

The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Business Activities and Lifestyle: Evidence from Egypt

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on business activities and lifestyle in Egypt. The study used daily and monthly average data from 15 February 2020 to 19 January 2021. The study found the correlation between workplaces mobility rate and residential mobility (staying at home) rate during the Covid-19 pandemic in Egypt; 77.1% of residential mobility (staying at home) reasons back to workplaces mobility rates. On another side; the difference between aspects of lifestyle (retail-recreation; grocery; pharmacy; Parks; transit stations; Workplaces; Residential) at the National Level; and the difference of workplaces mobility rates between Egyptian governorates; both are significant at 1%. Finally; some business activity types have an impact on workplaces mobility rates under Covid-19, these business activities related to manufacturing and foreign tourism are significant at 1%. On the other hand, the study didn't find this impact on Agriculture, Fishing, Domestic Tourism, and Mining. There is still a need for more future studies for both business activities and lifestyle, especially within the second wave of Covid-19.

Keywords

COVID-19, Business Activities, Lifestyle, Egypt

JEL Classification

M10, J45

1. The Methodological Framework

Introduction:

The coronavirus pandemic has caused a global impact never seen before in modern history (Saab, et al., 2020). Confronted by challenging and complex problems given the health, social context and economic challenges it poses, Covid-19 has policymakers working under a profound ambiguity. Also, the effect of Covid-19 crisis varies enormously within and across the continents, which have an important effect on countries in different aspects such as crisis management efforts and countries' response strategy (Allain-Dupré, Chatry, Michalun, & Moisio, 2020).

The pandemic was immediately and widely declared as a public health crisis of international significance by the World Health Organisation (WHO), in January 2020 (Saab, et al., 2020). WHO declared on February 4, 2021 that 223 countries are suffering from Covid-19, the number of confirmed cases worldwide is 103631793 and the number of confirmed deaths is 2251613 (WHO, 2021).

Governments, in coping with coronavirus, have taken substantial steps to reduce its threats. Therefore, in response to heightened security measures, activities were at an absolute standstill in many nations (Caduff, 2020). Covid-19 has developed several problems due to its virulence, as it enormously hampered the economies around the world by limiting employability or even the income of individuals, however, this influence differed from one nation to another; nonetheless many countries have been suffering from the problems on the economic matters (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020).

As countries tightened their protection, this resulted in shut-down of manufacturing, which impacts businesses all over the world including in aviation, tourism, fashion, entertainment, and automobile manufacture; the crisis has also intensified the difficulties facing millions of employees who are threatened by the possibility of losing jobs (Mitra, Chaudhuri, Mitra, Pramanick, & Zaman, 2020). It has been noticed that not only this pandemic changed the way humans view their environment but also forced the world to re-adjust their preferences and create new collaborations, as politicians are exerting every measure to cope with the catastrophe by using monetary, economic, and market solutions as well as financial assistance of families and businesses to preserve national standards and economic stability (Rezk, et al., 2020).

Business and society under COVID-19

The year 2020 was especially noteworthy, with many aspects of business and life-changing; locking down and limiting economic activity was a decision adopted by many cities and countries (Bapuji et al., 2020). Throughout the world, the latest epidemic had serious economic effects, and it did not seem like every nation would be unaffected. Not only did

thi have economic implications, but also all societies were impacted, which contributed to drastic shifts in the behaviour of companies and consumers (Donthu and Gustafsson, 2020).

