Hopes and Fears for the Future of Different Local Communities

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Abstract

Community psychology theorists underline the importance of fostering community empowerment (Rappaport, 1981). However, to become empowered, a community needs to envision a better future (Francescato, 2009; 2017). The aim of this study was to investigate the perception of the future of their Community of people resident in the city center of Rome, in peripheral areas of Rome and small towns of the metropolitan area of the Capital, analyzing what they fear most for their Community and what they desire mainly for the future of their Community, through Community Profiling. A collective reflection on hopes and possibilities provides opportunities to build a sustainable future community. A total of 147 communities were involved in the research, 49% from the City Centre of Rome, 27% from the Suburban areas of Roma, and 24% from small towns of the metropolitan area. Our research was based on the Community Profiling methodology (Francescato, Tomai & Ghirelli, 2002). The community profiling has a multidisciplinary approach since it integrates tools from different disciplines. In this study, we focused on the analysis of the future profile. Specifically, we analyzed how people feel about the future of their community, their main anxieties and hopes, comparing the different communities. Results were analyzed considering the seven profiles of the community profiling methodology (territorial, demographic, economic, service, institutional, anthropological, and psychological). The desires for the future most mentioned regarded territorial aspects for people living in the Centre of Rome, economic factors for people living in small towns, and services for people of peripheral areas. In all three communities, fears focused primarily territorial and psychological aspects.

Introduction

At the 8th International Conference of Community Psychology (ICCP) held in Melbourne in 2020, there were strong calls to expand research and action, widening our ecology of knowledge approach beyond the traditional empirical knowledge evaluating alternative ways knowledge can be produced. Rua et al. (2020) have underlined that critical reflective praxes are needed to make the theory more grounded in reality to acquire knowledge and promote social change. Following this direction, this study focuses on praxis-oriented research that aimed to foster community-based knowledge in three different types of local Italian contexts through Community Profiling. Community Profiling widens the ecology of knowledge, promoting an interdisciplinary approach based on competencies and knowledges of different professions. It stimulates interaction with other fields of human sciences such as architecture, economics, anthropology, political science, history and integrates subjective and objective knowledge.

This research focused on the reflections of members of different communities on the vision and path of the future of their communities. It was carried with people and is not on people. To increase knowledge and collaboration for sustainable futures is important to discuss together as community members' desires and fears for its future.

According to Bruscaglioni and Gheno (2004), the first step to empowerment is achieved by creating new narratives, allowing new objectives to become "imaginable" for an individual, a small group, an organization, and a local community, or a country. To become empowered, members of a community need first to be able to desire and imagine a better future (Francescato et al., 2021).

The ecological perspective and Community Profiling

The ecological framework (Brofenbrenner, 1979; Prilletensky, 2001, 2008, 2012) is the pillar of Community psychology (C.P.) for both research and action and is considered the field's principal insight (Hess, 2005). Community psychology explores how individuals relate to society and communities at the intra-psychic, interpersonal, organizational, cultural, and political levels. This model reflecting a coping and adaptation perspective assumes that people are agentic and not passive respondents to their environments (Trickett, 2009). Through this framework, community interventions are developed considering the dynamics among communities, groups, and organizations as they relate within specific settings (Kelly, 1968).
C.P. best explains and makes great use of Lewin's famous formula (Lewin, 1936), stating that behavior is a function of the person and his/her environment (Arcidiacono, 2017). C.P. has acknowledged the importance of methods that investigate in which ways the ecological contexts impact the lives of individuals. From the community psychology perspective, the context is not a backdrop; rather, it is the set of the play where social actors realize their life (Arcidiacono & Di Martino, 2012).
Several scholars (e.g., Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2006; Watts & Flanagan, 2007) bring forward a social-political perspective on local ecology, emphasizing the relevance

