



Anticipating the post-covid-19 world: implications for sustainable lifestyles

*a Global South
perspective*



Market Analysis

Anticipating the post-covid-19 world: implications for sustainable lifestyles

a Global South perspective

Edited by Fabián Echegaray

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Cover and Layout: Teresa De Bastiani

Graphs and Infographs: Fabián Echegaray

Content revision: Alisson Bittencourt, Bianca Fermiano, Débora Montibeler, Mariana D. Goulart, Murilo Malek-Zadeh, Romina Puig Pujol, Teresa De Bastiani and Thainara Oliveira.

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Introduction

The covid-19 pandemic has imposed a major disruption in how people live their lives. Impacts are visible in all domains of practice. It has affected the way we work, study, entertain, consume, socialize, develop and experience family life and love relationships, the means as much as the contents for our wellbeing and financial security, how we approach healthcare issues, our role as citizens and perceptions of authorities, and even the meaning of household and living habitats.

This report scans and projects what these impacts are and what they mean for working towards a sustainable future. In particular, we focus on the **implications for progressing in the direction of sustainable lifestyles**, recognized as one vital goal and perspective to build effective game-changing, purpose-oriented action. Purposeful leadership from both the corporate and the non-profit, cause-oriented worlds remains paramount to inspire consumers and citizens and mobilize supply chain, allies, and partners.

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*Accelerating,
decelerating
and
surprising
trends*

Reactions from governments and societies to the covid-19 crisis (thereon, C19) radically revamped numerous dimensions of life and practices, as well as the opportunity to enact these in the future. Sudden economic shutdown generating generalized bankruptcy and financial hardship and social isolation resulting in home confinement certainly imposed a dramatic shift in behaviors.

When reviewing trend watching consultancy studies from the last decade, no previous forecast indicated that people would make of their home the center-stage of their lives without interruptions and without personal contacts even with the loved ones. Likewise, no trend analysis anticipated a drastic reconceptualization of cleanliness and healthy habits, neither the obsessed hygiene train through which all major dimensions in life are nowadays evaluated as risky or safe. If cleanliness, in contexts like Brazil, usually referred to a status of refreshment, appealing aesthetics and even moral purity, the new, reductionist meaning of cleanliness now goes in a wholly different direction, embodying a transitory germs-free, protective antibacterial situation, incarnated in universal disinfestation as much as in the exclusion of known and unknown others. Living life physically distanced and socially isolated, and looking to life through a defensive health-conscious, hygiene-driven lens constitute two major surprises no trend anticipated.

Yet, not everything is a surprise in the effects the pandemic crisis bears on our lives. In fact, the crisis has accelerated many trends already pre-existing in society. The digitalization of work, leisure, shopping or love illustrate this. Online gaming and e-commerce never stopped growing over the past decades. Companies in segments like IT or consultancy were already dealing with remote working for many years and at a fairly decent scale. Online dating apps like Tinder were the paramount landscape where romance seeking and relation-shopping were taken place, attracting millions.





*Accelerating,
decelerating
and
surprising
trends*

However, the crisis has also decelerated other trends that were emerging under the pre-covid status quo and now seem braked, if not undone. One example of deceleration occurs with social mobility. Despite oscillations, the last two decades witnessed a gradual rise of living standards that removed millions from poverty while expanding the urban middle classes particularly in the Global South. This has been radically altered now. Another example of deceleration takes place with collaborative consumption, as the rules of social distancing reverse the growing, universal engagement in forms of sharing economy based on access to idle goods, socializing with strangers, and a positive view of reuse, recirculation, and recycling of goods.

In sum, by focusing on accelerated and decelerated trends as much as on the surprising expressions that crystallize as new tendencies, **this report provides a map of the challenges and opportunities ahead thus helping to navigate the uncharted waters of the post-covid-19 world.**



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Focus on domains of practice

This research report summarizes the ongoing legacy of the pandemic in **12 domains of practice**, capturing trends and effects that have already taken place and will continue to shape the businesses of citizens and consumers. We present the main trend in each domain and review its positive and negative derivations for both individuals and society, acknowledging the favorable and unfavorable dividends for progressing towards a model of sustainability.

The 12 domains of practice surveyed cover those areas of daily life that critically define individuals' roles, responsibilities and goals, thereby molding our needs and wants. These relate to

- Work and workplace
- Family and love/parenthood commitments
- Social life and interpersonal connections
- Wellbeing, self-realization and personal health
- Education and training
- Leisure and entertainment
- Consumption
- Mobility
- Housing and living habitats
- Citizenship and interactions with the state
- Financial security and social equality
- Healthcare provision and medical reassurances

The first (and longer) part of this report is thus organized in 12 sections, each one devoted to cover a particular domain of practice. Each domain contains a brief description of characteristics unfold by the pandemic.

Then, **individual and societal-level effects** are presented separately. At each level, **positive and negative dividends** are succinctly described with a reference to relevant social, environmental, ethical and/or economics consequences or implications.



Focus on the Global South

Efforts to describe how covid-19 affects societies and lifestyles are currently under way (or have recently been completed) for developed societies of Europe and North America. This effort has been less common for less developed societies. Data from technologically advanced regions is used to illustrate some trends here but the bulk of this report examines tendencies and developments taking place in emerging nations, in particular Brazil. This document thus contributes to widen our knowledge of occurrences and predictions about the post-Covid future, to include a Global South perspective.

Focus on public perceptions

Furthermore, this study heavily weights in primary data collected through survey research, thus moving beyond accounts solely based on aggregate data. **Individuals perceptions** of their situation, their understanding of challenges and ongoing changes as well as their subjective recognition of **new habits, procedures or rituals** illustrates the extent to which trends are pervasive and deeply present among the public.

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Work/Workplace

Lockdown measures dives the world into the largest 'experiment' in home-office in history.



Work & Workplace

Individual effects

- Telework prompt rising feelings of professional autonomy and responsibility resulting in higher productivity and motivation as well as employee satisfaction –indicators of workers wellbeing
- Time and energy saved in mobility due to traffic avoidance stretches wellbeing to the personal-level
- Remote work ethics focuses on achieving results or goals, rather than meeting schedules or following protocols. Ensuing personal time gains may reduce employee as well as employer resistance to accept a shortened workweek
- Home office opportunities to spend more time with family and engage/share in family routines realizes longstanding claim for work-life balance

Yet...

- Telework may also prompt feelings of misguidance due to isolation, along with alienation and a propensity to feel overburden. As a result. motivation and wellbeing may regress. Home-office helps revalue workplace social life (partly rescued through new, comforting apps reproducing typical sounds of office: SoundBored;QuarantineChat.com)
- Work from home risks exposing staff to excess availability 24x7, mixing-up work/home, professional/personal matters, worsened when coupled with kids homeschooling, which ultimately thwarts work-life balance
- For future generations, mass-scale telework implies impoverished training, acculturation with corporate mission and etiquette, missing the social role of workmates, in other words, resigning the role of socialization agent traditionally held by work



Work & Workplace

Societal effects


Telework brings many dividends to society

- Promotes lowering air and noise pollution, as well as reduced GHG emissions due to less commute travelling. In turn, this makes more attractive to walk or cycling as means of transportation
- Increased acceptability of shortened workweek due to home-office boost of productivity thereby helping in redistributing employment through working-time reductions
- Accelerates cloud-based economy with new impetus for a new economy of facilitators, a vast majority of which are SMOs thus encouraging larger distribution effects

Yet., telework also may prompt

- Acceleration of social inequalities based on type of occupation or quality of labor market inclusion (a minority working for corporations vs. a majority being self-employed, informal workers, or employed in underfunded small firms), which excludes the latter from home-office. These inequalities from labor insertion add to those that result from uneven computer literacy across classes and age cohorts or from lockdown recession that concentrates strained income situation among lower segments¹
- Potential intensification of further social inequalities towards disabled people²
- Risks of hacking, thus increasing household expenses as security systems are usually centralized in in-office servers. Exposure led to a boom of malware sites (over new 16,000 virus-prone domains themed after C19 issues) peaking since January 2020
- As notebooks replace desktops, there are more odds of developing physiological consequences like strain injuries, sight shortening, etc.
- Co-working spaces that spur alternative sharing economy practices and ethics comes out seriously damaged
- Abandoned office space rises issues of illegal occupations, fear of crime in deserted areas, undermining property prices and undoing of city center renewal areas



A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting on a couch, reading a book together. The man is wearing a green jacket over a white shirt, and the boy is wearing a white shirt. They are both looking down at the book. The background shows a window with white curtains and a lamp.

Family & love/parenthood commitments

*Social isolation leaves singles alone, couples
alone, parents and children 24x7 together
over longest time ever*

Family, love and parenthood commitments

Individual effects

Stay-at-home policies results in

- Family life thriving and being rediscovered, which matches long-time survey findings about claims for a simpler, family-oriented, communitarian life, a usually delayed need and want that also echoes in the resurgence of nostalgia values and rituals³
- Many experiencing in the flesh one of the tenets of wellbeing research that points out higher happiness levels among those living married (vs. being single-lower happiness)

Yet, physical distancing and social isolation also implies in

- Limbo for kids from separated parents under strict lockdown measures
- Rising tensions within households as a byproduct of overexposure⁴
- Likely overcrowding of parental household as C19 financial impact forces young adults to go back to parents home
- Loss of privacy due to over-intimacy



Societal effects

Societal consequences increasingly reach the frontline news

- Explosion of Christmas/New Years babies: the Corona Generation
- Massive learning about
 - responsible parenthood (mostly for males)
 - more egalitarian share of domestic duties → leveling gender inequalities and moderating second shift logic at home
 - dematerializing family joy → recognizing non-consumption driven enjoyment of family life⁵

Yet,

- Increases in domestic violence (+20% in largest metro area in BR)
- Increases in divorce rates → uptake of 25%+ in Wuhan province after lockdown. In BR: anecdotal evidence about a swell of consultations with lawyers and accountants over divorce plans. Google search for "how to divorce online" skyrocketed nearly 10,000%!



A photograph of three women standing on balconies of a building, clinking glasses in a toast. The woman on the left is wearing a light-colored sweater, the woman in the middle is wearing a light-colored top, and the woman on the right is wearing a dark top and jeans. They are all smiling and looking at each other. The balconies have metal railings. The background is a light-colored wall. A large orange semi-circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

Social life and interpersonal connections

Social isolation makes socializing and social companionship the most scarce practice and resource⁶



Social life/ connectivity

Individual effects

- Social connectivity moves online, heavily reliant on immersive technology and virtual socialization. Younger generations watch movies in group simultaneously (Netflix Party), attend to virtual parties and disco nights through Zoom and Houseparty apps, heavily relying on video-messaging features and tools⁷
- Concomitantly, social connectivity remains offline conditioned to the immediate neighborhood, in community gardens, community events, moving around and beyond the balcony singing⁸ “Balconies party” in several countries

Yet...

- Social cocooning becomes the rule out of fears of crowds and infection-free obsessions. socializing skills get slowly anesthetised. Intolerance and exclusion towards out-group people grows
- Social isolation aggravates loneliness syndrome already affecting large shares of C19-vulnerable population of developed nations⁹
- Communities trust members but not outsiders, creating barriers and separation between social groups
- Revalorization of local surroundings/outdoors, pressure and mobilization to rescuing open-air spaces and greening local areas, promote urban gardens/small-scale urban farming projects
- Revalorization of social bonding and social dependability, which gains primacy over self-centered, self-enhancement sufficiency
- Co-occurrence with the rise of touchless society – younger generations loosing social learning about empathy, emotional development, cooperation/sharing, solidarity, body language, whereas older generations may get rusty. Coupled with social media-mediated contacts that usually reinforces limited inner-group beliefs and standards, the future of interpersonal sensitivity and other-oriented considerations may be doomed
- Touchless society projects into, and get reinforced by, daily relationship with objects and subjects, from touch-free appliances, to QR and Bluetooth payments, to voice command procedures

Societal effects





Wellbeing I

Personal/mental health

Social distancing causes a "social recession" heightening the disintermediated influence of all sorts of media to interpret and transmit reality while exposing media users to fake news. Singles, elderly are mostly affected as they tend to bare to loneliness and isolation

Wellbeing / Personal/ mental healthcare

Individual effects

Home confinement enables introspection and taking stock of personal life/choices

- Slowdown routines harnesses a different, critical understanding of past lifestyles' effects over mental, intellectual and physical health
- Lowered barriers to access online forms of therapy helps to democratize and demystify psychotherapy and digital tools for mental health¹⁰

At the same time...

- Boom in trauma/post-trauma due to highly negative, stressful, emotional states elicited by isolation. Anxiety and worry top worldwide sentiments; sleep disorders and migraines multiply; legal and illegal drugs-intake booms¹¹
- Anecdotal evidence by physicians indicates increase in dosage for patients with depression or anxiety symptoms
- Rule is that women double men in concerns about isolation and mental illness



Societal effects

A new culture of cleanliness signified as a germ-free, antibacterial state achievable through intensive, daily acts of sanitation and hygiene, helps to develop habits that will slowdown the transmission of other diseases¹²

However...