Many studies were performed concerning business practises during this pandemic, such as tourism & air transport mobility (Selim, Aidrouss, & Semenova, 2020) (Nižetić, 2020) (Sigala, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020; Gössling et al., 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020; Kaushal and Srivastava 2021), retail (Loske, 2020; Richards and Rickard, 2020; Bhatti et al., 2020; Rukuni and Maziriri, 2020), education (Chick et al., 2020; Zhu and Liu, 2020; Krishnamurthy 2020) (Mahmood, 2020) (Fernandez & Shaw, 2020) (Helliwell, et al., 2020) (Al-Hosan, AlRajeh, & Arnout, 2020), communication (Clark-Ginsberg & Petrun Sayers, 2020), sustainability (Jones & Comfort, 2020) (Al-Dabbagh, 2020), and financial investment (Ortmann et al., 2020; Talwar et al., 2021) (Cozza, et al., 2020) (Bretas & Alon, 2020) (Usman, Ali, Riaz, & Zubair, 2020) (Rababah, Al-Haddad, Sial, Chunmei, & Cherian, 2020) (Van Eck, Van Melik, & Schapendonk, 2020) (Ratten, 2020). The present study, however, works on a comparison of these activities.

The business implications of COVID-19 in Egypt

Egypt wasn't away from the negative impact of the Covid19 pandemic, as it was announced by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the 10th of February 2021 that the number of confirmed cases is 170780 and the number of confirmed deaths is 9751 (WHO, 2021); see Figure No. (1).

The Egyptian administration recognized that life would never be the same as before the Covid-19 pandemic, therefore, while the government is working on preventing the virus from affecting the country, teams of experts were formed to formulate strategies for a post-Covid-19 world, built on the experiences of other nations. Many political, economic and social plans began being formulated before the pandemic was under control (IDSC, 2020).

The impact of Covid19 crisis on the Egyptian economy was examined by Breisinger C. and others in their study as they concluded that besides facing a major decline in tourist activity, Egypt also experienced sharp decrease in revenues obtained from the Suez Canal and Egyptian citizens who work abroad. The findings of their study indicates that for each month of the global crisis, Covid-19 reduces the country's gross domestic product (GDP) from around 36 billion \$ to 41 billion \$ which is about 0.7% to 0.8%; in addition to an average of Household expenditure and usage projected to fall between 153 and 180 EGP per individual for each month that signifies between 9 and 10.6% of the household revenue average (Breisinger, Abdelatif, Raouf, & Wiebelt, 2020).

Some Egyptian sectors were significantly affected by this crisis such as the travel and tourism sector that was seriously impacted due to reducing and sometimes halting of air traffic frequency; also, the Manufacturing industry was greatly affected due to interrupted supply chains which highly rely on trade and imported goods, accordingly assembly lines whether closed down or worked with a very considerable capacity (The Egyptian Junior Business Association, 2020).

Egypt's proactive approach to limit the pandemic's fallout

The Egyptian Government has adopted considerable measures to prevent the propagation of the Covid-19 virus by closing schools and academic institutions and banning gatherings and major entertainment events (UNICEF, 2020).

Due to the unpredicted and sudden jobs' losses and risking debts during the pandemic crisis, several workers are facing an uncertain financial situation, consequently, the HR departments of various countries including Egypt give priority to the preservation of their workers. Accordingly, Elsafty and Ragheb examined in their study the HRM (Human Resource Management) responsibility towards the employees in Egypt. They suggested that HR managers can optimize employees' satisfaction through several essential elements such as workplace assistance and guidance, accessibility to resources and information, and financial advantages. These elements should have been addressed by the organizations to optimize their earning ability and values appropriately. (Elsafty & Ragheb, 2020)

As for tourism, Egypt has adopted a number of policies aiming to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic and by encouraging the tourism industry, securing employment and wages and workers at work such as: 1) Postponing wages for tourism and food service entities. 2) Including another 100,000 families in the money transfer program that supports workers from different industries including the tourism; while setting a hotline for them to report any unfair layoff.

3) Providing a budget surplus of some 50 billion EGP to boost the tourism sector intending to sustain hotel operations throughout the Covid19 crisis (ILO, 2020).

Study problem

There are many studies dealing with covid-19, but usually these studies were based on what is expected, but the current study seeks to achieve what has already been done, by analysing the actual data of business activities and

lifestyle, through one of the emerging economies, its Egypt, so there are the following questions

Q1: Is there correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt?

