



Moto Boy Lenses in the Covid-19: Employability in Times of Pandemic and in the Post Pandemical Period

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September 13, 2021

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the worldwide economy in 2020. Brazil was not immune to the shock caused by the restrictions imposed on economic activity, like the drop in family income and the postponement of investments. On March 12, 2020, Brazil recorded the first death by the COVID-19, and from that case on, the country presented records of deaths every month, thus causing national and municipal decrees, emergency aid, a country in crisis, and the healthcare system in collapse.

As a result, the restrictions occurred. This fact has forced a large part of commerce to close doors, thousands of people lost their jobs, social isolation and confinement within their own homes gave the opportunity for the delivery activity to show services. Only essential services were kept open and the remainder services, considered non-essential, to not completely close their doors, joined to the delivery service. In this way, the delivery service proved to be the solution for professionals, parents of families, to maintain a monthly income.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed many behaviors of Brazilians. One of the new behaviors was the habit of ordering food by applications (apps). The delivery expenses grew 149% in the last year, according to the consultancy company Mobills, a personal finance management startup, which analyzed user expenses with the three main delivery apps like Rappi, Ifood and Uber Eats. Ifood was the one with the greatest increase in consumption (França, 2020). According to França (2020), comparing January to December, the app grew by 172%. Rappi and UberEats had an increase of 121% and 37%, respectively (França, 2020).

In this sense, this study aims to map the COVID-19 pandemical scenario and its impacts on working conditions with a focus on Moto boy services. The Moto boy is a professional who use a motorcycle to deliver and distribute various types of objects: pizza, fast food, documents, bank payments, among other products and services. (Franca, 2020; Folha Bv, 2021). This study also proposes the following specific objective: to identify the increase in demand for deliveries during the COVID-19 pandemical period. To achieve the objectives, two surveys were carried out: one theoretical and another empirical. To compose the theoretical basis, articles and websites were consulted, and to compose the

empirical research a questionnaire was carried out. Including the Introduction Section, this study has five sections: Section two describes the theoretical framework, Section three presents the methodology, Section four provides the results and the discussions, and Section five concludes and presents limitations and directions for further research.

2- Theoretical framework

2-1- Employability

Employability means the ability to obtain, retain and, if necessary, find a satisfying and rewarding job. According to Mannrich (2005) employability is related to the ability to obtain employment or work, remaining, and progressing in it, paying attention to the demands presented by the labor market.

The ability to remain employed is part of employability, that is, to have a set of knowledge, both technical and behavioral, which are sought by employers (Significado, 2018). Employability is directly related to the professional value that a person can have in the labor market (Unileão, 2021). As keeping a job is increasingly difficult due to globalization and digital transformations, companies want to hire employees who have skills focused on greater efficiency. Due to the great competition in the labor market, professionals must strive to demonstrate their value, qualification, and ability to contribute effectively and in an outstanding way compared to other professionals (G1, 2020).

Employability and professionalism are concepts that should not be confused. Employability is related to entry and maintenance in the labor market (Pravaler, 2020). Professionalism refers specifically to the behavior of a person as a professional. Professionalism is related to the responsibility to fulfill professional obligations (Significado, 2018). It is possible to understand employability as the set of knowledge, both technical and behavioral, that are sought by the labor market in a professional (Significado, 2018).

Employability can be seen as a set of individual skills, competence, knowledge, and relationship network (Pravaler, 2020). Minarelli (1995) affirmed that vocational

adaptation makes the employee work in the area they like and can positively influence the results achieved, as they feel pleasure in carrying out their activities. Professional competence is the professional's ability to keep up to date with innovations in his area of expertise, whether through courses, lectures, books, publications, among others. Suitability is the orientation of attitudes towards principles and values that consider respect for the law, honesty, and compliance with the employment contract. Being able to perform activities is a necessary condition for the professional to get good references in the job market. Physical and mental health, taking care to balance professional and personal life. Professionals who benefit from good physical and mental health are ready to face the daily difficulties at work. Financial reserve, having a financial reserve is a guarantee against moments of career instability. With this, the employee will have more peace of mind to go through periods of low economic activity. But also, it will remain focused on your efficiency and productivity. Relationships, in this part, only the closest relationships can become real work opportunities. Having a good circle of friends is fundamental for your professional life, always try to surround yourself with well-influenced people, so you will have professional references.

