

Concern about the effects of the pandemic caused by covid-19 in the retail sector in Spain.

Differences between men and women

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Introduction

The pandemic caused by covid-19 is generating important changes in organizations and in the ways of working. Restrictions on the mobility of citizens and quarantines decreed by governments to try to stop contagions in the population are causing decreases in forecasts for economic growth and predictions of a new economic crisis. In Spain, the professional sectors most affected by this crisis are tourism, catering and commercial, and especially the retail sector. The pandemic is not over and its effects on the workplace may be even worse than those that have already occurred. Furthermore, in Spain women suffer worse working conditions and have been more affected by previous economic crises.

Purpose

To know if there are differences between men and women in their perception of the effects that covid-19 can have at the workplace.

Method

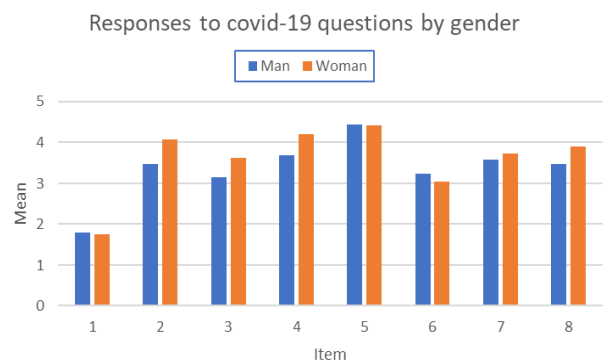
Participants: 467 retail sector workers (188 men and 279 women) answered a short eight-item online survey on their perception of the effects of the pandemic on their job, on a five-point Likert scale. Age of participants range from 18 to 61 years old (Mean = 33.56, *SD* = 8.42). Approximately 70% of the participants work in a large multinational company with more than 250 employees. To participate in the study, it was necessary to have been in the job for at least one year.

Procedure: Data were obtained on 2020 October–December

Instrument:

- Item 1. I am not worried about the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Item 2. The Covid-19 pandemic creates uncertainty in my job.
- Item 3. I have noticed physical changes (lack of sleep, muscle aches, irritability...) since the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Item 4. I fear that my work situation will be affected by the pandemic.
- Item 5. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected several aspects of my work activity.
- Item 6. Now I work more than before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Item 7. The work environment of my work is not the same since the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Item 8. I think my work situation is going to get worse due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results



| | Man | | Woman | | t | p |
|--------|------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| Item 1 | 1.79 | 1.26 | 1.75 | 1.29 | 0.35 | 0.729 |
| Item 2 | 3.47 | 1.54 | 4.07 | 1.35 | -4.48 | 0.000 |
| Item 3 | 3.15 | 1.48 | 3.62 | 1.49 | -3.37 | 0.001 |
| Item 4 | 3.69 | 1.45 | 4.21 | 1.24 | -4.16 | 0.000 |
| Item 5 | 4.45 | 0.96 | 4.41 | 1.06 | 0.36 | 0.720 |
| Item 6 | 3.24 | 1.47 | 3.04 | 1.59 | 1.39 | 0.166 |
| Item 7 | 3.58 | 1.36 | 3.74 | 1.37 | -1.23 | 0.219 |
| Item 8 | 3.48 | 1.36 | 3.90 | 1.32 | -3.34 | 0.001 |

CONCLUSION

Comparison of the responses given by gender showed that women have more uncertainty in their work (men = 3.4 vs. women = 4.1); they have noticed more changes at the psychosomatic level (men = 3.1 vs. women = 3.6); they are more afraid that their employment situation will be affected by the pandemic (men = 3.6 vs. women = 4.2) and they consider that their situation will worsen (men = 3.4 vs. women = 3.9) ($p \leq 0.001$ in all cases). However, both genders showed the same high concern about the pandemic and similar levels in terms of how the covid-19 had affected them at the workplace. The results of this study allow us to conclude that although, for now, the pandemic has negatively and similarly affected men and women in terms of their work, expectations about the future effects of the crisis caused by covid-19 are worse for women than for men.