- An impoverished notion of wellbeing may lessen happiness to comfort and safety, consecrating a one-dimensional view of it
- The elderly and those living in single-resident homes are particularly vulnerable to both C19 and lockdown-induced loneliness. Solitary elders exposed to muscles atrophy and might risk their health and mobility
- Depression epidemic around the corner: In US, emotional distress hotlines record 1,000% increase. Accounts of mental health institutions being less prepared than respiratory ICUs for current mental crisis multiply
- Shifting financial resources to cover sanitation expenses are highly likely to further reduce available funds to cover other needs, including mental health and wellbeing products/services





Wellbeing II Personal growth

Confinement curtails socializing and consumption routines leaving room and time for investments in both individual-centric wellbeing like self-awareness/personal growth/self-cultivation practices, along with physical health exercising, and other-oriented activities in the form of community belonging and solidarity action

Wellbeing II Personal growth

Individual effects

- Expectations for more time spent on spiritual activities
- Abrupt interruption of previous habits and customs coincide with numerous calls to rethink lifestyles towards simplicity through social media and apps-sourced commercial ads
- Physical and mental health narratives get to the top of the agenda, along with initial offer for more streaming Yoga, Qi Gong, home gyms, Zumba, HIIT¹³

Nonetheless...

- Fitness/wellness concerns may be more aspirational than real
➔ In BR, searches for exercise options and tools went up 160%, but surveys show people exercising less than before (or more people abandoning exercising than adopting it at home)¹⁴
- Live yoga classes experiencing a downturn over weeks of lockdown

Societal effects

Rise of “care mongering”: engagement in new alternative hedonism through self-initiated or local grassroots-driven intergenerational or interclass solidarity action

- Boom of elderly-oriented solidarity initiatives to socialize, entertain/read, help with logistics among neighbors and non-neighbors¹⁵
- Corporate-funded philanthropic action and foodbank distribution among the poor (in BR)¹⁶

Conversely, the pandemic reveals several downturns to collective wellbeing

- Lockdown measures have seriously prevented aid distribution in conflict areas or refugees camps, aggravating social conditions
- Government corruption in acquiring overpriced food-staples and personal protection equipment under emergency laws of weakened oversight (or by skipping formal, open bids) drain resources as much as credibility in volunteering and donations
- Huge, long-hours queuing in urban foodbanks (even in developed countries like US) multiplies social resentment and corrodes legitimacy of elected authorities





Wellbeing III

Food health

Restaurants shutdowns due to lockdown and restrictions for paid home-help by cooks and maid reverses trend towards eating out or outsourcing food preparation, throwing a major turn towards home-cooking and kitchen-centered activities

Wellbeing III Food health

Individual effects

- Health-centered thinking and immunity goal-seeking puts healthy food/diet change as pivotal to lifestyles, which strengthens ongoing trend of rising interest in healthy foods, mainly organic or natural¹⁷
- Diet change-consciousness (restrained to middle and upper classes) propelling migration towards plant-based foods¹⁸
- Boost to home-cooking¹⁹

Yet, home confinement also boosts negative food/diet habits

- Poor caloric quality of food particularly among lower classes heavily impacted by shutdown and recession
- Excessive eating/meals-intake, coupled with overweight/obesity challenges: People are eating more than usual (anxiety and boredom playing a major role for that) and gradually increase diet excess²⁰
- Alcohol beverages intake shoot up and spreads out evenly through weekdays/ weekends²¹
- Upswing in smoking²²

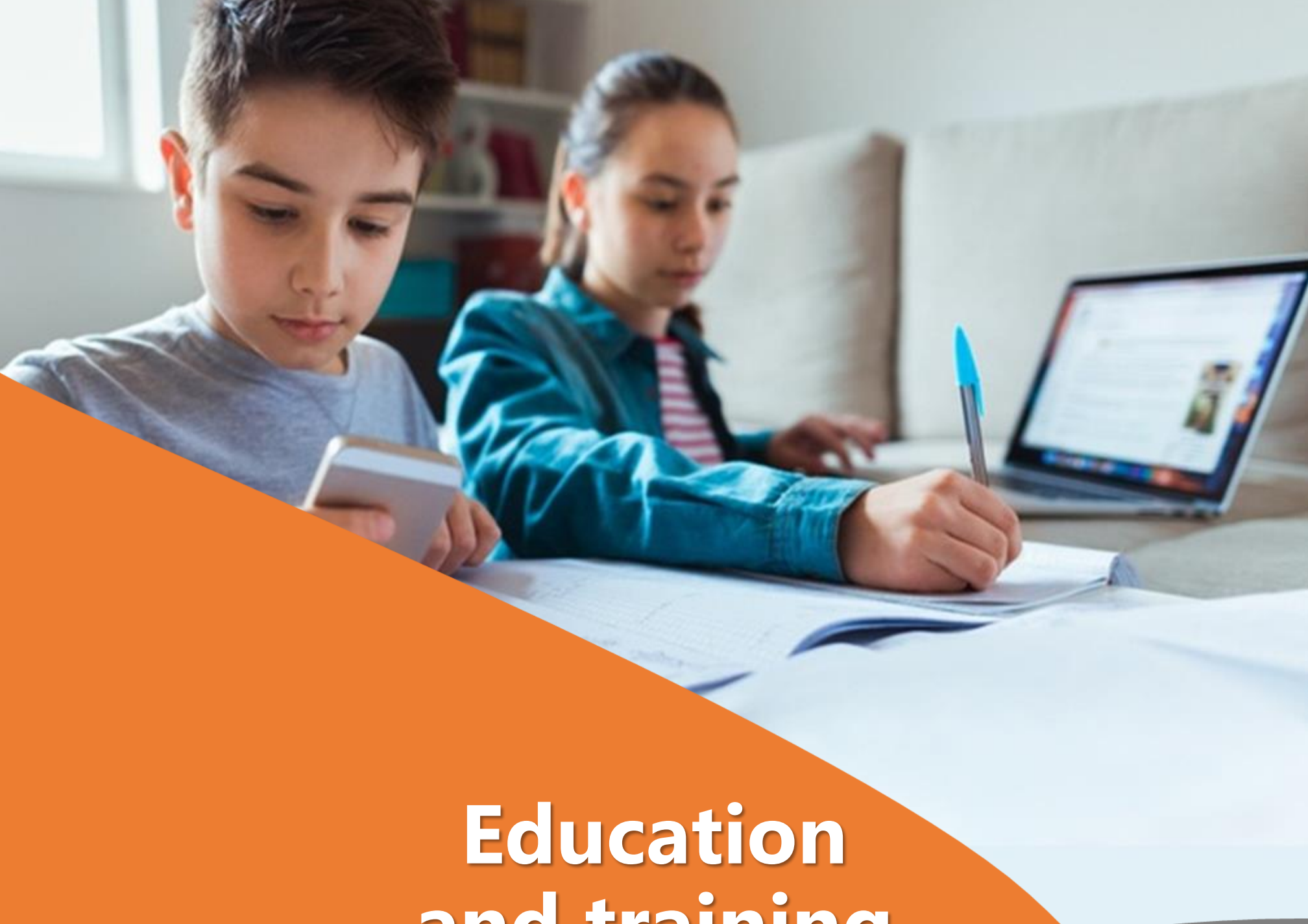
Societal effects

- Media discussions about C19 transmission to humans from animals raises awareness about food supply chains and food security, with increasing criticism about intensive caged formats of animal farming
- Animal welfare and protection of wildlife habitats gets linked to disease spread and health risks, suggesting an alternative, salient narrative for environmental protection (mostly, anti-deforestation policies)
- Linkage food supply chains-health risks opens a debate about transitioning to higher plant-based menus/diets

Concomitantly,

- Fresh food buying under menace, as social distancing translates into major drops at independent groceries stores, including consumer-to-producer, street fairs → direct/local/fair-trade oriented buying under threat as it requires weekly visits and potential agglomeration exposure
- Needs to minimize shopping out require long-term food stockpiling which tends to benefit choices for industrialized, frozen meals, further concentrating food supply and retail power into large food producers and big box players²³





Education and training

*Schools and universities shutdown gives room to
largest tele-education experiment ever, although
with stark differences between public/private
schools*

Education

Individual effects

- Acceleration of online education due to inability of schools to function boost e-learning penetration, shifting its status from poor cousin to mainstream mode of teaching/learning²⁴
- Spare time due to lockdown being invested in acquiring new skills or learning new topics²⁵

Though far from perfect as it also spawns

- Overloaded parents
- Overloaded students with online time
- Overloaded and frustrated teachers²⁶



Societal effects

- Major migration to online dissemination of knowledge and debates at all levels including university courses and academic/professional meetings congresses
- Even if facing students and parents' expectations for a face-to-face dominant mode of teaching, schools and universities will likely capitalize on skills learned by students and professors to scale-up and innovate in e-learning due to lower costs
- Fairly successful adaptive replication by other education/training-related segments like physiotherapy, martial arts, chess classes, etc.
- Reduced mobility due to home-schooling and e-learning produces lower travel GHG emissions

Concomitantly, full switch to edu-tech models generates

- Accelerated inequalities between public vs. private schools students²⁷
- Intensified inequalities between computer/internet literate and illiterate populations. Same with disabled students (usually overlapping private/public schooling divide in developing nations like BR)
- Hunger and financial stress over poor families whose kids were fed in/by public schools²⁸
- Reducing moral and training role of professors/teachers



A woman with dark hair is smiling and holding a glass of beer. In the background, a laptop screen shows a video conference with several participants. The scene is set in a home environment, likely during a lockdown.

Leisure & entertainment I

Social distancing and lockdown prohibitions impose a cultural recession in traditional terms, slumping live attendance to sports, events, plays, and festivals/parties



Leisure & entertainment

Individual effects

- Higher in-home consumption of screened cultural events, news, book items, documentaries, family movies furnish families with the opportunity for exceptionally frequent domestic sharing of cultural consumption products. While adding new social routines for bonding, this sharing may also favor intergenerational transmission of practices of open debate and plural views over objective contents by contrasting opinions
- Games colonization of entertainment: acceleration of the merge of immersive technology and virtual socialisation by means of the ascendancy of gaming as platforms and rationale through which entertainment occurs. Innovative merging of engagement formats (e.g., DJ parties landscaped within virtual gaming/Fortnite; simultaneous, real-time group attendance of movies/Netflix Party; video-messaging broadcasting and engagement in celebrations and parties/Houseparty, Zoom) may give way to more inclusive forms of leisure²⁹

Parallel to those positive effects...

- People turn into greater couch potatoes by skyrocketing screen-time (potentially affecting their health and social abilities) - particularly among kids/teens³⁰
- No short/medium-term expectations for joining social/sport events or having cultural consumption by majorities, freezing an impoverished notion of leisure reduced to digital-mediated consumption behaviors³¹
- Excessive exposure to social media may accelerate issues of online bullying



Leisure & entertainment I

Societal effects

- Democratisation of cultural offer through free or discount-based online accessibility via virtual visits to museums, zoos, shows, festivals, and local and international destinations (propelled by show producers, secretaries of culture & private tour agencies)³²
- Relative democratisation of specific contents as some networks offer free-access to previously paid materials, including kids-oriented series/movies and documentaries
- Public endorsement and demand for online lives and shows that rescue more than music bands³³
- Online gaming as social bridging tool (mostly teens/young adults). Specific games like social simulation games indirectly/playfully reconnecting individuals with nature³⁴
- Escapism and boredom pushing forward omniscient gaming and the reduction of entertainment to distractive, immersive, shallowly interactive routines, impoverishing alternative forms of recreation³⁵
- Gaming ascendancy incentivizes the spread of gambling expanding businesses like poker, rummy, etc., but also thrusts gambling addictions and its negative financial and social effects, turbocharged by the pandemic weakening of alternative forms of leisure
- Games omnipresence pushes forward another wave of planned obsolescence in VR equipment, generating further solid waste and further exhausting rare raw materials
- Social distancing habits and lockdown recessive effects on culture industry threatens the existence of public events and live entertainment (together with the vast supply-chain of producers, artists, creative staff, logistics firms, food, cleaning and safety staff) while severely reducing the appeal of conventional cultural socializing (theatre, cinema, philosophical cafés, book clubs/discussions)
- City center revitalization plans sustained upon a planned densification of a lively downtown cultural offer go into crisis. Prohibition or reduced presence of public in cinemas, theatres, comedy clubs, jazz cafés, piano bars in downtown areas, together with boosts in poverty/misery (homelessness) around these areas due to layoffs and finance crisis, augments fears of crime and personal safety, further motorizing a negative cycle of decay





Leisure & entertainment II

Lockdown leaves more time to home-based hobbies and activities which coupled with financial shortages and in-home family/community life pushes back old-time, non-material forms of leisure

Leisure & entertainment II

Individual effects

- Boom in DIY: cooking, repairing, gardening, self-hairdressing/home-made beauty enhancements,³⁶ along with a major uptake in online visits to cooking/recipe blogs/sites³⁷
- Record sales of baking/cooking ingredients sometimes generating product shortage (i.e., yeast and flour for bread/pizza)³⁸

Yet...