The study “Employability and Higher Education in times of pandemic”, recently carried out by the Semesp Institute, analyzed how the labor market has behaved in the face of the crisis scenario caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the information G1 website, the negative impacts faced by the Brazilian economy have a direct influence on the number of vacancies offered by companies, resulting in a notable increase in the rate of unemployed people, a reduction in income, working hours and even the suspension of contracts by employers.

To ensure their employability in the labor market, professionals must be aware of the demands of the market in their area of expertise. The greater the ability to meet the needs of the professional market, the greater will be your employability. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, unemployment was already a problem in the lives of a good part of the population. After all, the economy hasn't been doing well for a while. But what would it be like to stay in a job with the job market collapsing because of a serious external variable "Coronavirus pandemic"? It is noteworthy that Brazil is not the only one facing this type of problem. Other countries where the informal economy is strong are also suffering from unemployment.

2-2 The COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as the SARS-CoV-2, is a respiratory disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome Coronavirus. The virus has zoonotic origin, and the first known case of the disease was in December 2019 in Wuhan, China (Brazilian Health Ministry, 2020; Agência Brasil, 2020). On January 20, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified the outbreak as an International Public Health Emergency and, on March 11, 2020, as a pandemic. As of June 6, 2021, more than 172 million cases were confirmed in 192 countries and with nearly 4 million deaths, making it one of the deadliest pandemics in history (Agência Brasil, 2020; WHO, 2020).

To avoid contagion, the WHO (2020) recommended some preventive measures like social distancing, use of face masks in public, ventilation and air filtration, hand washing, surface disinfection and self-isolation for exposed or symptomatic people. The procedures established by the WHO (2020) to prevent contagion by the COVID-19 affected the performance of many markets (Machovec, 2020; Chen et al., 2020, Armitage and Nellums, 2020; Dente and Hashimoto, 2020; Knight et al., 2020; Monserrate et al., 2020; Castka et al., 2020; Belzunegui-Eraso et al., 2020; Cheval et al., 2020). Authorities around the world have responded by implementing travel restrictions, lockdowns, workplace controls and facility closures. Many places have also worked to increase the ability to test and track infected contacts. Several vaccines are being developed and distributed around the world. Dente and Hashimoto (2020) and Knight et al., 2020; Kahlert & Bening, 2020) state that the COVID-19 pandemic brought uncertainties in sectors like commerce, energy, transport, industry and services, agriculture, and fisheries.

According to information released by the G1 (2021) with the pandemic closing its doors to trade, the number of unemployed had an increase of 3.4 million unemployed, more than 33% increase in the period of 1 year, totaling 14, 4 million unemployed in Brazil. With these disappointing results, an uncertainty affects a large part of the population, hunger, if you don't have a job, how can you buy food? With that thought, the government collaborated with emergency aid, but it was not enough. One way out of this uncertainty was delivery services, as they helped to keep people at home (G1, 2021).

2-3 Delivery services

The word delivery stood out at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. As one of the prevention measures is social isolation, delivery service has become a solution for everyone who enjoys a different meal (França, 2020). They deliver food, medicine, books, gifts, documents, among a multitude of things requested by the phone or apps. In addition to the increase in meal apps, other segments also took advantage of this demand for delivery, like the free market, American stores, grocery stores, produce, and pharmacies (Folha Bv, 2021).

According to Mobills, spending on the main food delivery applications – iFood, Uber Eats and Rappi – grew 149% in 2020. In December, the highest number of expenses was registered, with R\$ 2,184,752.54 in delivery orders. According to the survey, it represents an increase of 187% compared to March 2020. To reach these numbers, the expenses of 46 thousand users were analyzed between the months of January and December of last year (França, 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, different degrees of social isolation were experienced and the Motoboy, as well as many other workers, were on the front line to support a part of the lifestyle of today's society (Unileão, 2021; Castells, 2003).