Q2: Is there difference between aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt?

Q3: Is there difference of workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19 between Egyptian governorates.
Q4: Is there impact of business activities types on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19?

Study hypotheses:

According to the research problem, its questions, and research gap the hypotheses can be formulated as follows:

H1: There is no significant correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt.

H2: There is no significant difference between aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt.

H3: There is no significant difference of workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19 between Egyptian governorates.

H4: There is no significant impact of business activities types on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19

Data

The daily data of the study cover the time period February 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021 and are used for both National data for Egypt as whole and individual Egyptian governorates. The data consist of components the change of retail-recreation, grocery-pharmacy, parks, transit stations, workplaces and residential (based on social distancing data according to community mobility reports to COVID-19). in addition to Business Activities (Agriculture - fishing - manufacturing-domestic tourism- foreign tourism-mining) as activities prevalent at the level of each province.

2. Data Description

Data description at national level

The figures no. (2) illustrates social distancing measures at Egypt; these statistical data are based on day-to-day figures of six indices; the present change from baseline from February 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021:

The “Workplaces Mobility” index maintained a general negative figure, despite of recording a positive average (8.1%) in February 2020, it reached the lowest average (-35.4%) in April 2020, showed gradual improvement till December 2020 (-1.7%), followed by a decrease (-13.8%) in January 2021. It was noticed that Matrouh governorate was the only one that contributed with a positive average (4.3%). Unlike the Red Sea Governorate that contributed with the least average, which is -30.162%.

Data description at governorates level

From the demonstrated figures no. (32) to (33), it is noticed that during the period of time from 15th February 2020 to 19th January 2021, the “Residential Mobility” index maintained a positive figure in Egypt. It was noticed that the Red Sea Governorate contributed with the highest average, which is 10.35%, due to many reasons, including that it is the least Egyptian governorate infected with the Coronavirus according to CNN (CNN, 2020). Unlike the North Sinai Governorate that contributed with the least average, which is -0.035%.

3. Hypotheses Testing

Examining the correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic

This hypothesis examines the correlation between development of Workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic for Egyptian society. The study used Pearson test to examine this hypothesis based on daily data. The statistic results in Table (1) that the correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt, and it is significant at 1%. Table (2) show regression analysis for workplaces mobility rates as independent variable and residential mobility rates as dependent variable.

The statistical results show (F) was 1144.043, which is significant at the level of 1%, but Adjusted R Square was 0.771; it means a 77.1% of residential mobility reasons under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt back to workplaces mobility rates.

Now, the study rejects the Null hypothesis and accepts the following alternative hypothesis:

"There is significant correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt."

Examining the symmetry workplaces mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in the Egyptian governorates

This hypothesis examines the symmetry Workplaces mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in the Egyptian governorates. The study used Friedman test to examine this hypothesis based on monthly averaged data.

In Table (3); the statistic results show Chi-Square was (196.01) it is significant at 1%. So that there is a difference in workplaces mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic between the Egyptian governorates, and it is significant at 1%. In other words, it can be said that the covid-19 pandemic has a significant effect on the workplaces mobility rates.

Now, the study rejects the Null hypothesis and accepts the following alternative hypothesis:

"There is significant difference of workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19 between Egyptian governorates".

Examining the symmetry aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt

This hypothesis examines the symmetry aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt. The study used test to examine this hypothesis based on daily data.

In table (4); the previous statistic results show Chi-Square was (1135.27) it is significant at 1%. So that there is a difference in aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt and it is significant at 1%. In other words, it can be said that the covid-19 pandemic has a significant effect on the workplaces mobility rates, According to factors that differ between the Egyptian governorates.

Now, the study rejects the Null hypothesis and accepts the following alternative hypothesis:

"There is significant difference between aspects of lifestyle under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt".