- DIY engagement coupled with sanitation concerns will discourage shared economy services based on bartering and exchanging access to tools for money or collaboration
- Few authorities calling off for gardening or repairing DIY activities as these may potentially result in injuries that may further strain medical attendance or trigger virus contagion when patients attend clinics/hospitals

Societal effects

- Rediscovery of inexpensive, non-monetary, family-oriented activities connect with emerging values of nostalgia and may revitalize values of sufficiency, community, and decoupling the notions of pleasure, desire or happiness from high-street or conspicuous consumption
- Revaluation of short distance, local surroundings, road travelling (vs. long-haul, flying) to avoid sanitation red-tape measures at airports, destinations, etc.³⁹
- Reduced leisure-mileages which in turn lower GHG emissions

On the other hand...

- Embracement of “staycations” and rejection of away-from-home vacations likely to reduce local tourism and hospitality economy and jobs (from country-side inns to farming houses to tour guiding to adventure trips) – all activities that usually involves numerous, non-polluting, youth-led SMO businesses likely to go bankrupt
- Abrupt decline in demand for destinations outside metropolitan areas will lead to further emigration of youth towards urban centers (e.g., de-ruralization and aging of rural areas), resulting in housing agglomeration of urban areas





Consumption I Patterns for spending scenarios

Lockdown policies blocked the enactment of consumption and related rituals following usual standards, levels, and goals. Coupled with drastic, major drainage in personal finances, consumption become the other most scarce practice and resource, together with social companionship

Consumption / Patterns for spending scenarios

Individual effects

End of conspicuous consumption?

- As people spend most of their time isolated or at a distance from others, status symbols may change or display signaling may lose importance as superfluous and inconsequential. Display becomes irrelevant when no physical meetings occurred. Likely to be replaced by status symbols which can be communicated online → room for new social norms
- Economic hardship (rising unemployment, zeroed savings, decreasing incomes, perception of increased expenses), conscious use of home resources to avoid further financial stress, and home-based slowdown practices dismissing new material stimuli → a heightened sense of frugality and unnecessary materialism to guide individual acts of provision
- Survivalist engagement with repairing and reused goods following sanitation protocols, as a way to circumvent drainage of personal resources may ultimately excite circular economy initiatives

Consumption revenge?

- Repressed, compensation-oriented, self-gratification hyper-consumerism may loom in the horizon to offset limitations in consumption during worst phases of the pandemic, thereby enticing a materialistic accumulation spree
- Consumption revenge multiplying solid waste and discouraging circular economy initiatives perceived as unsafe and emotionally frustrating
- Alternatively, economic insecurity and finance drainage may spur consumer avoidance or reduction of premium-priced greener, certified, sustainable products
- Fewer personal resources available for investing in long-term ecological/renewable energy for housing, mobility, water consumption, etc.





Consumption / Patterns for spending scenarios


Societal effects

- Recession and commute/travel bans helps to meet GHG emissions targets
- Wildlife recovery and lower pollution levels in different geographies are widely broadcasted by mass media revealing a positive side to the forced degrowth by economic shutdown
- Global South governments may provide free services for basic needs, including financial help and medical care, temporarily offsetting recession effects and guaranteeing minimal welfare thresholds. However, these steps are far from building a permanent safety network⁴⁰
- Governments' policies to reduce financial injury prevent further deterioration of economic conditions, among these:
 - exceptional decrees to freeze of layoffs and evictions (Argentina)
 - temporary tax delays for SMEs coupled with 90-days labor payroll and timetable flexibilisations partially covered by the state (Brazil)

Yet...

- Global South governments will come out of the pandemic with higher debts, lower revenues due to recession, becoming unable to provide relief effectively during the crisis and unable to sustain safety net after flattening the curve
- Skyrocketing social inequality due to labor informality or self-employed status of majorities in Global South, being hardest hit by lockdown and unable to receive financial help. These groups that account for about half the labor force will be late to recover financially due to the enduring recession environment even after the virus is finally contained⁴¹



A woman with long brown hair is holding a white credit card with a black stripe. In the background, a laptop screen displays a grid of various high-heeled shoes. A small potted plant is also visible on the desk. The scene is set in a bright, indoor environment with a window in the background.

Consumption II Means/modes of consumption

Eating out in restaurants and frequenting cafes (which accounted for roughly 1/6 of meals and 1/3 of total spending in food) has met a sudden halt, as the lockdown required people to remain at home

Consumption // Means/modes of consumption

Individual effects

E-commerce boom:

- Lockdown measures encouraged online shopping, teaching new abilities to internet illiterate or e-commerce wary publics⁴²
- Comfort and crowd-free safety will further maintain and push a migration of consumers to online shopping⁴³
- Delivery systems expansion with their use of non-human technology in warehouses, through robots, autonomous vehicles, drones accelerating emerging trends toward automation in supply and delivery chains
- Boost in more home-cooked meals based on more visits or purchases to groceries and supermarkets, affecting as many as half the population


- Business re-structuring to include or make a conversion to take away and home delivery model has been unevenly successful, while it further boosts a gig economy of underpaid, unsafe jobs⁴⁴
- Outdoor socializing heavily anchored on eating out venues is likely to slowdown, or becoming a status signal of class distinction by getting restrained to upscale dinners capable of ensuring luxury physical distancing

- Less eating out means lower ecological footprint due to less urban mobility requirements
- Declines in non-essential items shopping due to resources shortage and lack of opportunities for status displaying means less packaging: less waste

On the other hand...

- E-commerce companies like Amazon, Alibaba, eBay, MercadoLivre growing even stronger, whereas independent, specialized brick-and-mortar retailers scale down → concentration of retail in fewer players thus hindering redistribution effects of SMEs retailing.
- Packaging and plastic materials use boosts due to hygiene concerns when displaying food at groceries/markets, increased buying of packaged food, sanitation precaution when using touch-based payment methods, increased take-away/delivery all resulting in more non-compostable, hard-to-recycle waste⁴⁵
- Skyrocketing record of spam virus, hacking attempts, and online fraud due to mass boost of online shopping



A photograph of a woman and two children participating in recycling. The woman, wearing a light blue shirt, is pouring water from a clear plastic bottle into a blue recycling bin. A young girl in a pink and white striped shirt is holding another clear plastic bottle. A young boy in a red shirt is sitting on the ground next to the bin, which has the text 'WE RECYCLE' and a recycling symbol on it. The background shows a house with stone pillars and a dark door. The image is partially covered by a large orange semi-circle on the left side.

Consumption III

Cycle of acquisition, use, disposal

Shopping and integrating goods in one's lives under pandemic and post-pandemic times requires new protocols and follows new objectives, forcing an unstable balance between personal safety considerations and channelizing a drive for self-expression and social stimulation

Consumption III

Cycle of acquisition, use, disposal

Individual effects

- Declining income and sufficiency experience during lockdown spurs low intensity consumption patterns, non-material forms of leisure/entertainment, awareness about importance of producing own food/small urban gardens
- Personal valorization of clean air (including open-air, natural ventilation), green, well-preserved landscapes, natural illumination, particularly in the city surrounding areas
- Reduction in size of meals, recovery of meals leftovers, more conscious use of water & electricity by house members, higher valuation of product maintenance vs. automatic disposal/substitution
- Reuse economy pushed forward by declining income as much as by lessened brand-conscious dispositions in light of quarantine restrictions to status signal displaying
- Walking and cycling rediscovered and valued – alternative hedonism which is further reinforced by solidarity calls to using face-mask and other-oriented procedures

However, the pandemic also generates several drawbacks in sustainability

- Brazilian households generating 15%-25% more solid waste as a result of confinement demand for food delivery (*Abrelpe*)
- Disposable throwaway culture is back driven by contagious frenzy mindset that appraises non-reusable/disposable recipients like plastic cups, plates, bags, straws as safer⁴⁶
- Back to individualized forms of consumption such as single-person mobility solutions rather than public transport or car pooling; buying own tools rather than sharing tools or swapping services
- Natural, plant-based cleaning products perceived as less safe/efficient against C19 than conventional, petrochemical-based products thus dropping sales of the former (*Nielsen*)
- Premium prices of organic, ethical, sustainable products leading to lower demand in times of uncertain income, rising unemployment and cuts in spending



Consumption III

Cycle of acquisition, use, disposal

Societal effects

- European governments acknowledging that full circular economy will make production and consumption safer than outsourced model
- Incentives for urban agricultural initiatives (urban farms, garden roofs and shared gardens) as critical to food security policy
- Awareness raising effect of wider media visibility to cause-effect linkage between the pandemic and the combo of economic expansion/human occupation and destruction of natural habitats of wildlife → importance of wildlife conservation renewed
- Climate change linkage to disease spread among attentive publics helps to maintain its relevance among some groups⁴⁷
- Valuation of local producers; investment in less dependency from overseas & transportation-intensive products → rethinking of supply chain both downstream/upstream

Yet...

- Public procurement of food products to freely distribute among the needy single-minded concerned about price and delivery convenience, not favoring sustainable producers nor organic, healthy food-staples, etc.
- Waste segregation/sorting ignored by public service waste recollection/management companies as precaution to avoid workers from handling potential C19 infected, hazardous materials → solid waste thrown into landfills un-educating the public about waste segregation (BR).
- In some countries, waste sorting was out rightly prohibited (Italy)
- Recycling centers/programs being stopped due to risk-aversion against virus spread (US)
- Blow of collaborative consumption or sharing economy initiatives, from co-working to couch-surfing and rental of rooms that require guarantees of cleaning, to carpooling
- Medical waste growing 4-fold and personal protective equipment accounting for a big chunk of new solid waste⁴⁸





Mobility

Radical, lasting changes in the way people work, study, shop, engage in leisure and wellbeing, socialize, or participate in professional events like videoconferenced congresses, coupled with enduring self-protective hygiene mentality, severely affects the demand for mobility^{[49](#)}

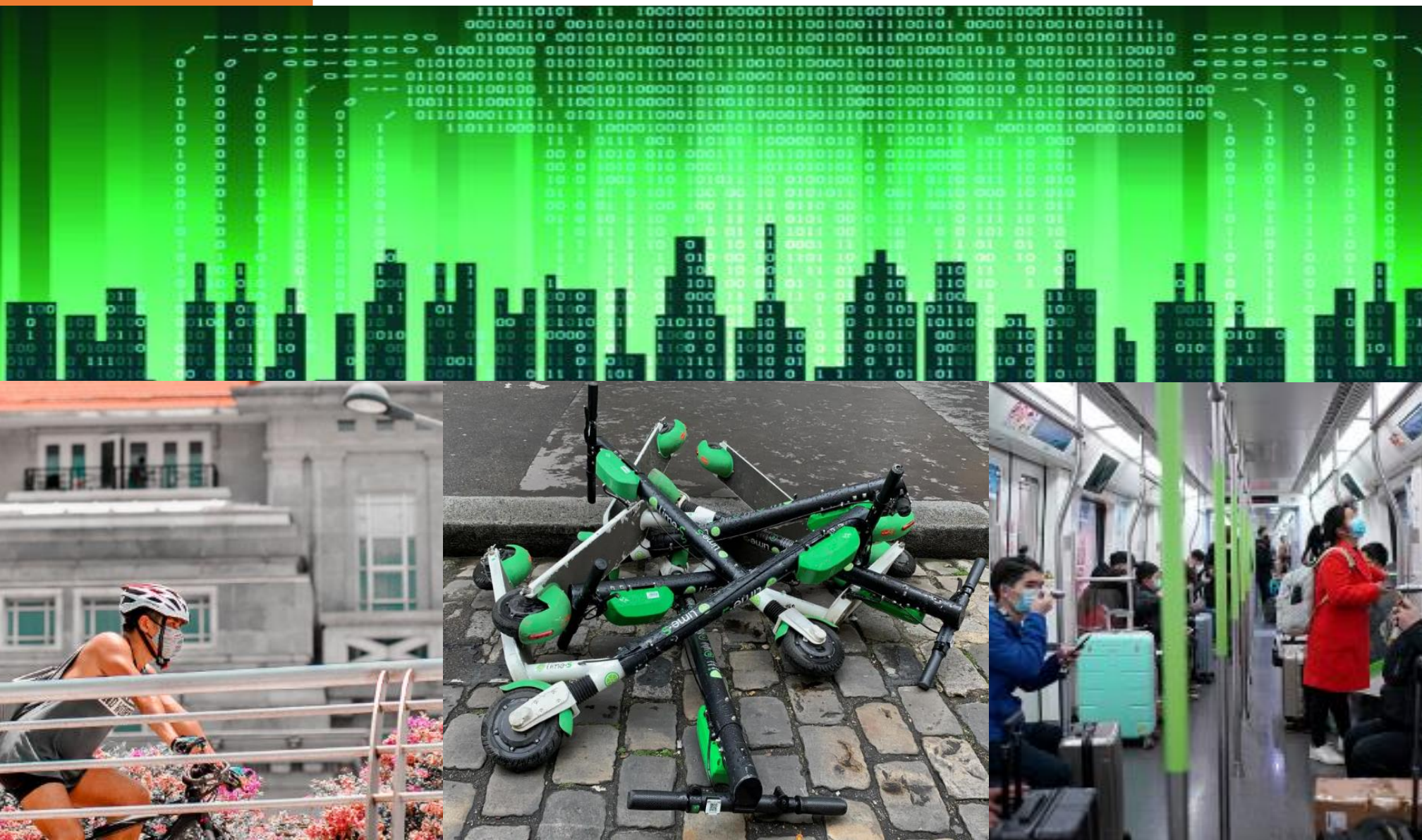
Mobility

Individual effects

- Quarantine-adapted daily routines alters the perception of reliance on mobility. Needs for using transportation falls into questioning, as home-based activities represent a savings in commute time, petrol expenses, or bus/train tickets
- Walking and cycling rediscovered as mobility modes while acquiring additional valued as means for mental and physical equilibrium to keep pace with social isolation policy
- Autonomous electric vehicles likely to obtain larger acceptance by general population being perceived as supporting physical distancing