of promoting social justice and eliminating oppression. A premise of C.P. is that psychological and social problems do not arise randomly in society but are directly related to locations, living conditions, and economic disparities. C.P. has a long history of being concerned with social issues such as marginalization and social exclusion. It has focused, for example, on indigenous people (Thompson-Guerin & Mohatt, 2019); lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) organizations (D'Augelli, 2006), rural African American families (Kohn-Wood & Wilson, 2005), homeless people (Ornelas et al. 2014), poverty (Moura Jr. et al. 2020) and decolonization (Serrano Garcia, 2020). C.P. scholars have tried to bring theory, research, and action for social justice and psychological wellbeing into closer alignment. From an ecological perspective, understanding a local community is a sine qua non to identify which goals and interests are central and which key individuals, groups, and social settings are most necessary to achieve the specific objectives (Trickett, 2009). Community profiling (Francescato et al. 2021) is an important tool that can be used to identify the strengths, weaknesses, needs, and issues of a community and to identify ways to improve community life.

Community Profiling and empowerment

Community psychology theorists underline the importance of fostering community empowerment (e.g., Rappaport, 1981). European Community Psychologists (Martini & Sequi 1988; Ehmayer et al. 2000; Francescato et al. 2021) have developed, widening the ecological approach, the Community Profiling technique. It has been applied in Austria, Italy, and Portugal to promote the empowerment of local communities and civic participation and in Serbia and South Africa repowering minoritized groups and promoting a better integration (e.g., Arcidiacono et al. 2016; Benedetti et al. 2010; Tuozzi, 2013; Mebane &

Benedetti, in press). This critical reflective praxis has investigated the strengths, weaknesses, needs, and community problems, considering different social and cultural groups.

Several researchers (e.g., Berghold & Seckinger 2007; Reich et al., 2007) underline the importance of interventions based on a pluralistic approach in the field of C.P. Community profiling assess a local community examining different soft and hard profiles. This process promotes new forms of knowledge productions and a pluralistic view that integrates different types of knowledge. While not always directly involving experts from other fields in the process, tools from various disciplines are used to carry out community analysis. The interaction of different disciplines and tools favor forms of collaboration and participation and local knowledge creation.

According to Zimmerman (2000), empowerment refers to the processes of participation, critical awareness, and control. Community Profiling fosters the development of these crucial and intertwined aspects of empowerment. For example, through the exchange of ideas in the focus group and during the different phases of the intervention, community members are actively involved in identifying issues of their neighborhood that can be addressed collectively. Through participatory decision-making, they evaluate which objectives are more relevant for their Community. According to Eklund (1999), being involved in defining priorities fosters a "substantial" form of participation. Critical awareness is reached by better understanding the power structures and their influence in the Community. Following a multicultural perspective, community profiling allows participants to analyze their neighborhood's positive and negative aspects using different lenses (from territorial to psychological profiles) and favors their critical understanding of the

contextual factors. A critical understanding of the social, cultural, and political conditions that influence their Community is also promoted through the interviews of stakeholders and key figures of the Community.

Community profiling enhances residents' sense of control, increasing their ability to influence decisions regarding their neighborhood, considering the various needs and hopes. Focusing on action-oriented plans brings members to move forward and create positive changes for their Community, increasing their sense of control.

A core of the Community Profiling technique, through which residents find new understandings and knowledge of their Community, is the relationship building that facilitators promote, linking different community groups (e.g., elders, young people, minority members). Discussing, discovering common issues and shared needs can enhance social participation. Developing positive relationships improves a community's ability to cope with collective problems. Several authors have underlined the development of empowerment is contingent on interpersonal relationships (Chirstens, 2011). The exchange of information and opinions using the different profiles makes visible diverse aspects of the Community, thus generating unfreezing moments to contribute to community empowerment and change.

Following the Community Profiling approach, this study will focus particularly on hope and fears for the future of three different types of Community.

Several authors (e.g., Freire 1976) have emphasized the role of hope in promoting community involvement. Hope can be a success key in promoting community participation. The concept of hope has several important characteristics (Rand, 2018): is

directed towards a goal, is future-oriented focusing on a goal that has still to be reached, is a general belief appropriate in a variety of situations and aims, it accentuates the relevance of the processes rather than emotions, it tends to focus on what individuals can do to accomplish goals (Rand, 2018). Through hope, community members can identify possibilities for the future of their Community and build collective projects to achieve them. When a sense of hopelessness characterizes instead a community, fatalism, the belief that events are predetermined and therefore unavoidable, tends to prevail. Several studies have emphasized the relation of oppression and injustice to fatalism (e.g., Martin Barò, 2017).