Examining the impact of business activities types on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19

This hypothesis examines the impact of business activities types on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19. The study used Panel data analysis to examine this hypothesis based on monthly averaged data.

In table (5); the statistic results show some business activities types have impact on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19, this business activities related to manufacturing and foreign tourism this are significant at 1%. In other words, it can be said that the type of business activity has different impacts on the workplaces mobility rates.

Now, the study rejects the Null hypothesis and accepts the following alternative hypothesis:

"There is significant impact of business activities types on workplaces mobility rates under COVID-19".

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Aspects of life and business activities were not the same as before COVID-19; both human behaviour and companies were affected by forced lockdown witnessed by most countries of the world. The study can only consider this epidemic as one of the systemic risks to human life, lifestyle, and business activities.

The study investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business activities and lifestyle in Egypt. A daily and monthly average data from 15 February 2020 to 19 January 2021 was used. The study found a correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility (staying at home) rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt; 77.1% of residential mobility (staying at home) reasons back to workplaces mobility rates.

On another side, there is a difference between aspects of lifestyle (retail-recreation; grocery; pharmacy; parks; transit stations; workplaces; residential) at the National Level; and a difference in workplaces mobility rates between Egyptian govern

orates; both are significant at 1%.

Finally, certain business activity types have a greater influence on workplaces mobility rates during Covid19. These business activity types related to manufacturing and international tourism are significant to 1%. However, the effect was not seen in the following areas: Agriculture, Fishing, Domestic Tourism, and Mining. There is still a need for more future research in both business activities and lifestyle, particularly within the second wave of Covid-19.

Recommendations

There are more areas for future studies on this epidemic, but we need more quantitative research with comparison across countries and industries through actual data for 2020. Finally; the study used data consist of components the change of retail-recreation, grocery, pharmacy, parks, transit stations, workplaces and residential based on social distancing data which can be used this data in Egyptian health strategies to drop the spread of COVID-19. That agrees with Saha et al., (2020) in India. The crisis of covid-19 could be opportunities instead of being a constraint for business units not only at the level of Egypt, but also for all countries of the world, as they contribute to supporting digital transformation and e-commerce. In addition to increasing the scope of entrepreneurship opportunities according to Wagdi and Hasaneen (2019) this requires providing adding value to the society.

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Appendix(A):Tables

Table (1): Pearson Correlation output for the correlation between workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt

Correlations

	RESIDENT	WORKPLAC
Pearson	1.000	-.879*
Correlation	WORKPLAC	-.879*
Sig.	RESIDENT	.
(2-tailed)	WORKPLAC	.000
N	RESIDENT	340
	WORKPLAC	340
		340

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source:Statistical Package for the Social Sciences output.

Table(2)Regression analysis for workplaces mobility rates and residential mobility rates under covid-19 pandemic in Egypt

ModelSummary

Model	R	RSquare	Adjusted RSquare	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.879 ^a	.772	.771	2.6456

a.Predictors:(Constant),WORKPLAC

ANOVA^b

Model	SumofSquares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8007.549	1	8007.549	1144.043
	Residual	2365.778	338	6.999	.000 ^a
	Total	10373.326	339		

a. Predictors:(Constant),WORKPLAC

b. Dependent Variable:RESIDENT

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			t	Sig.
	B	Std.Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.968	.202	9.732	.000
	WORKPLAC	-.319	.009	-.879	.000
				-33.824	

a. Dependent Variable:RESIDENT

Source:Statistical Package for the Social Sciences output.