According to Abílio et al. (2020), despite a 30% increase in delivery orders during the pandemic, 58.9% of Moto boys affirmed to have experienced a drop in payment. After an analysis of the weekly income divided by salary ranges, they found that there was a significant decrease in income among deliverymen who were better paid (income ranges above R\$ 520.00), when compared to the numbers before the pandemic, and a large increase (almost double) of workers in the lower-paid bracket (R\$260.00), compared to data representing the period immediately prior to the pandemic.

The application's lack of commitment to workers was identified as a generator of insecurity: 83.2% of the Moto boys said they felt afraid while carrying out their activities after the arrival of the pandemic and because they did not receive enough support, they said they started to act on their own in facing working conditions (França, 2020). Many

Moto boys have denounced the apps during the pandemic through social networks, for not providing the basic protective equipment, like masks and alcohol gel to prevent the contagion. (Unileão, 2021).

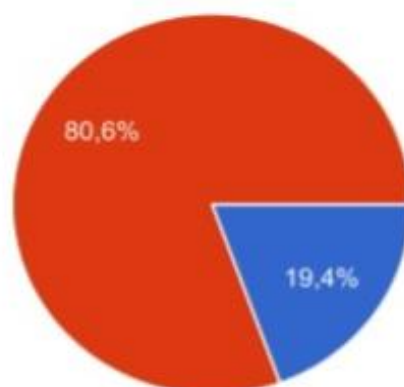
3- Methodology

The methodology is the sequence of steps necessary for the development of a research work (GRAY, 2012, p.201). The idea of carrying out this work was because one the authors of this study to work as a Moto boy. As a Moto boy for a private company, the author has experienced an increase in the number of orders due to the confinement required during the COVID-19 pandemical period. To carry out this exploratory academic work, two researches were developed, a theoretical research and an empirical research. In theoretical research, there was a search for articles related to the COVID-19 pandemic and delivery services. These articles identified contents that served to support this work. In these contents there was information from Moto boys of all branches, applications, autonomous and private. All articles were read, summarized, and analyzed. In the empirical research, a questionnaire was applied with Moto boys and snack bar owners (Appendix A). Among the respondents were barbers, shopkeepers, salesmen, masons and even businessmen who were unable to maintain their own businesses. As a result, 37 professionals answered the questionnaire.

4- Results and discussions

In the data analysis and discussion session, the results of the questionnaire were presented. At total, 37 responses were obtained. The graph 1 referred to the gender of the respondents.

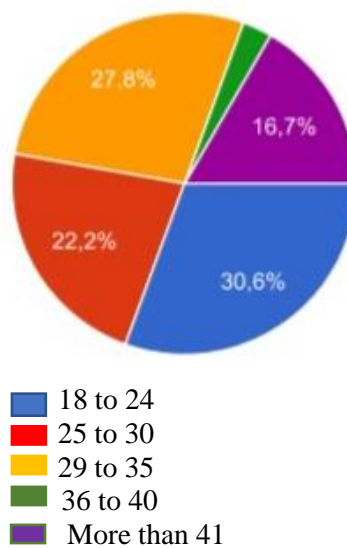
Graph 1 - Gender of respondents



- Female
- Male

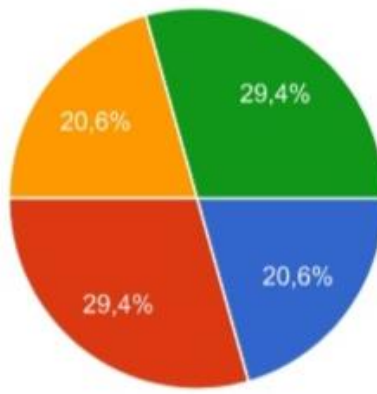
In this first graph, it is possible to see that there is a male predominance among Moto boys. Most of the respondents are men (80.6%), and only 19.4% are women. The graph 2 analyzed the respondents by age group