At the same time, mobility changes have several sustainability downturns

- Back to individualized forms of single-person mobility, instead of public transportation or car pooling, with the potential risk of shooting up emissions, pollution levels, congestion traffic and cramp street parking, once quarantine is lifted
- Micromobility solutions based on scooters, bikes, hover-boards and dicycles (e.g. segways) may die interrupting a raising awareness/acceptance of alternative forms of urban mobility



Mobility

Societal effects

- Less mobility due to pandemic and resulting fears for displacement promotes lowering air and noise pollution, as well as reduced GHG emissions due to less travelling
- Hugely reduced air travelling imposing a major favorable impact to meet climate change targets
- Micromobility solutions could also pick up more quickly if strict disinfection protocols are installed
- Few locations taking the opportunity to expand bike lanes (Paris, Bogotá, Brussels, New Zealand) while other imposing further car bans and road closures in downtown areas as short-term regulation to enforce quarantine (Buenos Aires, São Paulo) but also as key component of urban planning (Milan, few cities in UK)
- Environmentally-friendly walking/cycling as means of transportation becomes far more visible in a reduced or ban mobility scenario, thus obtaining gains in legitimacy

Conversely,

- Public transportation demand falls, as the system is perceived as a loci of crowds and a source of hygiene risks to personal health
- Car-pooling and shared transportation (paid and collaborative rides, bike and scooter sharing) also suffers a major loss given the heightened sense of risk perception, leveling down some forms of reduced emissions for urban moving along with affecting thousands of gig jobs
- Configuration and design changes in cars, buses, metros, and planes to meet new health standards will skyrocket costs prices, possible bringing about further social exclusion. Air-tickets expected to rise 50% of its price, along with the vanishing of low cost carriers, means the end of popular, accessible air travelling, which turns again into a luxury service
- Bail-outs to airlines in Europe (Sweden, UK, Denmark), US and Australia with no environmental conditions



A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a blue sleeveless top, is sitting on a bed with a grey patterned blanket. She is looking out a large window with a wooden frame. The view outside shows a balcony with a wooden railing and some green plants. The room has a modern, minimalist feel with wooden beams on the ceiling. An orange semi-circular graphic element is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

Housing and living habitats

Lockdown places home at the center-stage of everyone's lives, becoming the single ambience hosting multiple functions for which residences were originally not planned for. The blurring of boundaries between household, workplace, shoppingscape, studyplace, fitnessplace, leisurescape, etc requires major changes/redesign

Housing/ buildings/ living habitats

Individual effects

- Continued adherence to home-office will lead to search for home-office adapted residences thereby downscaling GHG emissions and pollution over the long-term
- Quarantine brings up new valuation metrics impelling new residential design with acceleration of emerging features that turn into synonyms of health, risk-minimization and psychological wellbeing:
 - Quality of the local surroundings, emphasizing the need for highly accessible public spaces and services
 - Naturally aired and space circulation assets, granting natural ventilation, built-in thermal and acoustic insulation, and reducing exposure to enclosed air conditioning/heating systems. Preference assigned to residential or office building with individual separate circulation systems
 - Increased valorization of community gardens, condos and neighborhood farms, support for urban greening projects
 - Balconies regain importance: open-air meals-place, place for socialization (with neighbors), break from home-office, loci for leisure (i.e., gardening activities, reading)
 - Pet room, as ongoing trend for pet adoption accelerates due to pets' highly valued recognition as threat-free and good companion for elderly facing social isolation [50](#)
 - Delivery box: similar to a postbox, as a comfort feature in times of e-commerce, food delivery and social distancing
 - Smaller multiple uses saloons for private use (not just garden space but exercise and entertainment spaces)

Quarantine and crowd-free priority propels non-sustainable changes:

- Dramatic shift from aspirations to downtown glamour riding on city center revitalization projects and densification of cultural and leisure offer back to suburbia, urging a new wave of gated communities life. Higher demand for safe, open-space, 'clean' boundaries, larger-room residences in gated communities
- Contamination fears may stimulate single resident occupation, especially among elderly, thus intensifying loneliness issues [51](#)
- Needs for bigger residential units in urban areas may further gentrify city center buildings, while at the same time larger homes means larger ecological footprints
- Notions of residential-related health risk minimization and psychological wellbeing increasingly reduced to a private equity



Housing/ buildings/ living habitats

Societal effects

- Based on lower disposable income and assimilation of sufficiency as a value, individuals accept/demand for residential units to be small and multifunctional, with flexible divisions of internal space and fitted with multiple communications systems
- Freeze in evictions or rental costs may reduce financial burden over tenants (Argentina, Germany, New Zealand) yet this may also boost rental price increases in the future while discouraging future constructions to attend housing needs
- Prioritization of public sanitation investments and anti-overcrowding measures in slums/popular hoods to minimize future pandemic risks⁵²

On the other hand...

- Downtown areas revitalization projects may halt due to financial impact of C19 on families resources and city center SMEs bankruptcy, the association of crowded areas with contagious risks which depletes cultural, events, and gastronomy industries and the loss of real estate value in city centers
- Alternatively, social distancing experience and the need for functional home-office space will drive demand for larger residential units among the mid/upper-class elite working for corporations within the formal labor market. This might spur further social inequalities
- Co-working spaces, market-based b2c urban sharing of households (e.g., Airbnb) and coach-surfing will freeze, if not disappear as contagious fears remain, travel bans endure, and home-office and university e-learning gets mainstream

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Citizen politics and interactions with the state

Major shift from elite-challenging to elite-directed involvement in politics, incarnated in power delegation to state authorities.

Sanitary emergency rule hollows street mobilizations and town meeting-type of democracy, while economic shutdown and continued lockdown fuels civil unrest. Private politics exerted through online and marketplace channels

Citizen politics and interactions with the state

Individual effects

- Recognition of state leadership and need for strong state presence to effectively cope with outbreaks and collective articulation of healthcare resources
- Perception change in favor of welfare state role and its mission/promise, particularly in patronizing advances in medical coverage, healthcare and science
- Increase in prosocial and cooperative behavior through self-initiated engagement or development of solidarity and volunteering actions, leveraging social capital⁵³

Nonetheless...

- Acquiescence to social and political control with consensual erosion of civil liberties and human rights → Danger of continued social control: suppression of civil liberties and political rights resulting from exceptional patrolling of individuals' behavior during quarantine
- Increased acceptance of general surveillance to fight pandemic, even favoring China-like social control measures⁵⁴
- Overnight internalization of a surveillance culture through privacy control and police denunciation of others living more flexible quarantine practices
- Growing support for heavily policed or militarized ghetto-type policies towards slums as outbreak control measures, escalating confinement
- Paranoid-based aggressive behaviors against medical care personnel being expelled or persecuted in buildings as potential, threatening sources of contagion
- Extension of lockdown and social isolation measures amidst financial hardship fuels civil disobedience and social unrest



*Citizen politics
and
interactions
with the state*

*Societal
effects*

- Return of authority: new salient, trusted role for government and the up scaling of experts/knowledge-solid/science-based → Shift towards elite-directed, decline or freezing in elite-challenging/elite-directing publics
- Recognition of organizing/articulating role of the state to coordinate solidarity-oriented actions: → In Argentina, government sponsored network of 35,000 young, middle-aged to do shopping, pay bills, complete procedures for quarantined elderly aged 70+ in Buenos Aires (#MayoresCuidados)
- Embrace of political consumerism as adapted yet expanded repertoire of action, mainly channelized through social media, in the form of denouncing and boycotting opportunistic or socially irresponsible brands, and spreading favorable word and trade rewarding ethically behaving brands [55](#)



Citizen politics and interactions with the state

Societal effects

- Ruling elites obliterate dissent, repress civil rights and freedoms (including press freedom), militarize territories, postpone elections, claim full powers and perpetuate in government through lockdown prohibitions for agglomerations
- Narratives putting a premium on collective healthcare safety in order to raise tolerance for exceptionally authoritarian norms and procedures wind up in political demobilization through the waning of protest. Open criticisms to forms of public activism focused on non-sanitary issues further kindles demobilization. Increasing denunciations this exceptionalism undercovers a threat or overt weakening of democracy⁵⁶
- Good citizenship redefined as compliant to sanitation emergency citizenship. War to pandemic narratives encouraging a militaristic language and approach, with discursive politics defining options in binary, friend-or-foe terms
- Revival of a strong state rhetoric leaves no tolerance for denunciations of procurement corruption, rulers authoritarianism, or officials inefficiency, turning a blind eye to crisis acceleration events like understaffed/unsupplied food-banks
- Lockdown measures halted pro-environment street mobilization. Climate change may be postponed as urgency being replaced by economic boom, consumption propelling, and expansion of healthcare spending
- Cheap oil may make renewable energy investment delayed. On top of this, government bail-out of fossil fuel industries and high emissions segments (automotive, air travel) with no environmental concessions
- Lockdown of public sector left forests and indigenous communities unprotected as environmental regulation authorities remained under quarantine which resulted in a rise of deforestation (+280% in Amazon, IMAZOM) and a disproportional number of indigenous people infected by C19 (Instituto SocioAmbiental)
- Likewise, tourism-drain in Africa provokes underfunding of wildlife anti-poaching, anti-deforestation, and rural settlements
- Xenophobia/anti-migrant policies as strangers/others become stereotyped as potential disease-vectors
- Economic recession likely to fuel social unrest once anti-agglomeration policies ease, re-initiating a cycle of protests-repression likely to speed up authoritarian responses or destabilize governments' handling of pandemic 2nd wave [← Back to Table of Contents](#)





Financial security & social equality

Lockdown means an economic stoppage, not just recession or depression, constituting a world-scale experiment on degrowth (a hugely dramatic one as it is led by disaster, rather than by plan)

The economic consequences of this stoppage affects society horizontally, except for public sector employees

Financial security & income perspectives

The current crisis offer some window of opportunity in civilizing spending and consumption behaviors towards sustainability by

- Growing consciousness about easy adaptability to self-sufficiency, reduced consumption, anti-work/spend treadmill lifestyles
- Improved planning of purchases echoing conscious consumption blueprints and reducing non-essential, unnecessary material consumption spending

Though sustainability payoffs can not obscure the dramatic personal consequences, accelerating social inequalities and tensions

- Huge impact of economic shutdown on financial estates, aggravated in developing nations by fiscal crisis of state and continued economic insecurity – Brazil GDP expected to plunge between 5%-6,5%
- Layoffs, job contract cancelations or reductions with lowered paychecks impact 53% of Brazilian families, more harshly among those from lower classes (65% families impacted among SECs C2DE-IBRE/FGV survey, may)⁵⁷

Societal effects

- C19-induced recession and overnight financial uncertainty heightens the value of savings, stimulating a reappraisal of building-up a financial safety net over spending frenzy and conspicuous consumption
- Increases in banked population as a result of protective hygiene measures (minimizing bills handing) and economic support measures by government (forcing to open a bank account to receive financial subsidies)

- First reversal in social mobility towards larger numbers of poverty and misery⁵⁸
- Acceleration of social inequality due to recession and massive layoffs⁵⁹
- Economic insecurity coupled with lifted quarantine triggers petty crime and threats of looting of supermarkets and small-scale, street-facing business
- Increasing resentment against state employees, public-salary earners, and political/judicial elites as they kept receiving payment without working and without cuts, unlike private sector workers – all of which may fire anti-state, populist sentiment





Healthcare provision & medical reassurances

C19 crisis is conducive to acknowledging of healthcare infrastructure as vital to both society wellbeing and the economy vigor, thus overcoming a previously predominant framing of healthcare as a cost drag into balanced public and private finances

Healthcare provision & medical reassurances

Individual effects

- Citizens will pressure governments to expand and upgrade health systems
- Healthcare reassurances (e.g., prevention measures, stricter sanitation policy, facilitation of hygiene repertoires) to become a critical requirement, feature equivalent to comfort (if not a new synonymous of comfort)

Yet...

