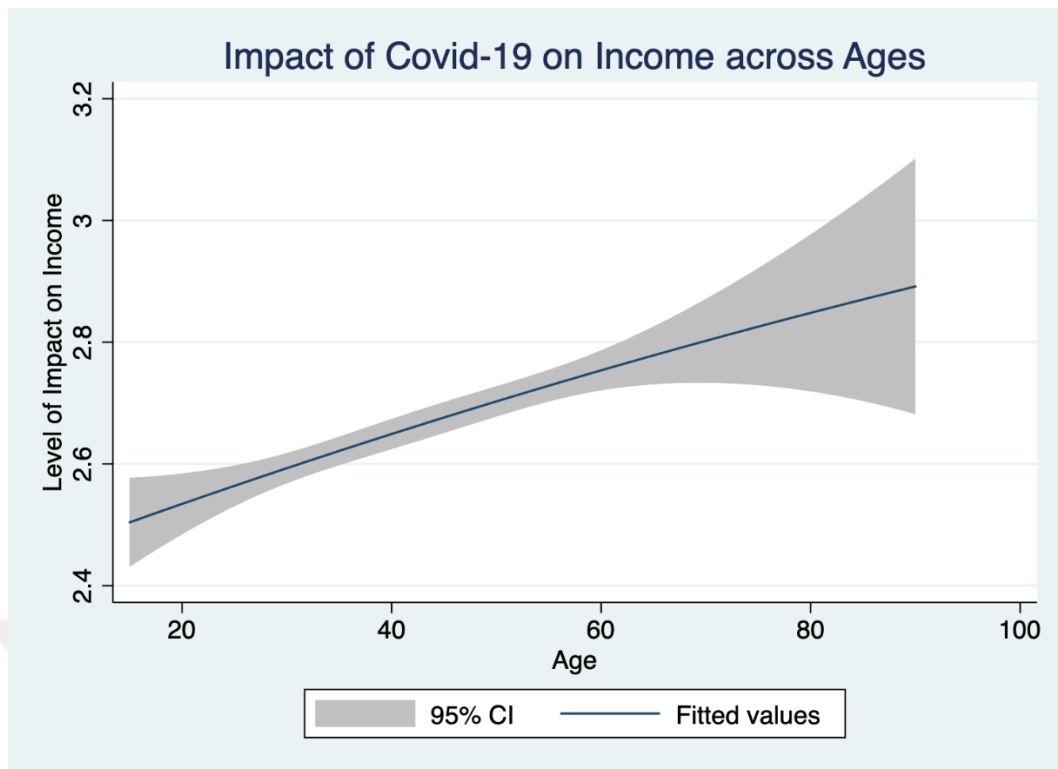


Figure 25. Two-way graph of impact on income and age²²

Figure 25 showcases the relationship between age and the perception of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on income among women. As age increases, the degree of agreement with the statement “The pandemic has negative impact on income” seems to decline. This implies that younger women, closer to age 20, are more likely to strongly agree with the statement, suggesting they feel a more pronounced negative effect on their income due to the pandemic. On the other hand, older women nearing the age of 100 seem less in agreement, hinting that they may not have experienced as severe of an income disruption or have other sources of financial stability. The shaded region represents the 95% confidence interval.

²² Impactinincome (impact on income), and age variables are used for this two-way graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

Hypothesis 14

In alignment with our hypothesis, the research illuminates a noteworthy trend: the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced women's paid work, which can be attributed to the surge in remote work. Our findings underscore the substantial impact on women's income, indicating a potential decline, particularly in countries with pronounced employment gaps in Figure 26. This discernment emphasizes the profound economic consequences of the pandemic, particularly in regions where women encounter heightened challenges in sustaining their earnings. These outcomes deepen our comprehension of the intricate ramifications of the pandemic, shedding light on the intersection of gender disparities and economic vulnerabilities.