Graph 2 - Ages of respondents



This graph showed that most respondents (30.6%) are the youngest between 18 and 24 years old and were young people who are entering a professional career, their first job or those who did not had opportunities in another career. The second place (27.8%) were adults from 31 to 35 years old, it is possible to realize that there is a window between ages, this research showed that to face the COVID-19 pandemic, part of the population may have relocated to the labor market through the delivery market. In third were adults aged 25 to 30 years with 22.2% and after fourth place by adults over 41 years 16.7%. The graph 3 analyzed Moto boys in relation to length of service.

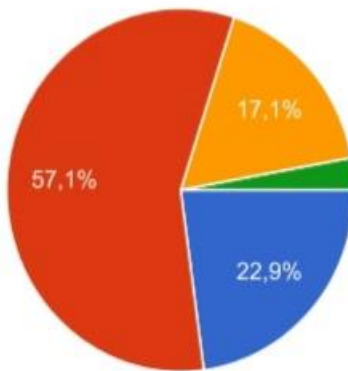
Graph 3 - Length of service as a Moto boy



- 0-1 year
- 2-3 years
- 3-4 years
- More than 5 years

In this graph it is possible to see a double tie, the first and the second are with 29.4%. It referred to workers with a career time of 2-3 years and those with more than 5 years. The third and fourth are with 20.6%, are workers with career time from 0 to 1 year and from 3 to 4 years. This difference in the graph showed that most respondents were already working as a Moto boy before the COVID-19 pandemical period. The graph 4 showed the distribution by Moto boys' monthly income.

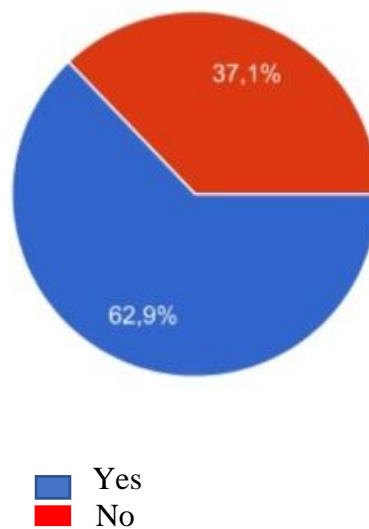
Graph 4 – Moto boys' monthly income



- Less than 1 basic salary
- 1-2 basic salaries
- 3-4 basic salaries
- More than 4 basic salaries

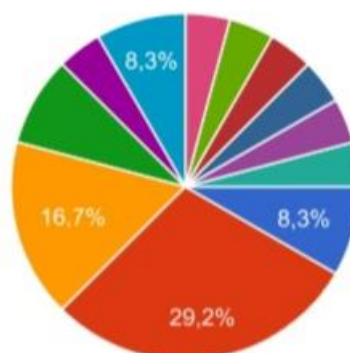
This graph showed that most of the respondents (57.1%) earn less than two minimum wages (between R\$1,000 and R\$2,000) which is in the average base salary for Moto boys in Brazil. Those who earn less than the minimum wage are Moto boys who work part-time or freelance (22.9%). In third place, with 17.1%, are those who earn between three and four salaries. And the minority are the best paid, representing 2.9 of the respondents who earn more than four salaries. In the Graph 5, it was identified whether the respondents were already working as Moto boys before the COVID-19 pandemical period.

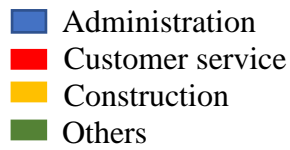
Graph 5 - Before the COVID-19 pandemic, were you already working as a Moto boy?



This graph showed that the majority (62.9%) are veterans in the Moto boy market, while the others (37.1%) started working as a Moto boy during the COVID-19 pandemical period. This fact showed an increase in demand for the Moto boys services. The graph 6 identifies which area these professionals worked before the pandemic.