Analyzing fears can become a strength for community development since it can help community members recognize something they do not want for their community. Identifying fears for the future of the community raises awareness of social, economic issues that worry members. Fears can mobilize local knowledge and resources and encourage people to cooperate to solve problems that may affect the community in the near future. Many useful community projects can be inspired by fear. For example, fear of an increase of homeless people or neighborhood decay can lead to the development of homelessness prevention and neighborhood rehabilitation programs.

Through Community Profiling Technique, hope and fear can both promote community development (Francescato, 2021).

Methodology

The aim of this study was to investigate the perception of the future of their community of people resident in the city center of Rome, in peripheral areas of Rome and small towns of the metropolitan area of the Capital,

analyzing what they fear most for their community and what they desire mainly for the future of their community, through Community Profiling.

Community Profiling

The community profiling process examines the local contexts through eight profiles (five hard profiles and three soft ones), integrating subjective and objective approaches (For a more detailed description of the community profiling technique, see Francescato et al., 2021).

The territorial profile explores data related to the territory: physical characteristics, environmental conditions, climate, land resources, and transportation infrastructures. The economic profile examines the different economic activities in the territory divided into primary, secondary, tertiary. In addition, data related to employment in other fields are also analyzed. The institutional profile considers the political-administrative organization of the community, the presence or absence of particular institutions (police station, prisons, church(s), tribunals, etc.), and their perception among the residents. Moreover, this profile investigates the relation of the municipal administration with the state, the region, the province, and the European Union. The demographic profile includes the number of inhabitants, divided by age group, civil status, gender, and education. Population increase/decrease and migratory flows are also analyzed. The service profile is three-pronged into socio-medical, socio-educational, and recreational-cultural. Data refer to the number of services, their location, and ease of access, and also the functioning organizational and operating procedures are analyzed. Experts' opinions on the services are compared to the judgments of ordinary people. The anthropological profile involves community history, values, social attitudes, rituals, myths, traditions, and community festivities. The

psychological profile explores affective dynamics, sense of belonging, collective identification, level of participation, social support, the tendency to collaboration conflict, and emotional security. The future profile explores the future perception.

Participants

Research participants come from the metropolitan area of Rome, characterized by different local dimensions: the Center, the peripheral neighborhoods, and small municipalities.

A total of 147 communities were involved in the research, 49% from Rome's city center, 27% from the disadvantaged peripheral areas of Rome, and 24% from small towns in the province of Rome. In Rome, a social-economic gap is associated to the distance from the Center of Rome (Lelo et al. 2016). With respect to education, the percentage of people with a complete university-level education are higher in the Center of Rome; they range from 42% in the rich neighborhoods of Parioli and Salario (42%), Acquatraversa, Eur, and Celio (41%) to as low as 5% in peripheral areas outside of GRA (Great Ring Road of Rome) such as Tor di Cervara, Santa Palomba (6%), Borghesiana (6,6%). Also, the occupational rates reflect a strong division between the Center and the peripheral areas outside GRA (Lelo et al. 2016.). The unemployment rates of peripheral areas are three times higher than some of the central neighborhoods of Rome (Tor Cevara 17%, Tufello, Santa Palomba, Tor Fiscale (14%) compared to the unemployment rate of 5% of the central areas such as Parioli, Pineto and Tor di Quinto). From 2002 to 2017, the number of people living in the Center has decreased by over 8%; in the same period, in the peripheral areas outside the GRA, inhabitants have grown more than 39% (Lelo et al., 2018). The composition of the family varies too since living in the Center has a

higher cost family with numerous members tend to live more in the peripheral areas.

The metropolitan area of Rome includes 120 municipalities. The municipalities vary in size, from 175 inhabitants of the smallest municipality Vivaro to Guidonia with more than 80.000 residents (25 municipalities have less than 1000 residents). The income distribution shows that 64% of the municipalities are characterized by a mean income inferior to the territorial mean average. Furthermore, an analysis of the data shows a high presence of work commuting; of the 238.000 inbound displacements towards Rome, 63% involve municipalities near the Center of Rome (Istat, 2017).