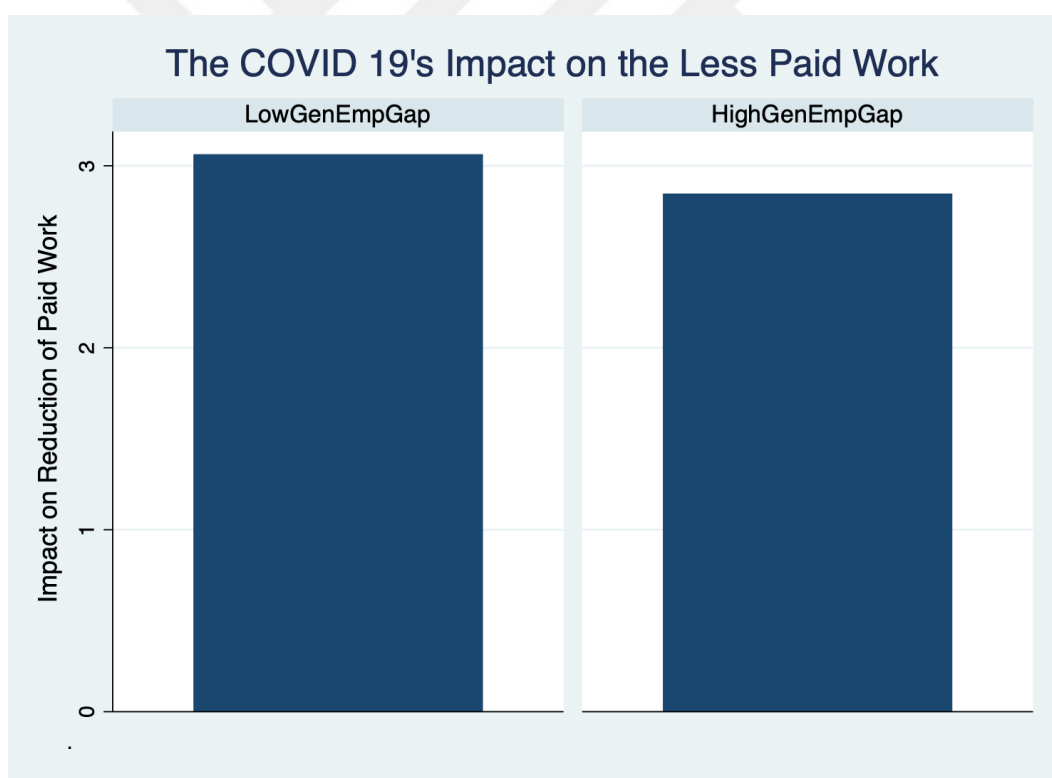


Figure 26. Exploring COVID-19's impact on less paid work²³

²³ Less_paid_work (less paid work), and country_gr variables are used for this graph.

Our comprehensive examination through a two-sample t-test has yielded a significant outcome, marked by an extremely low computed P-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance at the 1% level. This compelling finding accentuates a substantial discrepancy in the detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals' capacity to engage in paid work, explicitly impacting women's income. Our analysis underscores that the pandemic has adversely influenced women's paid work in countries characterized by higher employment gaps, revealing a stark contrast to the experiences of women in regions with lower employment gap levels.

Table 20. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Less Paid Work, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	less paid work	less paid work	less paid work	less paid work	less paid work	less paid work	less paid work
HighGenEmpGap	-0.2161*** (0.0190)	-0.1947*** (0.0189)	-0.1947*** (0.0189)	-0.1946*** (0.0189)	-0.1933*** (0.0189)	-0.1936*** (0.0189)	-0.1927*** (0.0189)
age		0.0157*** (0.0045)	0.0141*** (0.0045)	0.0132*** (0.0045)	0.0134*** (0.0045)	0.0142*** (0.0045)	0.0144*** (0.0045)
age#age		-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)	-0.0000 (0.0001)
ethnicity			-0.3582*** (0.0532)	-0.3377*** (0.0537)	-0.3266*** (0.0538)	-0.3281*** (0.0537)	-0.3268*** (0.0537)
migrant				-0.3643*** (0.0749)	-0.3491*** (0.0752)	-0.3540*** (0.0752)	-0.3516*** (0.0750)
disability					-0.2125*** (0.0470)	-0.2159*** (0.0470)	-0.2150*** (0.0470)
lgbtq						0.0656 (0.0482)	0.0652 (0.0481)
comm_midsized							-0.0189 (0.0245)
comm_large							0.0285 (0.0247)
Constant	3.0633*** (0.0130)	2.4908*** (0.0926)	2.5446*** (0.0931)	2.5729*** (0.0926)	2.5745*** (0.0926)	2.5524*** (0.0938)	2.5453*** (0.0955)
Observations	12,073	12,073	12,073	12,073	12,073	12,073	12,073

Table 21. Regression Analysis of COVID-19 Impact on Less Paid Work, Exploring the Influence of Ethnicity, Migration Status, Disability, LGBTQ Identity, and Community Size Including Education & Country-Fixed Effects

VARIABLES	(1) less paid work	(2) less paid work	(3) less paid work	(4) less paid work	(5) less paid work	(6) less paid work	(7) less paid work
HighGenEmpGap	-0.1376** (0.0672)	-0.1485** (0.0660)	-0.1477** (0.0675)	-0.1529** (0.0675)	-0.1621** (0.0674)	-0.1607** (0.0675)	-0.1704** (0.0675)
age		0.0195*** (0.0044)	0.0200*** (0.0051)	0.0189*** (0.0051)	0.0192*** (0.0051)	0.0205*** (0.0051)	0.0208*** (0.0051)
age#age		-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001* (0.0001)	-0.0001** (0.0001)
education			0.0721*** (0.0158)	0.0673*** (0.0158)	0.0658*** (0.0158)	0.0665*** (0.0158)	0.0620*** (0.0159)
ethnicity			-0.3631*** (0.0578)	-0.3453*** (0.0582)	-0.3345*** (0.0582)	-0.3370*** (0.0581)	-0.3336*** (0.0581)
migrant				-0.3523*** (0.0838)	-0.3353*** (0.0840)	-0.3400*** (0.0838)	-0.3379*** (0.0835)
disability					-0.2203*** (0.0507)	-0.2245*** (0.0508)	-0.2236*** (0.0507)
lgbtq						0.0966* (0.0537)	0.0930* (0.0537)
comm_midsized							0.0117 (0.0258)
comm_large							0.0714*** (0.0267)
Constant	3.0860*** (0.0486)	2.4696*** (0.1025)	2.3008*** (0.1243)	2.3430*** (0.1240)	2.3507*** (0.1240)	2.3154*** (0.1251)	2.3000*** (0.1259)
Observations	12,073	12,073	10,734	10,734	10,734	10,734	10,734