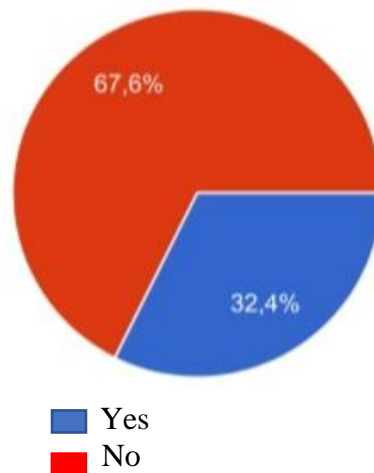
Graph 6 - Which branch did you work with before working as a Moto boy?





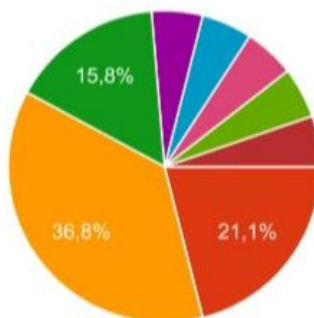
Most respondents worked with customer service with 29.2, in second place 16.7% were from the commercial branch and in third place was tied with 8.3%, the administrative and marketing branch. The graph 7 showed if the worker has other income besides the Moto boy service.

Graph 7 - In addition to working as a Moto boy, do you have other income?



In this graph, it is possible to see that most respondents (67.6%) have no other income. Of the respondents, 32.4% took advantage of the increased demand for delivery to obtain extra income. The graph 8 showed the area of activity of 32.4% of the professionals.

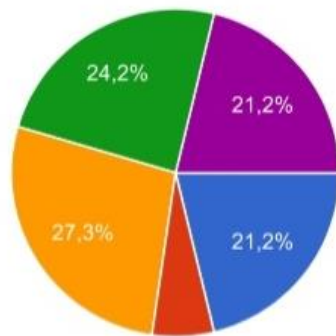
Graph 8 - If yes, in which area?



- Administration
- Customer service
- Construction
- Others

Major part of the respondents worked in the commercial sector (36.8%), in second place are workers who worked in customer service with 21.1%, and in third place with 15.8% are workers who worked in civil construction market. It is possible to note that the three most voted options are jobs with little purchasing power, so the delivery serves to complement the salary income. The graph 9 deals with the number of orders per application.

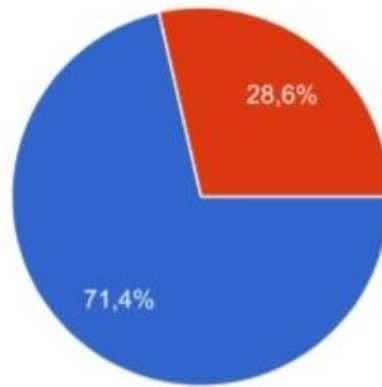
Graph 9 - The COVID-19 pandemic caused a significant increase in the number of orders per application. What percentage did you see in your orders compared to before and during the pandemic?



- 0-10%
- 11-20%
- 21-30%
- 31-40%
- More than 41%

In this chart it is possible to see that 27.3% of respondents had a 21-30% increase in delivery orders, but the other options had a similar percentage except for one that was 11-20% increase. It is possible to see that the last trade that was over 41% is tied with the first that is below 10%. The graph 10 asked if the respondent intends to continue working as a courier when the pandemic ends.

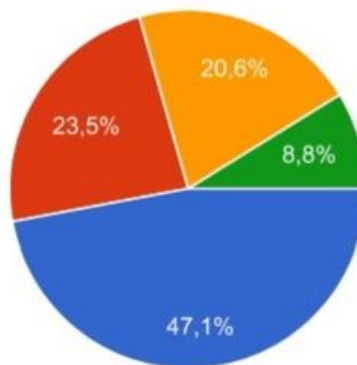
Graph 10 - Do you intend to work as a motorcycle courier when the pandemic ends?