Table(3):FriedmantestoutputforthesymmetryWorkplacesmobilityratesundercovid-19pandemicintheEgyptiangovernorates

Ranks

	Mean Rank
ALEXANDR	11.75
ASSIUT	14.21
QALYUBIA	13.21
SHARQIA	19.33
ASWAN	9.71
BEHEIRA	24.92
BENISUEF	15.54
CAIRO	3.75
DAKAHLIA	10.17
DAMIETTA	10.17
FAIYUM	21.33
GHARBIA	14.54
GIZA	7.58
ISMALIA	10.83
KAFRELSH	22.88
LUXOR	12.58
MATROUH	24.71
MENIA	20.21
MENOFIA	16.17
NEW_VALL	21.33
NORTH_SI	18.92
PORT_SAI	7.50
QENA	15.83
REDSEA_	1.67
SOHAG	13.04
SOUTH_SI	4.25
SUEZ	11.88

TestStatistics^a

N	12
Chi-Square	196.011
df	26
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a.FriedmanTest

Source:StatisticalPackagefortheSocialSciencesoutput.

Table(4):Friedmantestoutputforthesymmetryaspectsoflifestyleundercovid-19pandemicinEgypt

Ranks

	Mean Rank
GROCERY	5.48
PARKS	3.77
RESIDENT	4.77
RETAIL	1.28
TRANSITS	2.49
WORKPLAC	3.20

TestStatistics^a

N	339
Chi-Square	1135.274
df	5
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a.FriedmanTest

Source:StatisticalPackagefortheSocialSciencesoutput.

Table(5):PaneldataoutputforWorkplacesmobilityratesundercovid-19pandemicaccordingtobusinessactivitiestypes

Model7:Random-effects(GLS),using324observationsIncluded12cross-sectionalunits
 Time-series length = 27
 Dependent variable: WPRRobust(HAC)standard errors

	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>Std.Error</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p-value</i>	
const	-10.1203	3.60808	-2.805	0.0050	***
X1	3.65997	2.53714	1.443	0.1491	
X2	-0.0823954	2.36078	-0.03490	0.9722	
X3	-3.64184	1.33250	-2.733	0.0063	***
X4	2.08329	3.09671	0.6727	0.5011	
X5	-10.4790	4.38313	-2.391	0.0168	**
X6	3.50197	4.54869	0.7699	0.4414	
Meandependentvar	-11.24074	S.D.dependentvar			12.75287
Sumsquaredresid	46878.32	S.E.ofregression			12.14150
Log-likelihood	-1265.616	Akaikecriterion			2545.232
Schwarzcriterion	2571.697	Hannan-Quinn			2555.795
rho	0.450458	Durbin-Watson			1.053781

Between variance=8.29359'

Within variance=138.053

theta used for quasi-

demeaning=0.382438Joint test on named regressors-

Asymptotic test statistic: Chi-square(6)=49.5943 with p-value=5.66894e-009

Breusch-Pagan test-

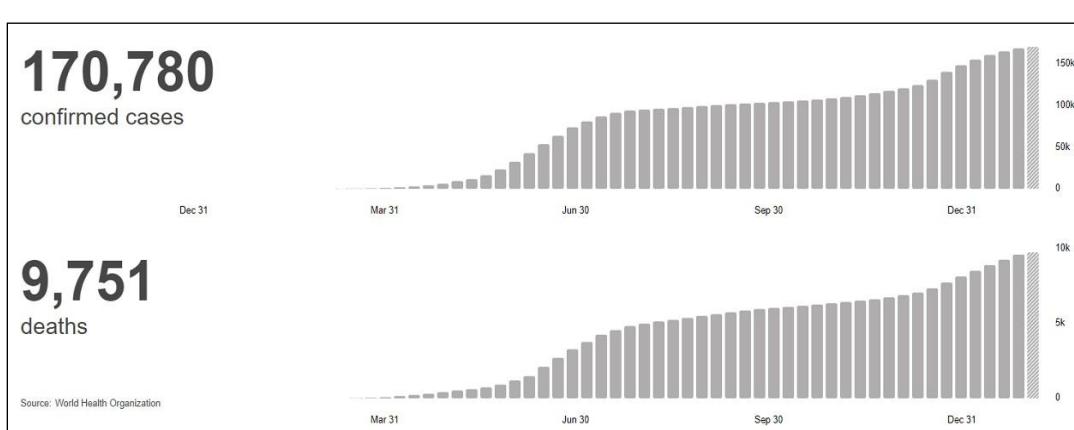
Null hypothesis: Variance of the unit-specific error=0 Asymptotic test statistic: Chi-square(1)=5.26244 with p-value=0.0217905