- Higher costs for expanded sanitation/hygiene prevention measures at work/school/travel environments will raise prices further impacting on personal finances
- Universal tax increases are highly likely to fund strengthened public healthcare system, transferring costs to the average tax payer



Societal effects

- Recognition of the role and value of a unified, public, free, state-supported healthcare system to cover assistance of middle/lower SECs like continental Europe public hospital networks or Brazil's SUS
- Healthcare investments will get a big boost. Governments pump in money to upgrade hospitals, buy new equipment, train and hire more workers, develop vaccines and other drugs. In BR, during the first 4 months of 2020, total expenditures authorized for Ministry of Health already exceed 48% of the entire budget used in 2019
- Increasing use of telemedicine, with regulations legalizing and legitimating its expansion, thus lowering mobility ecological footprint⁶⁰

Downturns of telemedicine and AI-based diagnostics exists: a standardized, one-size-fits-all medical attendance mode in the medium/long-term likely to remove patient-physician relationship and overemphasize objective data and downplay subjective data



*Back to
normal
or a
New normal?*

What the post-pandemic world will look like?

The acknowledgment of impacts and inflections in domains of everyday life critically helps to foreseeing what a post-covid-19 world will look like and to exploring the extent to which the future will go beyond a simple replication of old ways versus the possibility to carry on the current watershed of changes towards entirely new lifestyles. Those expecting a reversal to business as usual ultimately treat the pandemic effects as a mirage of alterations, a simulation of disruptions playing as a mere parenthesis until the abnormalities of the present fade away. Those expecting a “new normal” – a landscape of dramatically altered practices paving the road to wholly new existences – gaze a transformation so radical that rules, standards, and meanings are entirely revised and revolutionized.

A simple but popular prognosis reduces future patterns to a polarity between bouncing back to old ways (usually labeled “back to normal”) vs. the embracement of a “new normal”. Simplistic and reductionist as it may sound this polarity has caught attention worldwide, with over 42.4 million entries labeled as “new normal” in GoogleSearch (400,000 when using the Portuguese version). Narrowing repercussions of this simplified landscape to sustainability-related topics, one still gets nearly 6.4 million entries⁶¹.

For sure, GoogleSearch and its million entries that bet in a simple dichotomy are not alone. Media outlets, survey practitioners and many in the sustainability community reinforced this duality by priming the future in terms of going back to the unsustainable past that ultimately generated the crisis vs. a leap-forward towards a sustainable and smart future⁶².



*Back to
normal
or a
New normal?*

With millions of internet entries about what awaits around the corner, the mission of envisioning the post-covid-19 future becomes an industry of its own. One industry that surely requires acknowledging more complexity than a dual scenario.

So far, most efforts have focused on specific segments of the economy or effects within a single dimension of sustainability (for example, GHG emissions or energy transitions). Other efforts have focused on the disruptions affecting practices in everyday life (e.g., Manchester SCI report).⁶³ This approach helps to understand the extent and limits to changes in mundane, ordinary acts of material use and disposal, given the surrounding conditions imposed by infrastructure and society's organizational designs. However, this does not tell us much about how individuals process and react to the dramatic changes affecting their way to navigate ordinary life. Practices are dissected as independent from individuals' perceptions; events and policies connected to handling the C19 crisis apparently have no role in changing attitudes. Furthermore, this approach does not offer a rationale for fluctuations in the conceptualization of habitual needs and wants.

The practice approach puts so much emphasis on the structural conditions that lock-in routines and activities that tends to overvalue inertia and disregard the role of shifting perceptions and the possibility of changes. As a result, once lockdown restrictions ease or gone removed, amidst barely touched infrastructure barriers and structural conditions for practices, expectations from a "practice theory" perspective heavily incline in favor of a back-to-normal scenario. **Is this what the few examples of flexibilised or revised quarantines show us?**





*Transitioning
beyond an
old normal
vs.
new normal
dichotomy*

Co-occurrences of continuous quarantine in some locations and gradual lifting of restrictions in other locations, together with governments and experts speculations about the tentative, explorative, and reviewable nature of all sanitation policies, reinforce individuals' ambivalent and uncertain attitudes about how to behave and what to expect of the future.

Concomitantly, continued adherence to full or partial remote work and education, in parallel to halting investments, reducing salaries and cutting down labor hours or jobs, are dramatically conditioning individuals' behaviors and expectations about what wants/needs to comply with, if not entirely reviewing the very essence and reason of being of previously defined needs/wants. **As a result, vast majorities continue excessively cautious about abandoning a set of self-protective, social cocooning behaviors that have composed a C19 lifestyle in itself, that is, a way of living under the circumstances of the pandemic.**^{[64](#)}



*Transitioning
beyond an
old normal
vs.
new normal
dichotomy*

From tightly government managed cases in the Far East to the gradual, nudged-based ease of restrictions in Western Europe societies, to the more chaotic, self-regulated ways of exiting social isolation of Brazil and other Latin American nations, evidence indicate that people are not automatically reproducing old habits. Neither have they jumped into radically different lifestyles.

They are transitioning between the known and the unknown, in conjunction with their possibilities, resources and opportunities. Under those circumstances, some behavioral changes are evident. Newly reopened shopping malls are far from being flooded by avid customers.⁶⁵ Parks, green areas, beaches attract crowds that do not necessarily follow the same responsible rule of physical distancing than in supermarkets or drugstores. Telework is slowly being combined with some physical presence in office, while some countries have reopened schools. These expressions of a transitioning in behaviors reveal what the examination of perceptions and sentiments make clear. **The ambiguity and exploratory nature of experts and officials' policies is reproduced by the public's ambivalence for dealing with traditional and newly developed routines and practices.**

Surveys illustrate this state of flux even in Global South contexts like Brazil where covid-19 toll has been phenomenal. Asked what options may better reflect their future behaviors once the crisis and restrictions imposed are over, **30% of Brazilians choose to embrace the past exactly as it was**, whereas another 26% envision a wholly different life of new routine and activities. This leaves a huge plurality of 44% that **foresees alternative futures**. The bulk of this plurality (8 in 10 of those 44%) anticipates a daily life somewhat different from the past (that is, major changes but not an entirely "new normal", *FSB/CNI survey*). The remaining public conceive some level of deviation from the "old normal" but still conserving a flavor and smell of the business as usual paradigm.⁶⁶



*Transitioning
beyond an
old normal
vs.
new normal
dichotomy*

In foreseeing the future, a dichotomy between going back-to-normal vs. new normal is intuitively appealing as it helps to order complex forthcoming lifestyles and behaviors in a rather parsimonious and logical manner.

On the other hand, acknowledging a diversity of scenarios may capture a more realistic portrait of what individuals currently do and think of doing, while also being in line with perceptions and feelings about what to expect from society.

Recognizing this complexity is key to the effort of speculating about the configurations of responses and modes of action that will constitute the post-covid patterns of behaviors. These configurations ultimately compose embryonic lifestyles scenarios that bear consequences for making progress towards sustainability.

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Implications for sustainability

Covid-19 repercussions relevant to sustainability can be identified in triple bottom-line terms of social, economic and environmental consequences, plus an ethical dimension.

For example, the adoption of full-time telework has several sustainability dividends. It involves savings for both firms and workers (economic), while drastically shrinking pollution and emissions from transportation (environmental). It also enables work/life balance by permitting more time with family and – at the societal level – making more tangible the possibility of adopting a shorter workweek with redistribution of employment opportunities (social). Lastly, it motivates workers to switch to a more stimulating performance assessment based goal-achievement, instead of basing recognition on schedules or in-office ritualistic procedures (ethical).

Telework also bears negative effects. It maintains workers in isolation, instills a feeling of being left out and gauged up on, and takes for granted a sense of self-discipline which is likely to fail overtime for a substantive portion of employees. It also presupposes worker's continuous availability further propelling the so-called "Zoom fatigue" or overt burnout. Further, it takes for granted the disputable assumption of in-home conditions to perform job tasks productively, timely and safely (ethical).

Telework presupposes that harsh social and cognitive barriers to effectively engage do not exist, whereas it also misses how it may deepen existent inequalities, particularly among computer illiterate or disabled workers (social).

Full-time home-office under covid-19 may result in salary reductions or having higher utility expenses or – from a societal perspective- a crisis in co-working initiatives and mounting hacking issues (economic).

Lastly, it may also lead to scaling up home energy use likely to be of non-renewable origin while scaling down usage of renewable energy powered firms (environmental).



*Recognizing
disruptions in
how needs
and wants
generate:
the scarcity
hypothesis*

An account of disruptions affecting sustainable behaviors is important provided those changes refer to domains of practice where needs and wants are defined. The definition of needs and wants does not occur in a vacuum. It is imprinted by the roles, responsibilities and goals derived from individual engagement within each of these dimensions of life and domains of practice. For example, telework redefines the domain of work practice by proposing a different role, responsibility and goals to in-office work. Goals and achievements are defined by results or outcomes individually generated rather than by following schedules or the personal contributions to positive teamwork climate. Responsibilities are highly individualized and relate to the self-discipline and autonomy of action that enables everyone else' telecommute to run smoothly as well. In terms of roles, teleworking epitomizes a depart from the hierarchy of crystallized functions and positions proper to in-office working as boundaries between leaders and led are blurred, given the need to abide by a self-managing ethos.

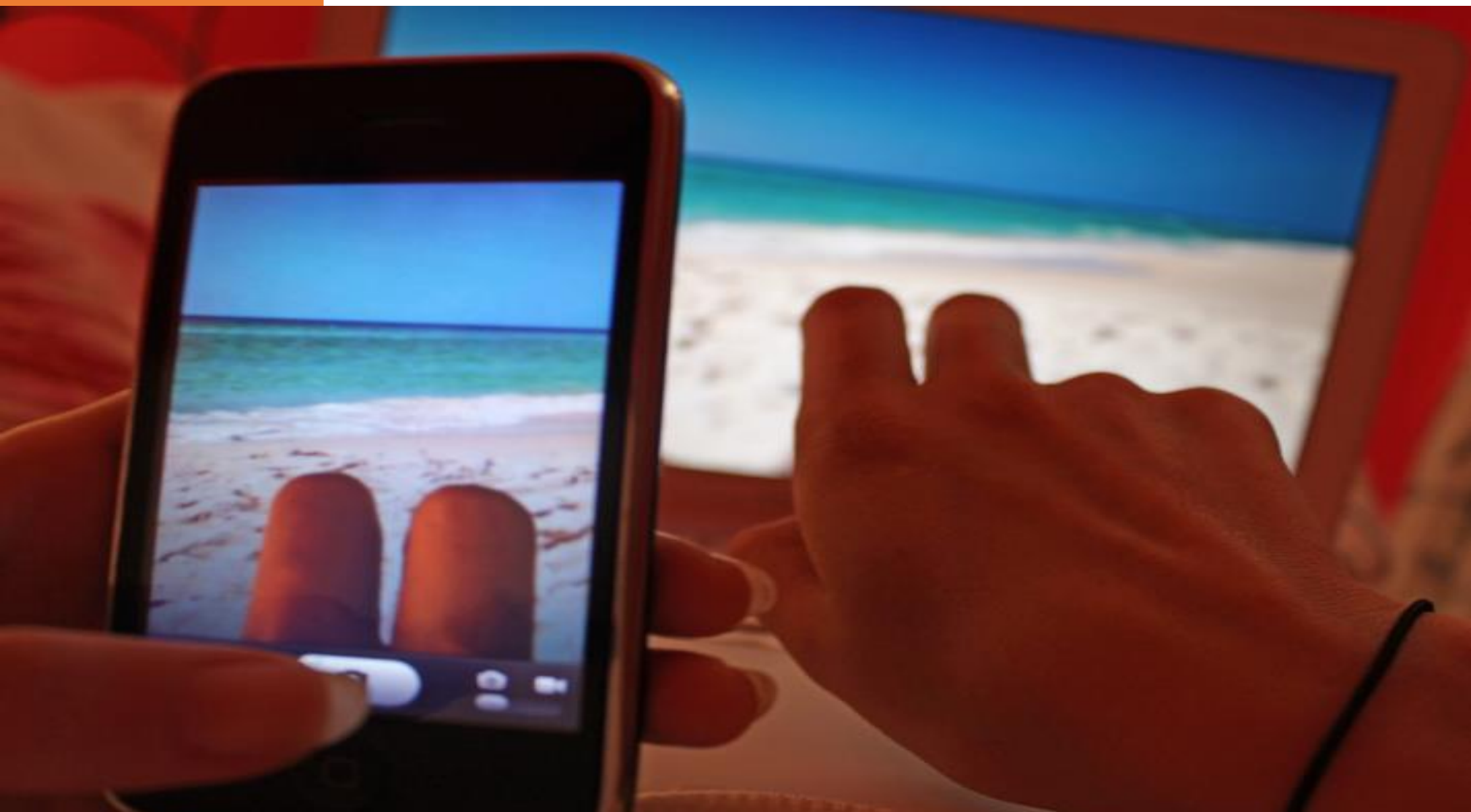
Disruptions in domains of practice help to recognize changing behavioral repertoires, which more radically depart from previous catalogues of action the more affected by scarcity the domains are. Scarcity imposes the more lasting consequences because that is what influences individuals' identification of needs and wants. The pandemic has primarily and more seriously affected practices of consumption and socializing. If anywhere, deprivation during the C19 crisis occurred in these two realms. Habitual patterns, procedures and volumes of consumption and social companionship are radically revamped by C19 policies, behaviors and structural as well as contingent impacts. The suppression of conventional manners of engaging in consumption and social companionship makes of these two the most scarce resources.