■ Yes
■ No

It is possible to see that 71.4% of respondents intend to continue in the delivery business after the pandemic, which proves that delivery brings a satisfactory financial return. The graph 11 shows the work relationship of the Moto boy.

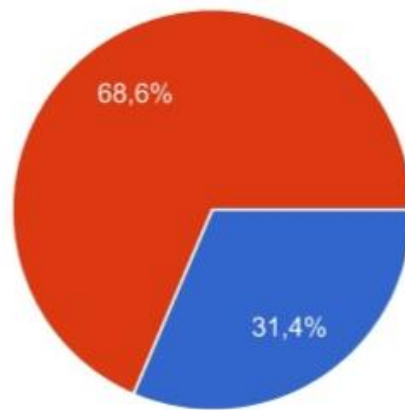
Graph 11 - What type of work relationship do you have?



■ Application
■ Autonomous
■ Hired
■ Outsourced

In this chart, it is possible to see that delivery apps are far ahead of other options, with 47.1% of respondents. The apps are an alternative for everyone who wants an opportunity for those who want a quick job with little bureaucracy. In second place are the self-employed with 23.5% of respondents, who are also classified as Moto boys with few bureaucracies. The graph 12 asked whether with the increase in demand for Moto boy services there was an improvement in the benefits for the class.

Graph 12 - Did you have any improvement in benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic?



■ Yes
■ No

Unfortunately, the result was the worst, 68.6% of respondents said they had no benefits and only 31.4% had some type of benefits. For the 31.4%, the improvement in benefits happened with the receipt of salary increases and overtime.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 brought significant challenges to the society. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, a question haunted all of us, what is it possible to do? Provisional measures were adopted, like the use of a face mask, hand hygiene and social distancing. However, what most harmed the world economy was the lockdown, an imposition of the State that means total blockade. In the pandemic scenario, this measure is the most rigorous to be taken and served to slow down the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Only essential services were allowed to work like markets and pharmacies. Among these essential services, delivery stood out, as a way of not letting commerce stop and keeping the population at home and supplied at the same time. In this way the Moto boys had their function and need increased. They became essential and served as the basis for the collapse not to be complete. In this way, many professionals, fathers of families became Moto boys to maintain their monthly income. According to this survey, 37.1% started working as a Moto boy during the COVID-19 pandemical period and 71.4% of this total will continue working as a Moto boy after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. This fact

demonstrated a satisfactory financial return for the function. Another aspect that shows the positive financial return for Moto boys is that 67.6% of professionals working in the area work only as Moto boys.

During this work it became evident that not all jobs are completely safe, many people lost their jobs and transferred to work in delivery market and today these people want to continue in delivery market because it gives a quick and satisfactory return. It is evident that even if the world is against you, persist, react, fight and if everything goes wrong change. Sometimes the best solution is yet to come, keep going and have faith. For future studies, the idea is to continue focusing on Moto boys, analyzing the influence and the need for this service in the post-COVID-19 pandemical period.

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APPENDIX A

1 - Gender:

- Female
- Male
- Other. Which?

2 - Age:

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 30
- 29 to 35
- 36 to 40
- More than 41

3- How long have you been working as a motorcycle courier?

4- What is your monthly income as a motorcycle courier?

5 - Before the pandemic, were you already working as a motorcycle courier?

- Yes
- No

6 - If you didn't work as a motorcycle courier, in which branch did you work?

- Administration
- Customer service
- Construction
- Others. Which?

7 - In addition to working as a motorcycle courier, do you have other income?

- Yes
- No

8 - If yes, in which area?

- Administration
- Customer service
- Construction
- Others

9- The pandemic caused a significant increase in the number of requests per application. What percentage did you see in your orders compared to before and during the pandemic?

- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- More than 50%

10-Do you intend to continue working as a motorcycle courier when the pandemic ends?

- Yes
- No

11-What kind of work relationship do you have?

- Application
- Autonomous
- Hired
- Outsourced
- Others. Which?

12 Did you have any improvement in benefits during/after the pandemic (Ex: meal ticket, salary increase)?

- Yes
- No

Which?