Haussman test-

Null hypothesis: GLS estimates are consistent Asymptotic test statistic: Chi-square(6)=58.4021 with p-value=9.49797e-011

Source: Gnu Regression, Econometrics and Time-series Library output.

Appendix(B):Figures



Source: World Health Organization (WHO), Retrieved on 10th February 2021 Figure No.

(1) Egypt Situation: Confirmed Cases and Deaths

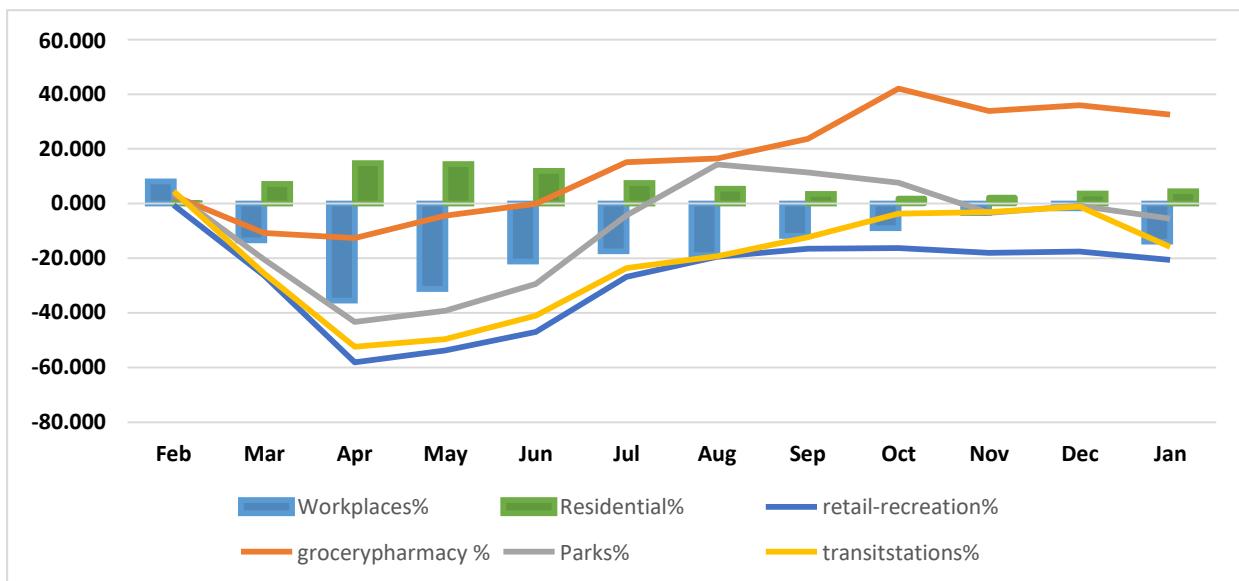


Figure No.(2) Monthly Average Indices in Egypt from February 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021



Figure No. (3) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Egypt



Figure No. (4) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Qalyubia Governorate



Figure No. (5) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Alexandria Governorate



Figure No. (6) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Ash Sharqia Governorate



Figure No. (7) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Assiut Governorate



Figure No. (8) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Aswan Governorate



Figure No. (9) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Beni Suef Governorate



Figure No. (10) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Cairo Governorate



Figure No. (11) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Dakahlia Governorate