The regression analysis presented in Table 20 investigates the factors affecting the likelihood of women doing less paid work during the COVID-19 pandemic, presumably due to an increase in unpaid work at home, such as childcare and housework. The dependent variable is the level of agreement with the statement about doing less paid work because of the increased burden of unpaid work at home.

The significant and negative coefficients for HighGenEmpGap indicate that in countries with high gender employment disparities, women are statistically more likely to do less paid work. This might reflect a societal norm or expectation that women in such countries undertake more unpaid household responsibilities during the pandemic. The age of women is positively associated with less paid work, as shown by coefficients ranging from 0.0144 to 0.0157. This linear relationship is evidenced by the insignificant age-squared term, suggesting that older women are increasingly likely to do less paid work. Negative coefficients for ethnicity indicate that women from specific ethnic groups do less paid work compared to the reference ethnic group. The consistently negative coefficients for migrants across all models suggest that migrant women are likely to report doing less paid work. This could be due to various factors such as barriers to employment, social support systems, or increased unpaid responsibilities at home. The negative coefficients for disability in the latter models imply that women with disabilities might face additional challenges that lead to them doing less paid work. This suggests that within the scope of this study, LGBTQ status alone does not have a discernible impact on the balance between paid and unpaid work for women during the pandemic.

The regression analysis suggests that factors such as a high gender employment gap and age are significantly associated with women doing less paid work during the COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast, other factors like ethnicity, migrant status, and disability also play a role, but their effects are more nuanced. The absence of significant results for LGBTQ status and the inconsistent findings for community size implies that these factors do not have a uniform influence on women's employment situations.

The regression analysis yields new insights after adding education and country fixed effects variables, as shown in Table 21. HighGenEmpGap's negative coefficients still suggest that in countries with a more significant gender employment gap, women likely do less paid work.

Education shows positive coefficients across all models, which indicates that higher educational levels are associated with an increased probability of less paid work during COVID-19. This is somewhat counterintuitive as higher education typically correlates with better-paid jobs, suggesting the possibility that the pandemic may have affected traditional employment dynamics.

Ethnicity's negative coefficients indicate that certain ethnic groups are significantly more likely to engage in less paid work, perhaps reflecting pre-existing economic vulnerabilities that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Migrant status also has negative coefficients, suggesting that migrants are more likely to find themselves in less paid work situations, possibly due to limited job opportunities or barriers to entering more stable, higher-paid positions during the pandemic.

Individuals with disabilities are shown to have a higher likelihood of less paid work, as indicated by the negative coefficients. This could be due to the compounded challenges faced by disabled individuals in securing gainful employment, especially in the pandemic's disrupted job market. The coefficients for LGBTQ identity are positive in some models but not significantly different from zero, indicating that LGBTQ status does not have a clear association with the prevalence of less paid work in this dataset.