In each community analysis, small groups of about ten men and women, including young people (under 30 years of age), adults (40 to 65), and the elderly (over 65), were involved. Focus groups were facilitated by 50 Master level graduate students trained in community profiling intervention methodologies in the practicum lab connected to an advanced community psychology course in Sapienza University of Rome and community psychologists in 2015-2019. Students who lived in the Center of Rome, or in the periphery of Rome or small towns around Rome, recruited residents to form focus groups, members of local associations, ranging from business associations to volunteer groups, or from youth and elderly recreation centers. Participants were asked to consent to participate in the study.

To assess how residents perceived the future of their community, the Future Profile was used. First, people in small groups were asked how they visualize their community in the next ten years and subsequently their desires and fears for the future of their community. After every member had a chance to give their opinion, members discuss whether they agree that a specific item cited during the brainstorming phase is a relevant/common

desire/fear of the community.   Answers are then classified as belonging to one of the profiles. Finally, they discuss solutions to given problems/desires that emerge.

Results

View of the future of the Community in ten years

The members' answers on how they would see their local communities in 10 years showed that 43% of the people living in the Center, 48% of the people living in Small Towns and Peripheral areas thought that their communities would improve in the future. Around 46% and 45% respectively of the people living in Rome Center and Peripheral areas and 35% of the residents in small towns had a negative view of their future in the community. About 11% of the people from the Center, 7% of the people living in the Peripheral areas, and 17% of the people from small-town believe that it will remain as they are now. This data (see graph below) shows that a negative and positive view of the future are quite balanced, especially in Rome Center and Peripheral areas. There is a less pessimistic view in the small towns and a more optimistic tendency to view the future, and a higher percentage of citizens have a neutral expectation toward the future.
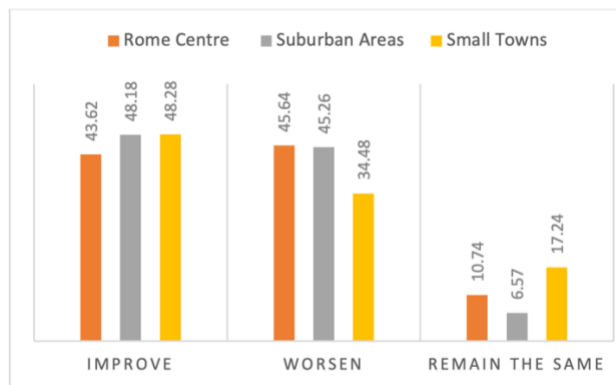

Figure 1: View of the future in 10 years

Desires for the future

Rome Central Area In the Rome Central area, the greatest number of wishes expressed concerned the territorial profile (34%). Specifically, 22% of hopes regard less pollution and 22% maintenance of green areas in this profile. Summarizing 44% percent of the comments contemplate a greener city, 12% of the desires related to more interventions to limit the architectural degradation. People emphasize that several historic buildings suffered degradation and decay due to neglect and misuse. Around 17% of the comments focus on greater transport efficiency, especially at night, traffic regulation 9.5%, and a greater possibility of finding free parking spaces 8%.

The second profile (17% of comments) mainly mentioned was the psychological profile, most of the remarks (46%) related to the desire to feel safer in their community. Residents were primarily worried about the rise of local crime in their community.

The third profile most frequently (16%) mentioned was the economic profile. People from the Center desired: more business premises (26%), more work (25%), regulation of the costs of houses and rents (22%), and an improvement in the tertiary sector (19%) (especially store hours of shops).

The fourth profile (16%) most mentioned by people in the Center is the service profile. Comments related to this profile (54%) concerned the desire to have more culturally recreative neighborhood activities (cinemas, theatres, cultural spaces, promotion of arts). For the health sector (39%), they wished for better health services, easier usability, and efficiency.