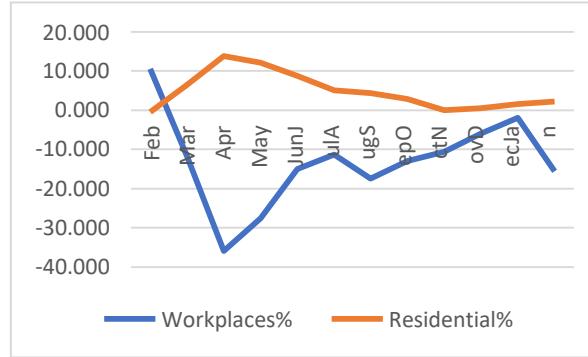


Figure No. (12) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Damietta Governorate



Figure No. (14) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in El Beheira Governorate



Figure No. (15) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Faiyum Governorate



Figure No.(16) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Gharbia Governorate



Figure No.(17) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Giza Governorate



Figure No.(18) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Ismailia Governorate

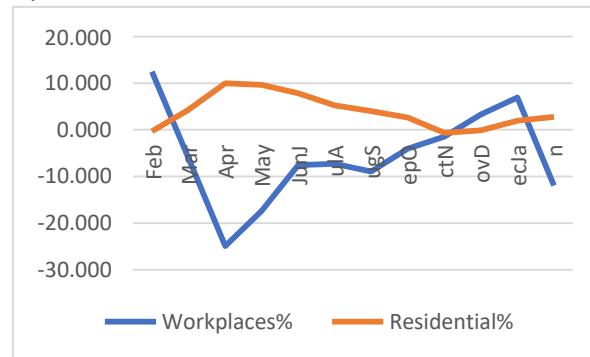


Figure No.(19) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Kafr ElSheikh Governorate



Figure No.(20) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Luxor Governorate



Figure No.(21) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Matrouh Governorate



Figure No.(22) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Menia Governorate

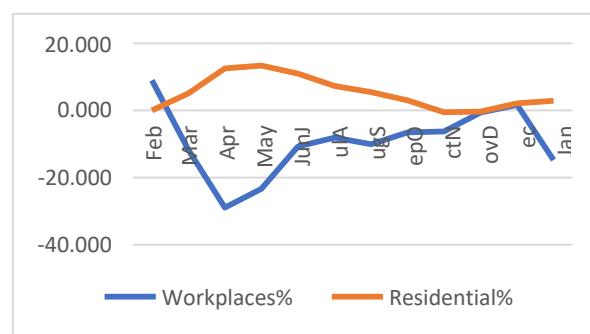


Figure No.(23) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Menia Governorate



Figure No.(24) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in New Valley Governorate



Figure No.(25) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in North Sinai Governorate



Figure No.(26) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Port Said Governorate



Figure No.(27) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Qena Governorate



Figure No.(28) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Red Sea Governorate

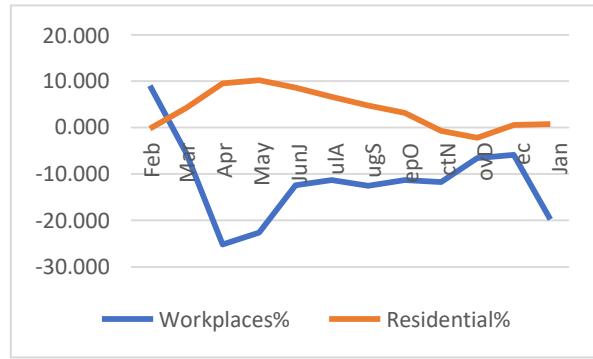


Figure No.(29) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Sohag Governorate

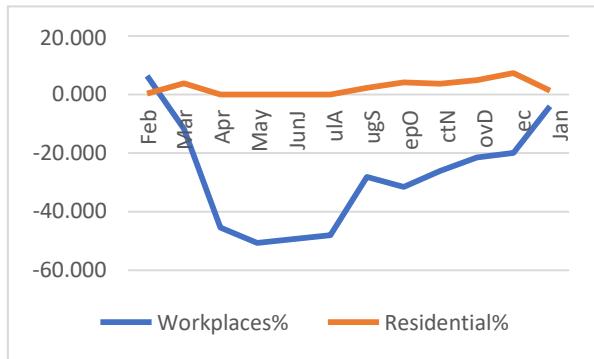


Figure No.(30) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in South Sinai Governorate