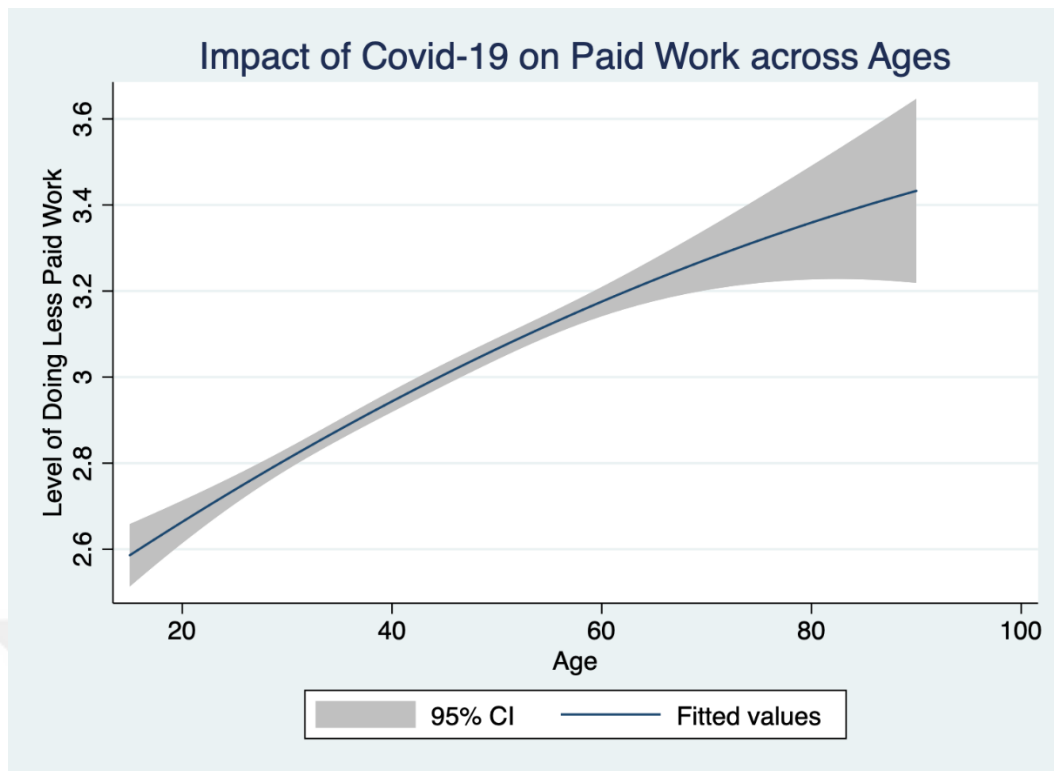


Figure 27. Two-way graph of less paid work and age²⁴

Figure 27 presents an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the housework burden for women, stratified by age. The x-axis represents the age of women in years, while the y-axis quantifies the impact of the pandemic on their housework duties.

A positive trend is depicted by the fitted line, showing a correlation between advancing age and the increasing impact of COVID-19 on housework for women. This trend could suggest that older women may take on more housework during the pandemic, possibly due to additional responsibilities such as caregiving for relatives or compliance with social distancing measures that increase time spent at home.

²⁴ Less_paid_work (less paid work), and age variables are used for this graph. Quadratic (second-degree polynomial) relationship is being explored. The grey shaded area shows the 95% confidence interval.

The interval widens with age, suggesting more significant uncertainty in the impact estimates for older women. This could indicate a more diverse range of experiences in housework changes due to COVID-19 among the older population, influenced by individual differences in health, economic status, and social support systems.

The graph suggests that the burden of housework increased for women as they aged during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a noted increase in uncertainty about this impact in older age groups.



CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The investigation into the differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the financial status and employment dynamics of men and women across varying employment gap levels, marital statuses, and parental roles has yielded insightful findings. As highlighted in the literature review, women were predisposed to economic disadvantages, setting the stage for a comprehensive analysis of the pandemic's repercussions. The first hypothesis posited that women would experience a more substantial negative impact on their personal finances than men, a proposition supported by examining mean values and detailed t-test analyses. Figure 6 vividly illustrates that the financial impact of COVID-19 is notably more pronounced in countries with a high employment gap, consistently reflected across both genders. Further substantiating this, the t-test analyses reveal a significant gender disparity in personal finances across countries with high and low employment gaps. The robustness of this trend, as confirmed by the overall t-test across all countries, underscores the conclusion that women experienced a more pronounced negative impact on their personal finances during the pandemic. The regression analysis delves deeper, identifying determinants of individuals' perceptions regarding the negative impact of COVID-19 on personal finances. The negative coefficient for 'woman' across all models consistently underscores the gendered financial implications of the pandemic. At the same time, the inclusion of educational attainment and country-fixed variables refines the understanding, attributing some of the gender disparities to cross-country variations and education levels.

Moving to the second hypothesis, which explores the relationship between marital status and employment patterns, the results reveal intricate dynamics.

Contrary to the initial expectation, the relationship between the gender employment gap and employment status is nuanced. While the hypothesis anticipated a higher negative impact for married women, the positive coefficients for the variable high gender employment gap suggest a more complex association. The negative association between being a woman and employment status remains consistent, emphasizing the disproportionate impact on women's employment during the pandemic. Incorporating education and country-fixed variables refines these trends, indicating that educational attainment and cross-country variations contribute to the observed complexities in marital status and employment dynamics.

Moreover, hypothesis 3 posited that women with children would encounter a more pronounced negative impact on employment compared to men with children. The results of t-test analyses examining the effect of having children on women's employment status support this hypothesis. In both high and low-employment gap countries, women with children were less likely to be employed than their counterparts without children. Interestingly, the impact of having children on employment status was statistically more substantial for men, underscoring the universal challenges parents face, with potential implications for work-life balance and societal expectations.