Scarcity in consumption and socializing domains

Scarcity has traditionally driven redefinition of values (Inglehart 1990), so it should also drive future understandings, conceptualizations and practices in those two realms most impacted by C19. Consuming and socializing in the way individuals originally learned and exercised prior to the pandemic become scarce experiences/uses thereby triggering alterations in people's pyramid of needs, definition of priority wants, and types of acceptable vs. questionable behaviors.

Scarcity in how we connect to goods or services define consumption relationships and the extent to which needs and wants are ultimately addressed. This reshapes social norms, attitudes towards consuming objects, and self-perceptions of capability to perform certain behaviors. Similarly, scarcity in the level and format of embracing social companionship determines our understanding of living sociability, triggering a similar reconceptualization of needs/wants, acceptable behaviors, and sense of control over behaviors and the desirable outcomes. Reasons, modes and drivers of consuming and socializing are critically shaped; moreover, the very nature of consumption and social companionship changes.



Scarcity in consumption and socializing domains

A focus on those domains more seriously affected (consumption and social companionship) help to line out potential behavioral and lifestyle scenarios and identify their repercussions for sustainability.

In the case of **consumption**, in addition to the redefinition of channels (e-commerce, delivery, drive-thru), procedures (increased rational planning and elimination of spontaneous, unplanned, on-site stimulated purchases), priorities (enthroning of cleaning and sanitary habits and products), C19 is also dramatically redefining the financial and purchasing power situation of vast majorities of individuals. In Global South contexts like Brazil, characterized by a majority in the informal labor market, this effect is even more intense once quarantine means frozen revenues and increased expenses and level of indebtedness. Formal workers in the private market fare better off although witnessing a dramatic shrinkage of their consumer power as a result of either layoffs, wage cuts, early retirement or unpaid holidays, thereby drowning their spending capabilities.^{[67](#)}

So thinking ahead of the post-C19 world, one can speculate of two opposing ideal-types responses in terms of consumption. On the one hand, a **radical back-to-old-normal, revenge consumption response**, where delayed gratification and repressed consumption urges compensation practices of materialistic goods accumulation emulating deep-rooted conspicuous consumption,. Let's call this the **"consumer revenge"** response.^{[68](#)}

On the other hand, a recognition of post-material payoffs by fulfilling needs through non-material goods and the valorization of frugality and sufficiency experienced during the "stay-at-home" exercise results in the abandonment of status markers and work/spend cycle treadmill. Let's call this the **"postmaterial frugality"** response.^{[69](#)}





*Scarcity in
consumption
and
socializing
domains*

The other dimension seriously affected by C19 relates to **social companionship**. Lockdown forced severe restrictions in social communication, group-related identity and belonging experiences. Individual isolation becomes the rule for many at the age-cohort extremes (youngest and eldest generations), opening the door to considerable privacy but also negative feelings and perceived vulnerabilities while freezing sociability capabilities.

For those sharing residence with others, social cushioning was essential to sustain a balance. Overnight this cushion was suddenly removed, letting everyone exposed to unexpected privacy loss as well as to negotiations about shared responsibilities within households. Daily conflicts may thus emerge. Concomitantly, social isolation policies resulted from a heightened sense of risk associated to others. Thus, social situations from gregarious encounters to crowded agglomerations swiftly get equated to risky, deadly outcomes. Sociability routines thus become subject to reinterpretation from a wellness feature enriching personal life to a contagion threat. **New channels, procedures, priorities also revamped how socializing becomes enacted.**



Scarcity in consumption and socializing domains

Here, one also can speculate of two opposing ideal-types responses in terms of socializing for the post-C19 world.

On the one hand, a dive into a bodily sociability with others by rushing into social and group situations, high physical out-of-home exposure aimed at recovering the human contact with others, catching up with the deprivation experience of being left without affections and positive social emotions, urgently compensating for frozen or repressed senses of identity and belonging. Let's call this the **"social diving"** response.

On the other hand, lockdown measures may have trained, or numbed, individuals into living social relationships remotely, assimilating the routines of digital connection as natural and valuing the privacy/intimacy/comfort/convenience of new ways of performing social life, weighting the benefits of solitude stronger than its costs, thus extending to the social dimension the newly learned abilities of remote and virtual social performance. Let's call this the **"internalization of virtuality"** response.

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Segmenting and profiling post-covid lifestyles scenarios

These are four possible, opposing ideal-type responses. Real-life situations may fall within degrees of each extreme. Still, these extreme profiles help to organize the possibilities ahead of us.

By intersecting each ideal-type responses of each domain, **we come up with 4 hypothetical settings or scenarios**. Where “consumer revenge” confluences with “social diving” reactions we call it the **“back to normal” scenario**.

If “consumer revenge” meets a prevalent response of “internalization of virtuality”, we call it the **“wireless materialists” scenario**.

By the same token, a context characterized by a turn towards “post-material frugality” with a social companionship response in terms of social diving, illustrates a “gregarious simplifiers” scenario.

Lastly, a combination of post-material frugality with virtuality internalized stages the “click rebels” scenario.

Post-covid-19 Lifestyles Scenarios

	SOCIAL DIVING	VIRTUALITY INTERNALIZED
CONSUMER REVENGE	BACK-TO-NORMAL	WIRELESS MATERIALISTS
POST-MATERIAL FRUGALITY	GREGARIOUS SIMPLIFIERS	CLICK REBELS



Segmenting and profiling post-covid lifestyles scenarios

What future lifestyles hosts each scenario? What sort of behaviors one can expect at the major domains of practices to understand what comes after C19 that is relevant for the debate on sustainability?

	BACK-TO-NORMAL	WIRELESS MATERIALISTS	GREGARIOUS SIMPLIFIERS	CLICK REBELS
WORK	Partial adoption of telework conditional to convenience, status signaling, and profit	Full adoption of remote work to maximize professional potential	Resistance to telework, favoring shortened workweeks	Remote work to enable self-realization and a free-lancing ethos, dynamics. Open-source collaborator
FAMILY/LOVE	Material conditioning of social and family life. Outsourcing of family/in-home caretaking tasks	Unbalanced work-life. Adopter of materialistic means of family life enjoyment	Priority to family/community life in work-life balance. Active engagement in analogic rituals	Sharing digitalized rituals with family, along with more egalitarian parenthood responsibilities
socializing	Avid in-person meetings out-of-home in consumption rituals	Mostly social cocooning with light adoption of balcony socializing. Isolation and loneliness as serious issues	Family and community priorities in socializing around green, neighboring areas and shared meals	Gamification of social life: Zoom lives and participatory VR-embedded rites like Netflix Party or Houseparty
WELLNESS	Relaxed germ-free sanitation approach. On-site visits to group-oriented fitness centers, wellness classes	Consumer of online fitness and wellness classes. Virtual reality gym and games	Non-monetary based mental and physical wellness routines (hikes, family life, meditation)	Germ-concerned mentality with spiritual activities investment. Avid consumer of mental health narratives
EDUCATION	Focus on networking outcomes. Resistance to home-schooling for kids	Continuous education instrumental to personal gains	Opposing home-schooling. Favorable to alternative education models	Supporters of e-learning for all publics and for improving broader skills.
LEISURE	Live shows, dine-outs, world travelling are a must to be posted online for display	24x7 news consumption. Avid immersive technology user for home entertainment and online gambling	Outdoor, natural surroundings trips as top leisure priorities. Involved in DIY hobbies & nostalgia analogic games	Cloud-based collaborative game playing. Virtual visits to museums, destinations, gamified meetings
CONSUMPTION CYCLE	Shopping malls spending in material status signaling goods (fast-fashion, cosmetics, accessories). Intensive users of touchless tools and disposable waste (plastics)	Switch to online-adapted status signaling goods (book shelves, art, gardening) Reliance on internet banking and e-commerce. Intensive generation of packaging/solid waste	Avoids e-commerce. Values recycled, repaired and reused goods. Engagement in urban farms and gardens. Waste minimizers (using segregation, composting), rejecting plastic recipients	Reliance in online, reputation-based e-commerce and sharing economy. Values reused goods. Highly planned purchases only.



Segmenting and profiling post-covid lifestyles scenarios

What future lifestyles hosts each scenario? What sort of behaviors one can expect at the major domains of practices to understand what comes after C19 that is relevant for the debate on sustainability?

	BACK-TO-NORMAL	WIRELESS MATERIALISTS	GREGARIOUS SIMPLIFIERS	CLICK REBELS
FOOD PROVISION & CONSUMPTION	Mix of online/offline buying. Relying on specialized, boutique –type shops. Animal-based coupled with healthy supplements and organic, certified food diets	Full reliance on online shopping. Dependence on industrialized, frozen food. Likely excessive eating and alcohol drinking	Priority to purchase clubs, local businesses, and direct to farmers markets. Transition to more plant-based organic/fresh food. Continuous home-cooking	Convenience-driven purchase, based online at big box stores. Optimizing food leftovers. Adopter of online-guided home-cooking
MOBILITY	Omniscient individualized automotive transportation as priority and status symbol	Mobility minimalists. Heavy reliance on online solutions including delivery, virtual meetings, e-commerce, e-banking	Commuting through walking/ biking. Favorable to exploring safe car-pooling/shared rides	Dreaming about self-driving vehicles, using micro-mobility means (individualized low-impact electric scooters/bikes)
HOUSING	Living in larger apartments or suburbia gated communities. Balconies as key socializing ecosystem	Valuation of highly compartmentalized units adapted to full home-office routines. Also likely to move to gated communities	Valuation of green, well-preserved landscapes and naturally aired/lightened habitats. Importance to water and energy conservation	Users of city center, small, flexible, multifunctional units. Importance to water and energy conservation
CITIZENSHIP	Conceptually opposed to lockdown. Political consumers thru boycotts and buycotts	Compliant citizens. Likely to trade rights for tighter social control aiming at health safety. Adopters of checkbook activism	Prosocial, self-initiated networked actions in solidarity to vulnerable groups	Highly involved in click-activism, crowdsourcing, social media campaigning
FINANCIAL SECURITY	No major hardships or slightly profiting from pandemic economy	Light or temporary impacts offset by decreased spending and savings	Relatively hit by hardship offset by substantial decreased spending, bartering, and dispossession	Seriously affected through furlough and lack of savings
HEALTHCARE	On-site visits to physicians, fitness centers, wellness classes	Heavy users of telemedicine and diet/weight control apps	Voluntary, other-oriented actions as therapy through care-mongering	Adopters of remote psychotherapy and mental wellness

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*Profiling
the post-
covid-19
protagonists:
a day
in life*

How individuals responding to the logic of each of these scenarios will confront the post-lockdown future? In which ways their lifestyles and patterns of behaviors echo long-lasting and short-termed changes introduced by C19? How and to what extent do they integrate sustainability considerations and practices into their way to manage life after the pandemic crisis eases its grip on society? What do they represent in terms of an old normal vs new normal prognosis?

Imagining a day in the life of an archetypical individual reflecting each scenario inclinations and presuppositions offers an intuitive window through which to identify the resulting lifestyles produced by the responses developed to deal with the scarcity of consumption and social companionship. This technique turns explicit the definition of needs and wants promoted by each scenario, by considering reactions to relevant domains of practice and the way these determine roles, responsibilities and goals. embraced by each segment.

This technique also help us to integrate the plethora of trends and occurrences already reviewed in a non-repetitive manner, by proposing certain hypothesis about behaviors, which will also reveal underlying values and perceptions of barriers or opportunities for action. This also enables to portray attitudes towards sustainability

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*A day
in BN
(Back-to-
Normal)
life*

Introducing BN. From her 150 sq meters apartment in one of the central, fancy neighborhoods, BN tests her collection of Louis Vuitton design mask while opening her bedroom curtains to check if the shopping mall has actually re-opened. Her lunch at 12pm at the barbecue food-court of the mall with two of her best friends is a great start of the post-pandemic times. She longs for face-to-face conversations where make-up and clothing can be checked, compared and exhibited while enjoying one or two caipirinhas. It wouldn't matter if these come in a plastic cup now that glasses are deemed unsafe.

Or, maybe lunch is the second best thing, as she soon needs to rush to meet her real-estate agent who promised to find a 250+ sq meter new apartment, with internal divisions and a larger garage room. Internal divisions became a must as she realized how difficult was to run Zoom-meetings with workmates while, at the same time, the kids were home-schooling and her husband was running loud fitness lives, all at the living room next to her. A larger garage is non-negotiable as well, as she needs her own personal car to fit the jewels her keen eye usual spots at the boutique stores and high-end markets. Going back to ride her own SUV car is not so bad, now the pandemic recession forced so many people to sell their hatchbacks, emptying the streets. If it weren't for the army of delivery motoboys rushing here and there, it'd be perfect.