Figure No.(31) Monthly Average Workplaces Mobility & Residential Mobility in Suez Governorate

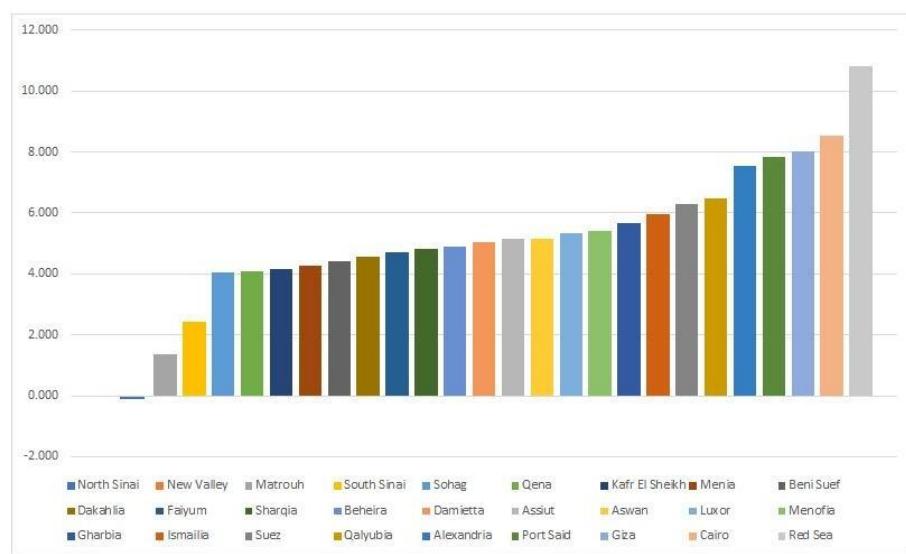


Figure No. (32) Average of Residential Mobility in the Egyptian Governorates from February 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021

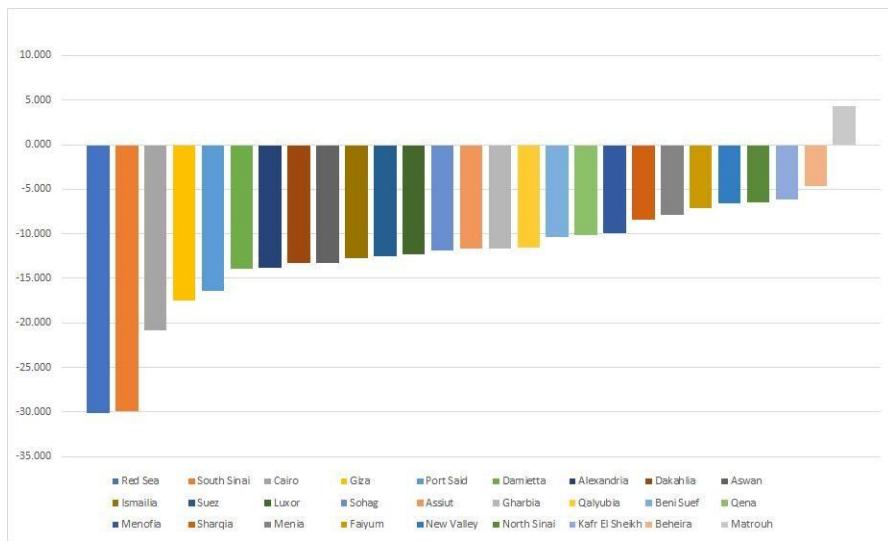


Figure No.(33) Average of Workplaces Mobility in the Egyptian Governorates from February 15, 2020 to January 19, 2021