Our research investigates whether the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affects specific demographic segments, specifically focusing on women in regions with varying employment gap levels. Women in countries with high employment gaps are more likely to perceive a negative impact on their work-life balance. T-test results show a significant difference in "worklife" scores between high and low employment gap countries, indicating that women in high employment gap regions are more affected. In the regression analysis, the

HighGenEmpGap variable consistently negatively associates with work-life balance perceptions. Age, ethnicity, migrant status, and disability also play roles in shaping these perceptions. After adding education and country fixed effects variables, the negative association with HighGenEmpGap persists, emphasizing its impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

Examining the repercussions of the pandemic on women's roles in the job market, hypothesis 12 finds a significant and adverse impact in countries with high employment. T-test results confirm this disparity, highlighting a more pronounced effect on women's job market positions in countries with high employment gaps. The regression analysis reveals the consistent negative association of HighGenEmpGap with job market perceptions. Age, ethnicity, disability, and education also influence these perceptions. After adding education and country fixed effects variables, the negative association with HighGenEmpGap persists, emphasizing its role in shaping negative job market perceptions. Our research indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected women's income, particularly in countries with high employment gaps. T-test results confirm this substantial disparity in the adverse impact on women's income, with the regression analysis emphasizing the negative association between HighGenEmpGap and income impact. After adding education and country fixed effects variables, the negative association with HighGenEmpGap remains, highlighting its role in exacerbating income negativity during the pandemic. Ethnicity and disability also consistently influence income impact perceptions, emphasizing the nuanced challenges faced by these groups. These findings underscore the need for targeted policy responses to address the diverse impacts of the pandemic on women in different socioeconomic contexts.

Our study investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's paid work, supporting hypothesis 14. This illustrates a potential decline in women's engagement in paid work, particularly in countries with pronounced employment gaps. Our findings emphasize the significant consequences for women's income, highlighting the pandemic's economic impact, especially in regions with existing gender disparities.

Conclusion

In this extensive study, we investigated the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's labor force participation and financial well-being. Our research encompassed a range of demographic and socioeconomic factors to provide a comprehensive view of the challenges faced by women during the pandemic.

While this study contributes valuable insights to the field, it is crucial to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the generalizability of our findings may be constrained by the specific sample characteristics and context under investigation. The study focused on European Union countries and the United Kingdom, and caution should be exercised when extrapolating the results to broader populations or different contexts. Additionally, the data collection method employed in this research by Eurobarometer, face-to-face interviews, has inherent limitations, such as the potential for response bias or recall errors. Despite these constraints, the findings presented herein offer a foundation for further exploration and contribute to the ongoing discourse on the COVID-19 pandemic's socioeconomic impact on gender inequality.

The comprehensive exploration of the differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the financial status and employment dynamics of men and women

across varying employment gap levels, marital statuses, and parental roles has yielded insightful and nuanced findings. Grounded in women's predisposition to economic disadvantages, as established in the literature review, our study advances our understanding of the pandemic's repercussions on gender-specific experiences. Examining hypotheses revealed a pronounced negative impact on women's finances during the pandemic, especially in countries characterized by a high employment gap. This was corroborated through mean values, detailed t-test analyses, and robust regression models. The intricate relationships between marital status, employment patterns, and the presence of children underscore the multifaceted challenges women face, with cross-country variations and educational levels adding layers of complexity to these dynamics. The investigation into the impact on work-life balance and job market perceptions further revealed disparities, emphasizing the heightened challenges faced by women in regions with pronounced employment gaps. The consistent negative association of the HighGenEmpGap variable in regression analyses reaffirms its role in shaping negative perceptions.

Additionally, our study unraveled the substantial impact of the pandemic on women's income, particularly in high employment gap countries. These findings were further validated by regression analyses highlighting the persistent negative association with the HighGenEmpGap variable, emphasizing its role in exacerbating income negativity during the pandemic. Ethnicity and disability also consistently influenced income impact perceptions, highlighting the nuanced challenges faced by these groups. The investigation into the decline in women's paid work during the pandemic, as posited in hypothesis 14, revealed a potential downturn, especially in countries with pronounced employment gaps. This decline has significant implications for women's income, accentuating the profound economic consequences

of the pandemic, particularly in regions where gender disparities intersect with economic vulnerabilities.

In conclusion, our study offers a comprehensive understanding of the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing valuable insights for policymakers to formulate targeted interventions. The findings underscore the importance of addressing women's diverse challenges in different socioeconomic contexts, ensuring that policy responses are nuanced and inclusive. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender and socioeconomic dynamics during global crises, paving the way for informed strategies to mitigate disparities and promote resilience in the face of future challenges.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS FROM THE EUROBAROMETER

Data Set 7780

1. What is your nationality?

Responses: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom (Great Britain, Northern Ireland), Austria, Sweden, Finland, Republic of Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia.

2. Gender.

Responses: Male or Female

3. Age

Responses: between 15 – 99

4. In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right". How would you place your views on this scale?

Left									Right
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5. Which of the following best corresponds to your own current situation?