The anthropological profile (7%) is mentioned very rarely there. People underline that contemporary society is

characterized by the loss of past values and superficiality in dealing with current issues. The demographic profile (6%) also is seldomly mentioned. The observations focus on the age group of young people, for whom more and better opportunities are desired, especially in finding a job. Finally, the institutional profile is hardly mentioned (4%); they appreciate the involvement of religious institutions in the community, and they would like to trust more their political-administrative institutions.

<u>Peripheral Areas</u> People that live in the peripheral areas long for more recreational and cultural activities and a higher quality of these services (26%). Around 57% of their observations are related to the recreative-cultural area. Residents denounce that cultural activities are unsatisfactory and demand more high-quality cultural opportunities. Moreover, residents' comments on the social, educational area (28%) regarded the desire to increase the number of schools (educational offer is limited only to certain types of educational institutions).

The second profile most mentioned by people in the disadvantaged peripheral area (19%) is the territorial one. Citizens comments on this profile related mostly (37%) to the architectural decay of the neighborhoods and buildings due to lack of care, to the desire that air pollution dropped significantly, traffic would diminish in the future (24%), communication routes (16%) improved, better maintenance of roads (residents lamented for example that poor lighting made places more dangerous).

The third profile mostly cited (18%) among desires for the future is the psychological profile. Most desires in this area focus on a higher level of support and collaboration in the neighborhood (30%) and affective security (22%).

Desires related to the economic profile (15%) regard especially improvements in the tertiary activities, especially those services of communication and relation with the public (such as banks, post offices) and more leisure clubs. Almost 13% of the wishes focus on the institutional profile; residents see political and administrative institutions as entities responsible for changes. They want them to take care of the community providing for the modernization of the various areas. Moreover, they also desire more police control in the future. Finally, 8% of the wishes focus on the anthropological profile. People would like to receive in the future more social support in their neighborhood. They hope for a greater community spirit, more affectivity, friendships, and involvement in the neighborhood.

<u>Small Towns</u> In the small towns, most desires involve the economic profile (26%). People would like more job opportunities in the future, a revival of production activities typical of the area. They also hope for an increase in tourism.

 About 23% of the wishes focused on the Service Profile, 77% of the desires focused on the recreational aspects, residents of small-town lamented to be often forced to move towards Rome to find places to meet and have fun. They wished that new recreational activities will be offered. Overall, 15% of the comments related to different aspects of the psychological profile such as feelings towards the community (20%), greater collaboration (20%), emotionally safe (20%).

 Almost 14% of residents mentioned the territorial profile. People living in small towns were generally satisfied with the geographic characteristics of their territory (22%), they hoped that in the future, there would be lower levels of architectural decay (22%), lower levels of pollution (17%), and a better system of communication (17%) and also better maintenance of the green areas.

Overall, 11% of the wishes concerned the engagement of local and political institutions in modernizing the towns, implementing policies for the maintenance and protection of the town, increasing control, and carrying out an existing project that could help solve problematic situations. The anthropological profile's desires (10,5%) concerned more

support and promotion of historical traditions, folk festivals, and the perseverance of popular values.