A new building with larger apartments looks promising as they carry larger balconies as well, her favorite place to have breakfast or dine, as she learned during lockdown. A larger apartment will enable having a garden corner, now that walking to the greens may be a risk of contagion but also a risk of seeing homeless or beggars. Many people lost their jobs and became penniless, occasionally being evicted from their rented apartments. This was the case of Maria, her former maid, BN was left with no other option than ending Maria's contract due to the lack of public transportation but also to prevent contagion. She can't help thinking that people like Maria has something to do with the virus outbreak. Thanks God a robot cleaner was delivered right after, a new washing machine bought, and disinfectant surface doormats were invented. She trusts technology blindly to save mankind from big sacrifices.

BN ends her imported cheese and fruits breakfast alone, the kids needed to rush to their online classrooms not before negotiating getting a new Iphone each. It's of not use to tell them their current ones are perfectly working. BN takes a long shower before leaving the apartment. What an exciting time ahead!



*A day
in GS
(Gregarious
Simplifiers)
life*

Let's meet GS. Walking through the chaotic toys and board-games filled living-room is not easy early in the morning. But the fond memories of last night with family and few neighbor friends cooking pizza and playing until late make any nuisance disappear.

For GS, socializing simply and like the old days is synonymous of self-realization. Old ways approaches are his quintessential paradigm to recreate certainty in the post-C19 world. Taking kids to school by bike or letting them bus ride everywhere just feels right. Spending days practicing beach or field sports or hiking to the next waterfall are guarantees of wellness and staying healthy. He still resists how suddenly society traded a notion of health connected to being active and fit to one of staying clean and sanitized, and morphing into a couch potato watching movie after movie.

Today is Friday but looks like Sunday, as he succeeded in convincing his boss to shorten his workweek to four days to realize his wants of longer time at home or for himself. This should also help others in need of a job, now that so many fellow workers were laid-offs. Less workload may mean lower payment but that's not such a big issue for GS when his priority is walking away responsibly from business obligations.

Sorting out his wardrobe, GS thinks twice about using that mid-season t-shirt for a third day in a row. But it makes no sense to wear a new one and end up the day with two pieces to wash, water must saved as many days have passed without a rain and neighbors warned that a serious draught is just around the corner. Looking again, he counts no more than a dozen shirts and t-shirts to choose from. When his wife suggested he may get a couple more for birthday GS raised an eyebrow instantly letting her know that was unnecessary.

His birthday present for her was a romantic home-made dinner with fresh organic ingredients brought from the local farmers' market, repairing her outdoor hammock and calling the technician to fix the solar panels that heat their shower. He's fortunate to have one in the neighborhood that considers freshly home-cooked bread and the fact that GS's wife takes care of his kids at home when he needed a fair payment for the job.

GS is aware that next year, once the pandemic eases, he won't be able to escape from a more memorable birthday present. But he has it well thought already. A short family trip to a wonderful rural area at driving distance. This tip from his church mates will be a great score.



*A day
in WM
(Wireless
Materialists)
life*

WM needs to feel in control, so he wakes up and instantaneously switch on TV while skimming newspaper on his tablet. Scanning the news and digesting what matters brings, somehow, a sense of productivity and progression. All this has a purpose.

This routine may point out opportunities at the stock market now that shares had gotten cheaper than bananas. He may spot some unique statistics he can profit from at his job to produce a killer presentation to his colleagues and clients. He may also get some sense of distantly managed community life, as he gets informed about recent local and national events which he treats more as entertainment than as a source of belonging or feeding some feeling of being at the right place.

WM feels part of a nascent global community in a world affected by the pandemic, one whose sense of identity pivots around a secretly admitted realization that life under quarantine was far from traumatic. In fact, it was enjoyable.

Lightly affected by recession or isolation, or so he thinks, he buys food and supplies online, pays bills via internet banking, webinar his customers, gets exercising tips using mobile apps, socializes via Whatsapp audios, all untroubled. Having dinner on Zoom, dressed in style, book shelves and a brand new wine cellar filled up on his back, with his would-be girlfriend still to meet in person becomes natural. Though now and then he wonders why they won't meet in person and invite her to his apartment rather than dinning alone.

Or maybe he knows why. The temptation to take a picture and upload it to his Instagram account would be too great...and would make him look terribly inconsistent after exposing himself so strongly in defense of social confinement and stay-at-home, not to mention the few denunciations he did of neighbors breaking the quarantine to take their kids for a walk. He divides the world in two: homestayors and the outlaws, although he has doubts about where to place nurses, physicians, supermarket cashiers and garbage collectors – who ultimately are also potential virus-spreaders.

Tonight it won't be Zoomed dinner night, so he may relax a bit on the etiquette and just wear his newly bought winter-style bathrobe for a round of Netflix series, along with a ready-to-defrost meal...and –hey!- no limits to drinking!.

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*A day
in CR
(Click Rebels)
life*

CR is about to start his day. For him, life resembles a virtual game. Frontiers are blurred between playing and socializing but also between playing and working or playing and studying. Free-lancing through remote working (although keeping one major contractor) and relying heavily on open-source solutions, CR works, learns, competes, shares, engage in leisure gaming and socializes with his online peers with similar skills and never can tell exactly what the differences are. Collaboration and competition is all in one same place. Fridays may start with video catch ups comparing performance stats among subcontracted parties like him, sometimes leaving a sour feeling of loosing ground to other in-house competitors, and then end up later the day simulating a night pub session with virtual activities including musical bingo, trivia and his favorite *'guess whose fridge is whose'*.

Digitally accompanied all day he wonders around the ecosystem he spends 2/3 of his time without much awareness or concern about the rest of the material world. Food, clothing, furniture, mobility are far from priorities, connecting himself rather lightly, casually, in ad hoc fashion, with these spheres.

What makes him tick is the need for acceptance. That is what drives him into sharing and collaborating with peers, as much as into campaigning or crowdsourcing for causes not necessarily cogent to particular ideas, but useful for the community he feels to belong. Needs for acceptance and recognition wants are the forces behind his efforts at intellectual or digital skill development, participating in idle stuff reuse chat groups, joining live mindfulness sessions, and doing biweekly online therapy.

CR feels as living in a timeless period with time divisions resulting not from day/night transitions but from group games encounters, jobs done and new ones just starting, or walk-time with his dog. Months transitions become reality when the utility bills are delivered, his spending in energy sometimes is higher than in food and, definitely, much higher than in clothing. As jobs became less frequent, he has learned to cook for himself and his dog, always something practical and quick. He has also learned to waste nothing, utilizing leftovers, the same philosophy of reuse he applies to much everything else.

CR wears his mask, gets the dog leash and leaves for a slow ride on his electronic scooter, demanding his dog to do some extra exercising that will have it tired later on when CR wants to play electronically with his online pals. Heading to the nearest park in his scooter, CR goes dreaming of having a faster computer processor or an automated self-guided vehicle, probably his only two consumer dreams for real.



Conclusions

The covid-19 pandemic has hit everyone's lives with an unsuspected force. All major dimensions of life were impacted and radically redrawn. To many people the year 2020 is defined as lost and deserves to be left to oblivion, for many others this year is tragically unforgettable, when their lives made a turn hard to undo.

Surprises abounded. No one saw that a mask, so commonly a symbol of crime in Brazil, one that conveys feelings of insecurity, will overnight be catapulted to represent a guarantee of health. No one saw the stoppage of booming international travelling, either. Hardly any consultant would tell in late 2019 that the hottest trend few months later would be bread baking or pizza cooking at home. And not even with lots of imagination and wishful thinking, sustainability practitioners and intellectuals would expect that something like a worldwide degrowth experiment would be set in motion, at least for few months.

True, some features that were fairly common in pre-C19 times stayed and accelerated. The mass digitalization of so many dimensions of life, from working to shopping, from education to entertainment, from healthcare to love. Regrettably, the exercise of domestic violence that used to plague newspapers also accelerated due to home quarantines. The critical perception of our food supply chain and its weaknesses speeded up too, intensifying demand for healthy foods and plant-based meals.

Other trends decelerated to the point of bordering disappearance. The booming sharing economy hailed since the crisis of 2008 as a showcase of reinvention and creativity has now collapsed. Co-working spaces refer now to unsafe-to-health ecosystems. Car-pooling, couch-surfing or tool swapping suddenly shifted in meaning from smart and sustainable forms of consumption to healthcare risk-prone options. , while other features suddenly decelerated and now risk a slow and gradual disappearance.

Covid-19 affect multiple domains of practice, reshaping these spheres where individuals learn and exercise roles, responsibilities and goal-achievement to determine their needs and wants, thus building-up identity. Those impacts can be recognized on consumers' behaviors but they stretch to mold business future and society's progress towards sustainability.



Conclusions

In envisioning what world await us around the corner, a dichotomy between “going back to old ways” vs “confronting a new normal” is both intuitive and instrumental in organizing the upcoming discussion. But as every dichotomy it offers a simplistic reduction. Transitioning the way out of flattening the curve and finding a permanent fix to the life-threatening virus is still plagued by uncertainty. Consequently, many different and alternative futures can be met, which may lie between “business as usual” and a “new normal”, as much as beyond those two poles.

Focusing on those two domains more severely impacted by deprivation (consumption and socializing), helps to organize a forecast of what sorts of lifestyles may emerge in the future. Four possible scenarios are derived from speculating about ideal-type responses in each of those two domains. A “back-to-normal” lifestyle contains those leaving the pandemic avid for social immersion (after months of social isolation) and eager to catch-up with delayed consumerism (in light of lockdown measures). Opposite to this, one should consider the emergence of a “click rebels” lifestyle, that gathers those getting used to an internet-mediated, physical distanced life and uninterested or unable to dive into the materialistic world of a “born to buy” mindset. A third emerging lifestyle can be identified among those urged to recover old socializing rituals while fulfilling their expression and identity needs and wants in a frugal way, these embody a “gregarious simplifiers” lifestyle. Lastly, we recognize a fourth possibility populated by those wary of leaving the convenience and security of online behaviors while aspiring to the material satisfaction provided by conspicuous consumption, this embodies a “wireless materialists” lifestyle.

Each lifestyle has consequences for sustainable consumption, some predominantly positive, others mostly adverse. Most of these consequences are unplanned, the resulting effects of changes occurred in spheres of life. Consequently, due to its indirect, unthought-of nature, many of those sustainability-related effects are quite fragile in their continuity as enduring practices or policies, or in terms of the awareness raising implications they may have among the general public.



Conclusions

This report contributes in describing how our lives have been affected and exploring what all this may mean for the upcoming years ahead. It stands out from the myriad of emerging reports, discussions and webinars by illustrating how a Global South society, Brazil, undergoes the pandemic experience.

How the numerous popular sectors of the global South fit into this emerging landscape? No doubt the economic shutdown impacts lower classes more dramatically. Yet, social isolation and physical distancing becomes unfeasible across the thousands of slums and poor tenements. Moreover, internet connection that so decisively molds the vast array of evolving trends remains non-existing or extremely low quality. The developments and changes reviewed, as much of the implications acknowledged, seem to address middle and upper classes mostly. Those are the social segments required to navigate and adapt to the ongoing challenges and that afford the cultural stock and the financial wallet, as much as confront the structural or institutional demand, to do so. Can we still think beyond the inertial middle-class bias cross-cutting the projections about the post-pandemic future? Or should we conform to presuppose that for lower classes it is just about going back to their own old normal?

This research affords specific insights concerning the sustainability-related derivations those impacts cause. This analytical angle provides a window through which to identify the undergoing changes, new behavioral repertoires, and emerging needs and wants and connect them with adequate government policy, NGO advocacy and corporate action to advance sustainable development goals.

Rather than centering around one or few waves of opinion surveys to snapshot the present fears, constrictions or gains, or – alternatively- reviewing how institutional and infrastructure conditions have varied that may influence the way mundane tasks are executed, we combine multiple approaches. This study is based on scoping trends and describing changes and continuities in those domains of practice that structure individuals roles, define responsibilities, and articulate goals, and –as a result- mold the definition of needs and wants that drive behaviors. Those domains



Conclusions

go beyond the routines involving usage of resources like the practice theory would have it. However, in order to successfully capture those modifications, we factor in the individuals' perceptual and behavioral reactions using primary quantitative and qualitative data, which offer a unique basis to understand how different publics perform their adaptation to disruptive contexts.

Only few months into the pandemic in the Global South and with quarantine measures unevenly imposed across different societies, this effort at documenting ongoing effects and anticipating the implications and challenges for post-covid-19 futures remains highly speculative. For the very same reasons, this context represents a unique opportunity to gather evidence and carry on research that will prove the value of market intelligence to inform different stakeholders and agents about what awaits for us in the future. The stakes of attaining actual progress towards a more sustainable society and avoiding a relapse into unsustainable practices and behaviors justifies the risk of attempting to anticipate the post-pandemic world.