Responses: married or remarried: living without children, married or remarried: living with the children of this marriage, married or remarried: living with the children of a previous marriage, married or remarried: living with the children of this marriage and a previous marriage, single living with a partner: living without a children, single living with a partner: living with the children of this union, single living with a partner: living with the children of a previous union, single living with a partner: living with the children of this union and of a previous union, single: living without children, single: living with children, divorced or separated: living without

children, divorced or separated: living with children, widow: living without children,
widow: Living with children, other

6. Do you see yourself and your household belonging to...?

Responses: The working class of society, the lower middle class of society, the middle class of society, the upper middle class of society, the higher class of society.

7. What is your current occupation?

Responses: Responsible for ordinary shopping and looking after the home, or without any current location, not working, Student, Unemployed or Temporarily not working, Retired or unable to work through illness, self-employed farmer, self-employed fisherman, self-employed professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, etc.), owner of a shop (craftsmen, other self-employed-person), business proprietors, owner (full or partner) of a company, employed professional (employed doctor, lawyer, accountant, architect), employed position, general management, director or top management (managing directors, director general, other director), employed position, middle management, other management (department head, junior manager, teacher, technician), employed position, working mainly at a desk Employed position, not at a desk but travelling (salesmen, driver, etc.), employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital, restaurant, police, fireman, etc.), employed position, supervisor, employed position, skilled manual worker, other employed (unskilled) manual worker, servant.

8. Thinking about the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

-The Coronavirus pandemic has serious financial consequences for you personally

Responses: Totally agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree, totally disagree

9. How many children aged 10 to 14 years old live in your household?

10. How many children less than 10 years old live in your household?

Data Set 7870

1- What is your nationality or nationalities if you hold more than one?

Responses: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom (Great Britain, Northern Ireland), Austria, Sweden, Finland, Republic of Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia.

2- Age

Responses: between 15 – 99

3- Do you identify as any of the following?

Ethnic or religious minority

Responses: not mentioned, ethnic or religious minority

- Migrant, refugee, asylum seeker or displaced person

Responses: not mentioned, migrant, refugee, asylum seeker or displaced person

- Person with a disability / disabilities

Responses: not mentioned, person with a disability / disabilities

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex or queer

Responses: not mentioned, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex or queer

- Any other minority groups

Responses: not mentioned, any other minority group

4- Would you say you live in...?

Responses: A rural area or village, small or medium-sized town, large town/city

5- Has the COVID-19 pandemic made you more or less financially dependent on your partner, other

Responses: Much more dependent, somewhat more dependent, no change, somewhat less dependent, much less dependent, don't know, prefer not to say

6- Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the COVID-19 pandemic?

- The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance

Responses: totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, totally disagree

- Because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, I could do less paid work than I wanted to

(meaning less work for a salary or wage)

Responses: totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, totally disagree

- The pandemic had a negative impact on my income

Responses: totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, totally disagree

- Because of the increase in work at home (such as household tasks, care for family members, home- schooling), I could do less paid work (for a salary or wage) than I wanted to

Responses: totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, totally disagree

APPENDIX B

TABLE OF QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Eurobarometer	94,3		Question	Named after emerged	Hypothesis
Code	7780				
Year	2021				
Q#/Variable	isocntry	isocntry	Fieldwork Country	country_gr	Control Variables
	Q049	d1	In political matters people talk of "the left" and "the right". How would you place your views on this scale?	leftright	
	Q024	d10	Gender. Male or Female.	gender	
	D8r2	d8r2	How old were you when you stopped full-time education?	education	
	D11	d11	How old are you?	age1	
	Q050	d7r	The Coronavirus pandemic has serious financial consequences for you personally	perfin	Hypothesis 1
	Q067	d53	Which of the following best corresponds to your own current situation?	maritalstatus	Hypothesis 2
	Q403	qa13_1	Do you see yourself and your household belonging to...?	class	Hypothesis 3
	Q055	d15a	How many children less than 10 years old live in your household?	childyes	Hypothesis 4
	Q062	d40b	How many children aged 10 to 14 years old live in your household?		
Q063	d40c	What is your current occupation?	employed	H2,H3,H4,H5	
Eurobarometer	2712		Question	Named after emerged	Hypothesis
Code	7870				
Year	2021				
Q#/Variable	isocntry	isocntry	Fieldwork Country	country_gr	Control Variables
	D11	d11	How old are you?	age	
	D4r2	d4r2	How old were you when you stopped full-time education?	education	
	DX2	dx2_1	Do you identify as any of the following? Ethnic	ethnicity	Hypothesis 6

		or religious minority		
DX2	dx2_2	Do you identify as any of the following? Migrant, refugee, asylum seeker or displaced person	migrant	Hypothesis 7
DX2	dx2_3	Do you identify as any of the following? Person with a disability / disabilities	disability	Hypothesis 8
DX2	dx2_4	Do you identify as any of the following? Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex or queer	lgbtq	Hypothesis 9
D13	d13	Would you say you live in...?	comm	Hypothesis 10
Q4	q4	Has the COVID-19 pandemic made you more or less financially dependent on your partner, other relatives or friends, or has there been no change?	findep	H6, H7, H8, H9, 10
Q5_1	q5_1	The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance	worklife	Hypothesis 11
Q5_2	q5_2	Because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, I could do less paid work than I wanted to 2 (meaning less work for a salary or wage)	jobmarket	Hypothesis 12
Q5_5	q5_5	The pandemic had a negative impact on my income	impactincome	Hypothesis 13
Q5_6	q5_6	Because of the increase in work at home (such as household tasks, care for family members, home- 6 schooling), I could do less paid work (for a salary or wage) than I wanted to	less_paid_work	Hypothesis 14

APPENDIX C

VARIABLES OF DATA SET 1

Indicators for Each Hypothesis	isocntry: What is your nationality? (country_gr) d10: Gender, Male or Female
Choices	Lithuania, Finland, Latvia, Sweden, Estonia, France, Portugal, Denmark, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Germany (West), Luxembourg, Belgium, Slovakia, Germany (East), Austria, Netherlands, Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary, Spain, Ireland, United Kingdom Mainland, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Italy, Greece, Malta, United Kingdom
Measure	The dataset consists of responses from 30 distinct European countries, categorized into two groups: High Employment Gap Countries and Low Employment Gap Countries.
Hypothesis 1	The Coronavirus pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the financial well-being of women.
Indicator #1	qa13_1: The Coronavirus pandemic has serious financial consequences for you personally. (perfin)
Choices	Totally Agree, Tend to Agree, Tend to Disagree, Totally Disagree, Do not Know
Measure	We classified responses, placing 'totally agree' and 'tend to agree' under the category 'agree,' while 'totally disagree' and 'tend to disagree' were grouped under 'disagree.
Indicator #2	d4r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 2	The labor force participation of women during the COVID-19 era is influenced by their marital status, encompassing categories of being single, married, or divorced.
Indicator #1	d7r: Which of the following best corresponds to your own current situation? (maritalstatus)
Choices	“Married or remarried: Living without children”, “Married or remarried: Living with the children of this marriage”, “Married or remarried: Living with the children of a previous marriage”, “Married or remarried: Living with the children of this marriage and of a previous marriage”, “Single living with a partner: Living without children”, “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of this union”, “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of a previous union”, “Single living with a partner: Living with the children of this union and a previous union”, “Single: Living without children”, “Single: Living with children”, “Divorced or separated: Living without children”, “Divorced or separated: Living with children”, “Widow: Living without children”, “Widow: Living with children and other”.
Measure	Incorporating a total of 15 responses, encompassing various marital status combinations, the data was categorized into three groups: single, married, and divorced/separated.
Indicator #2	d15a: What is your current occupation? (employed)

Choices	1. Responsible for shopping and looking after the home, without any current occupation, not working", "2: student", "3. Unemployed or temporarily not working", "4. Retired or unable to work through illness", "5. Self-employed farmer", "6. Self-employed fisherman", "7. Self-employed professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, etc.)", "8. Owner of a shop, craftsmen, other self-employed people", "9. Business proprietors, the company's owner (full or partner)", "10. Employed professional", "11. Employed position, general management", "12. employed position, middle management", "13. Employed position, working mainly at a desk", "14. Employed position, not at a desk but traveling", "15. Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job", "16. Employed position, supervisor", "17. Employed position, skilled manual worker", "18. Other employed (unskilled) manual workers", "19. I never did any paid work
Measure	Comprising a total of 19 responses, encompassing both paid and non-paid responsibilities, the data was classified into two distinct categories: paid activities categorized as 'employed,' and non-paid activities categorized as 'not employed.'
Indicator #3	d4r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 3	In the COVID-19 era, the presence of children within a woman's household correlates with fluctuations in her participation in the labor force.
Indicator #1	d40b + d40c: How many children live in your household? (childyes)
Choices	0,1,2,3
Measure	When faced with responses greater than zero, categorize them as 'yes child'; conversely, when the response is precisely zero, classify them as 'no child.'
Indicator #2	d15a: What is your current occupation? (employed)
Choices	Responsible for shopping and looking after the home, without any current occupation, not working", "2: student", "3. Unemployed or temporarily not working", "4. Retired or unable to work through illness", "5. Self-employed farmer", ...
Measure	Comprising a total of 19 responses, encompassing both paid and non-paid responsibilities, the data was classified into two distinct categories: paid activities categorized as 'employed,' and non-paid activities categorized as 'not employed.'
Hypothesis 4	The COVID-19 pandemic has elicited varying shifts in women's labor force participation, contingent upon their social class categorizations.
Indicator #1	d63: Do you see yourself and your household belonging to...? (class)
Choices	The working class of society, The lower middle class of society, The middle class of society, The upper middle class of society, The higher class of society
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #1	d15a: What is your current occupation? (employed)
Choices	Responsible for shopping and looking after the home, without any current occupation, not working", "2: student", "3. Unemployed or temporarily not working", "4. Retired or unable to work through illness", "5. Self-employed farmer", "6. Self-employed fisherman", ...