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23. [Winners in food purchases: frozen products \(up 23% in BR\), industrialized products \(up 21% in BR\) –Nielsen, April](#)
24. [In BR: a range of 15%-30% of non-infant population exposed to some form of e-learning during pandemic \(McKinsey, April\)](#)
25. [In BR: remote teaching tool/platforms use increased from 36% to 45% of users - Ipsos, March; In UK: 6% began a foreign language class by e-learning tools -YouGov, April](#)
26. [In BR, 8 in 10 feel untrained and inexperienced to embrace e-learning, \(OESP, 19/05/20\)](#)
27. [In BR: half of public schools students fail to follow distance learning in São Paulo mostly due to lack of internet. Resorting to LAN houses for e-learning further increased expenses and hardship among lower classes. Less than 10% of federal universities implemented remote teaching](#)
28. [In BR: 39 million kids affected \(O GLOBO – 22/04/2020\)](#)
29. [In BR, video game rental went up 41%; +32% of online games usage. Visits to "games" category sites went up > 20% while navigation time augmented 15% \(Comscore, march\).](#)



Notes and References

30. [In BR: services of paid streaming up 57%; free streaming usage up 50% \(OpinionBox, april\); US: 44% let kids watch TV/videos more than usual \(KFF, April\)](#)
31. [In BR: over 2/3 won't spend in shows, theater, sports events or social parties in the rest of 2020; 1 in 2 avoiding cinema and travels; 4 in 10 avoiding restaurants/bars - OpinionBox, April](#)
32. [In BR: up 1,200% in visits to famous architect Niemeyer museum and virtual travelling](#)
33. [In BR, Instagram/Facetime- broadcasted theater plays, Festival Janelas de SP, #CulturaemCasa, #Batalhadellustradores24](#)
34. [Nintendo's New Horizons sales of 5 mi digital copies since March; TikTok app reaching 2 billion downloads by mid-march](#)
35. [Boredom is one of the common-place feelings reported by something between a 1/4 and 2/5 of people in surveys across the globe - Ipsos, Kantar, BastionInsights, Leger, Pew. In BR, over half the population acknowledges this feeling -OpinionBox, April](#)
36. [In BR, 33% cooking for the first time or far more than usual \(Nielsen\), pushing up 30% in sales of gas cylinders \(ANP\)](#)
37. [In US: visits to food/recipes websites and online sources went up over 50% for pizza, thai, and fast-food home-preparing \(Nielsen\)](#)
38. [In BR: about 4 times higher sales of yeast and 2 times of flour \(Agas\). In US: >650% up in yeast sales \(Nielsen\)](#)
39. [In BR: 4 in 10 expecting to do travelling only in 2021, same amount that assumes doing some flight in the future \(OpinionBox, May\)](#)
40. [In BR: economic individual relief limited to 2 months direct payment close to half a minimum wage. Argentina limited relief to one single payment equivalent to 120% of Brazilian sum.](#)
41. [Informality in Latin America accounts for over 50 percent of total employment -IMF, October 2019; self-employment reaches 37% in the region, although Brazil, Mexico and Argentina rates fall below the average \(32%, 31% and 25%, respectively\) - Statista,2020](#)
42. [In BR: ~1/3 of online shoppers in C19 times being first-timers \(Comscore, March\)](#)
43. [In BR: 49% uptake in online supermarket purchases and over 40% increase in food delivery. Same with online delivery from drugstores/ pharmacies: + 39% - OpinionBox, April. According to RankmyApp site, delivery apps downloads went up 200% in BR, being installed in over 22 million smartphones](#)
44. [In BR: unsuccessful for restaurant-based delivery: minimal growth below 5% - OpinionBox, April](#)
45. [In US: 4 in 10 have purchased more packaged food -IFIC.Foodinsight.org](#)
46. [Up in 15% in Thailand \(Thailand Environment Institut\)
https://edition.cnn.com/2020/05/04/world/coronavirus-plastic-waste-pollution-intl/index.html](#)
47. [UK: fighting climate change still a public priority – Ipsos-Mori, April; In US: issue is 2nd only to spread of diseases among newer generations \(18-29\) -Pew, April](#)
48. [Bloomberg Green:
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-30/the-unexpected-environmental-consequences-of-covid-19](#)
49. [Transit use down 75% in UK, 88% in Spain between mid-Feb to end-March, EIT/Meep, 15/04/20](#)
50. [In BR, rise in pet adoption:
https://g1.globo.com/fique-em-casa/noticia/2020/04/03/procura-por-adocao-de-caes-e-gatos-cresce-na-pandemia-cuidadores-fazem-alerta.ghtml](#)
51. [In BR, single resident units accounts for 15% of total households \(~11-12 mill\) and slightly less than half of them aged 60 years or older-IBGE](#)
52. [Over 6% of total population \(11,5 million\) living in overcrowded households \(average 3 people per room\), although this gets as high as 13% of population in the North/Northeast regions – coincidentally, those regions more affected by C19. Moreover, 15% of households \(31 million\) lack potable water access at home -IBGE](#)



Notes and References

53. [In UK, over 1 million volunteers to help NHS, charities, mutual help groups; communities creating survival packs for vulnerable people in Africa and India; In Iran, self-organized neighborhood groups for disinfecting ATMs, telephone booths, etc.](#)
54. [A Gallup International survey in 28 countries fielded in late march indicates that ¾ agrees with human rights sacrifices to help prevent the virus-spread \(\[https://www.gallup-international.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/GIA_SnapPoll_2020_COVID_Tables_final.pdf\]\(https://www.gallup-international.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/GIA_SnapPoll_2020_COVID_Tables_final.pdf\) p.4, \)](#) In UK: over half endorses implementing several surveillance policies - Ipsos-MORI, May
55. [In BR, mobilization against brands promoting anti-social isolation positions \(Madero, Havan\) or cynical free-riding upon climate of fear and health-centric preoccupations \(e.g., McDonalds opportunistic rebranding of logo while overexposing their employees. Concomitantly, social media praise and buying recommendations favoring brands that effectively implemented health-centric CSR actions like producing protection equipment or sanitizing products-\[https://intelligence.wundermanthompson.com/2020/04/the-business-of-health/?mc_cid=88a1d58032&mc_eid=fadf4208c8\]\(https://intelligence.wundermanthompson.com/2020/04/the-business-of-health/?mc_cid=88a1d58032&mc_eid=fadf4208c8\)\)](#)
56. [From Hungary governing by decree without congress oversight to El Salvador suspension of rights to the criminalization of anti-fossil fuel protests in US states. MacMillan Center and Yale Law School webinar "Democracy & Rise of Authoritarianism in covid-19 World" 05/05/20](#)
57. [In BR, surveys indicate that income has decreased for 6 in 10 while another half of the population saw expenses rising \(OpinionBox, April\); likewise, about 2/3s of the public avoid non-essential items, over ¼ intend to do so. Only 1 in 8 will have funds for non-essential items \(McKinsey, April\)](#)
58. [<https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/impact-covid-19-coronavirus-global-poverty-why-sub-saharan-africa-might-be-region-hardest>](#)
59. [In BR: unemployment, decreased income, and stop paying bills impact among SECs CDE was 31%, 63%, and 55% vs. 8%, 48%, and 37% among SECs AB, respectively - OpinionBox, March](#)
60. [The global telemedicine market size is expected to reach USD 155.1 billion by 2027, expanding at a CAGR of 15.1% -GlobeNewswire, April; In France, teleconsultations went up from 10,000 to 936,000 just in march. France-based Doctolib, which started out as a scheduling platform before offering online consultation services, has seen the number of video consultations spike from 1,000 to 100,000 a day. In 22 months till mid-April, patients had booked 2.5 million consultations on Doctolib; In US: 22% consulted with a healthcare provider by phone and 13% via video chat. \(Axios-Ipsos, April\)](#)
61. [Curiously, there is a ratio of 3:1 in entries defending a 'new normal' over a 'back to normal' relevant to sustainability issues conditioned by C19 impacted discussions, suggesting a favorable balance to a perspective of discontinuities and major changes. However when removing sustainability as keyword, the ratio of 'new normal' vs 'back to normal' entries conditioned by C19 reverses in favor of a "bouncing back" scenario by a factor of nearly 2:1. How idealistic and biased thinkers, news reporters, and practitioners of sustainability are if compared to their peers in more mainstream business issues? \(All entry values by author checking as per May 10, 2020\).](#)



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62. [Snapshot surveys around the world witness the naturalization of this polarity in people's mind as well as the expectations that radical changes towards a "new normal" will overcome the economic and political elites crave for returning to "business as usual". For example, when probed about the future in binary terms, 73% of Canadians sided with "broad transformation of society" over a mere 26% foreseeing a "back to status quo" situation \(Ekospolitics, May 7\). Similarly, 54% of Britons hoped for changes in their own lives after the crisis and only 9% expect to be back to normal \(YouGov/ Royal Society of Arts/The Food Foundation\). In Italy, only 1/4 of consumers presuppose a back to business as usual, while the rest anticipates different scenarios of major changes \(BVA-Doxa, May\). In Australia, 1 in 6 anticipate their lives will never be the same, an another 2 think there will be a middle-ground between old and new normal \(BastionInsights, april\). In BR, 80% agrees the pandemic will change the way we will live hereafter \(Leo Burnett survey, B9, 26/05/20\)](#)
63. [Sustainable Consumption Institute, "Covid-19, changing social practices and the transition to sustainable consumption and production", SCI report, version 1.0, may 2020: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=49196>](#)
64. [Surveys where lockdown restrictions are being eased or ambiguously followed show that over 50% of the public still endorse social distancing and quarantine-type policies while remaining wary of visiting crowded places as much as acquaintances and relatives home. In Brazil, over 2/3 don't see themselves spending time in crowd-featured spaces or events like shows, party, sports spectacles, cultural supply, and another 4 in 10 will avoid restaurants and bars. After nearly 2 months of restriction measures and few weeks into restrictions lifting, the number of people in total isolation plus leaving home only for groceries shopping changed minimally, from 80% to 77% \(OpinionBox, april\), with a maximum of 10pp dispersion across differently sourced surveys \(FSB/CNI, may\). Brazilians stand out among the most resistant publics to go back to work in the conventional in-office mode: 7 in 10 feel uncomfortable to go back to regular workplace or plan to resist doing so. Over 2/3 of Indians and Mexicans feel equally uncomfortable. Resistance in Brazil is even more dramatic concerning school and university classes: 85% oppose the highest rate in 16 countries – Ipsos-Mori, late May. In UK, around 75% opposed external visits at home \(nannies, nurses, maid, cleaners\), 70% opposed boyfriends/girlfriends' visits, nearly 60% are against socializing with friends in open-air areas \(Ipsos-Mori, may\). In US, only slightly over 1/3 visited a friend/neighbor or receive acquaintances at home and below 30% believe it's safe to visit friends/relatives home while over 92% avoid public spaces \(USC, may\), whereas 7 in 10 feel uneasy with lifted restrictions \(Pew; may\) and 6 in 10 warned it's too early to go to stores \(ABC/Post, end of May\)](#)
65. [Media coverage of reopened malls and commercial city centers throughout the second half of May in Brazil consistently yields the same disappointing description of underperforming sales and extremely essential-items conscious spending by the general public \(VEJA, 2/05/20; Folha 03/06/20\). There have been few exceptions in China, South Korea or Spain, though, giving credit to the hypothesis of a limited 'consumer revenge' situation. See: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-southkorea-revenge/bobok-til-you-drop-south-koreans-roar-back-to-malls-as-coronavirus-curbs-ease-idUSKBN22F0XQ>; <https://www.ultimahora.es/noticias/sociedad/2020/05/15/1165559/desescalada-zara-abre-colas-kilometricas-puerta.html>; <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/the-curious-phenomenon-of-revenge-shopping-in-china-after-lockdown/articleshow/75509099.cms?from=mdr>](#)



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66. [FSB/CNI survey, May. Millennials and Gen X that compose the bulk of the active economic population and voter base have an even stronger siding towards anticipating a radically different future or several changes away from old normal. In turn, the least educated population, matching the poorest and less influential segments of society, is the one betting more strongly on 'back to business as usual' hypothesis, leaving us wonder the extent to which this perception in this group reflects actual behavioral intention or a defensive wishful thinking back to pre-layoffs and pre-recession times](#)
67. [For example, half of the Brazilian population \(48-55%\) acknowledge that work, income, savings and ability to make ends meet have been seriously impacted by C19. Spending increase is slowing down its reach \(from half population to below 40%\). Additionally, between 70-80% of population had to cutback expenses and behave very carefully about spending. \(McKinsey, <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/survey-brazilian-consumer-sentiment-during-the-coronavirus-crisis>, April\)](#)
68. [As indicated in endnote 64, vast majorities do not see themselves quickly jumping on board of a consumer revenge frenzy, yet some minorities –probably untouched by economic shutdown- are ready to rush to shops and outdoor eating. Surveys in developed nations experiencing restrictions easing prove public resistance to retake consumption practices. In the US, 6 in 10 warned it's too early to go to stores \(ABC/Post, end of May\). In France, nearly 2/3 oppose returning to bars/restaurants \(BVA, June\)](#)
69. [In addition to evidence described in endnotes, 64 and 67, survey data in a handful of countries have explored positive learnings from the pandemic in terms of anticipating sustainable lifestyles. In Australia, for example, over 40% reckon "appreciate the small things", "enjoy simpler life", and "simplify life" as lessons to be embrace in post-C19 times, thus, indicating a favorable climate for simplicity and minimalist lifestyles. Similarly, around 1/3 acknowledge "take time out", "slow down", and "cook from scratch" as routines to integrate from now on, giving value to a non-consumeristic approach to leisure \(BastionInsights, April\)](#)

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