Measure	Comprising a total of 19 responses, encompassing both paid and non-paid responsibilities, the data was classified into two distinct categories: paid activities categorized as 'employed,' and non-paid activities categorized as 'not employed.'
Indicator #2	d4r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'



APPENDIX D

VARIABLES OF DATA SET 2

Indicator for Each Hypothesis	isocntry: What is your nationality? (country_gr)
Choices	Lithuania, Finland, Latvia, Sweden, Estonia, France, Portugal, Denmark, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Germany (West), Luxembourg, Belgium, Slovakia, Germany (East), Austria, Netherlands, Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary, Spain, Ireland, United Kingdom Mainland, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Italy, Greece, Malta, United Kingdom
Measure	The dataset consists of responses from 30 distinct European countries, categorized into two groups: High Employment Gap Countries and Low Employment Gap Countries.
Hypothesis 5	A potential inverse relationship exists between a country's level of development and its susceptibility in terms of the gender employment gap to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 6	Women who self-identify as being part of an ethnic or religious minority are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened susceptibility to experiencing economic ramifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories.
Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	dx2_1: Would you describe yourself as belonging to an ethnic minority? (ethnicity)
Choices	Ethnic Minority, Not Mentioned
Measure	There are two distinct responses: 'Ethnic or religious minority' and 'not mentioned.' We have utilized the categories as they are.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 7	Women who self-identify as migrants, asylum seekers, or displaced persons are hypothesized to face a greater likelihood of experiencing heightened economic impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic relative to individuals outside these categories.

Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	dx2_2: Would you describe yourself as a migrant, asylum seeker, or displaced person? (migrant)
Choices	Migrant, Not Mentioned
Measure	There are two distinct responses: 'Migrant, refugee, asylum seeker or displaced person' and 'not mentioned.' We have utilized the categories as they are.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 8	Women who self-identify as individuals with disabilities are hypothesized to exhibit a heightened likelihood of encountering amplified economic repercussions from the COVID-19 pandemic compared to individuals not identifying as such.
Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	dx2_3: Would you describe yourself as a person with disability/ disabilities? (disability)
Choices	With Disability, Not Mentioned
Measure	There are two distinct responses: 'Person with a disability / disabilities' and 'not mentioned.' We have utilized the categories as they are.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 9	Women who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, non-binary, intersex, or queer (LGBTQI) are hypothesized to demonstrate an increased likelihood of encountering amplified economic repercussions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to individuals not identifying within this spectrum.
Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	dx2_4: Would you describe yourself as LGBTQ+? (lgbt)
Choices	lgbtq, Not Mentioned
Measure	There are two distinct responses: 'Person with a disability / disabilities' and 'not mentioned.' We have utilized the categories as they are.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?

Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 10	Women residing in small sized towns are expected to exhibit a higher probability of experiencing greater susceptibility to economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic than those residing in larger towns.
Indicator #1	q4: Has COVID-19 caused you to become financially dependent on your partner or another individual? (findep)
Choices	Much more dependent, Somewhat more dependent, No change, Somewhat less dependent, Much less dependent
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	d13: Where do you live? Rural, Small Town, Big Town? (comm)
Choices	Small Town, Middle Sized Town, Large Town
Measure	There are two distinct responses: 'Rural area or village, Small or middle sized town, We have utilized the categories as they are.
Indicator #3	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 11	The pandemic has adversely affected women's work-life balance.
Indicator #1	q5_1: The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance (worklife)
Choices	Totally Agree, Tend to Agree, Tend to Disagree, Totally Disagree, Do not Know
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 12	The pandemic has led to a negative impact on women's position within the job market.
Indicator #1	q5_2: The pandemic has had a negative impact on job market. (jobmarket)
Choices	Totally Agree, Tend to Agree, Tend to Disagree, Totally Disagree, Do not Know
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 13	The pandemic has negatively impacted women's income, potentially leading to decreased earnings and financial disparities compared to pre-pandemic levels.
Indicator #1	q5_5: The pandemic has had a negative impact on my income. (impactincome)
Choices	Totally Agree, Tend to Agree, Tend to Disagree, Totally Disagree, Do not Know
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.

Indicator #2	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'
Hypothesis 14	The pandemic has led to women do less paid work because of the increase in work at home.
Indicator #1	q5_6: Because of the increase in work at home (such as household tasks, care for family members, home- 6 schooling), I could do less paid work (for a salary or wage) than I wanted to (lesspaidwork)
Choices	Totally Agree, Tend to Agree, Tend to Disagree, Totally Disagree, Do not Know
Measure	We utilized all five responses to determine the aptitude.
Indicator #2	d8r2: How old were you when you stopped full-time education?
Choices	Up to 15 years, 16-19, 20 years and older, still in time full education, never been in full-time education, don't know
Measure	We categorized responses, 'primary school', 'high school', 'bachelors', 'higheredu'

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