The main results on the desires of the three communities, classified according to the seven profiles, are shown in Figure 2
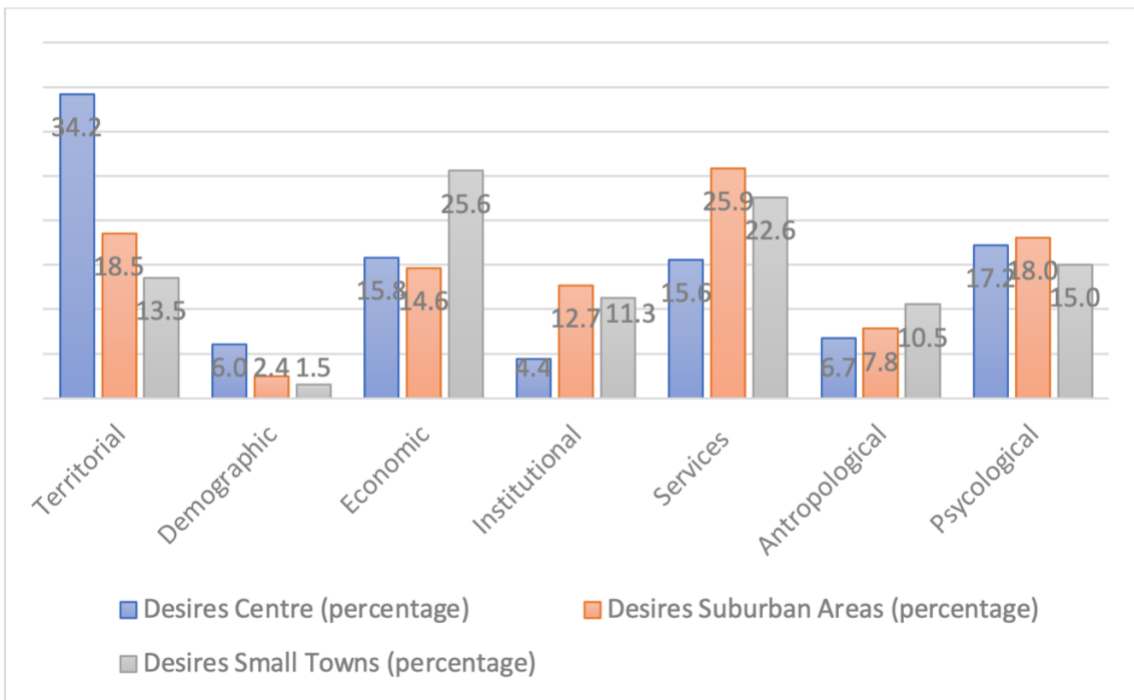

Figure 2: Desires for the future in Rome Centre, Peripheral Areas, and Small Towns

Fears towards the future

Rome Central Area Concerning the fears, the profile mostly cited were the psychological, 30% of the comments, and the territorial, 24% of the comments, followed by demographic profile (14%), the anthropological profile (14%), and the economic profile (13%). Most of the comments on the psychological profile (35%) related to the widespread fears for the rise of crime, and 22% of the statements in this profile related to emotional aspects: they feared that in the future, there will be more

relational difficulties among members of the community and that the values of community unity will be lost. Furthermore, they also feared (14% of comments) that social representation of their neighborhood will lose prestige in the coming years.

The second profile mostly mentioned was the territorial profile (24%). In this profile, 55% of the comments related to fear of increasing air pollution and their harmful effects on public health and traffic congestions. Moreover, they also worried about an increased degradation of the community and

littering in green areas and streets (such as abandoned garbage and writing on walls).

The third profile mainly mentioned was the demographic one. People from the Center fear the increase of population density in the neighborhood due to the presence of non-EU nationals in the territory (54% of the comments). They are afraid the presence of immigrants will be a source of crime for the community and loss of security. They are worried that immigrants may take the place of Italians in the neighborhood.

The fears related to the anthropological profile (14% of the comments) concerned the disappearance of historical traditions (50% of the comments), the rise of disrespectful lifestyles, rudeness, bad habits in the neighborhood (18%), and negative social norms (18%). Finally, about 13% of the fears of residents in the Center were related to the economic profile. In this profile, 71% of the observations concerned mostly preoccupations associated with a possible further increase of the already high cost of living, the high rents, and house prices.

Peripheral Areas In peripheral areas, the first profile (25%) that raises concerns is the psychological one. People that live in the peripheries are especially afraid of the spread of crime and drug dealing (53% of fears); 22% of the comments refer to experiences of fear of isolation that might worsen in the future.

The second profile is the territorial one (24%). About 59% of the comments related to this profile refer to the fear that in the future, there will be fewer green areas, more pollution, and more traffic and 24% of the concern refer to architectural decay. Fifteen percent of the fears related to the demographic profile and 14% of the concerns associated with the anthropological profile, most of the comments on this profile refer to losing the typical traditions of the

neighborhood. For the demographic profile, 63% of statements were related to preoccupations due to the increase of migration flows and immigrants' high presence, which could contribute significantly to the rise in crime and concerns related to the rise in delinquency in the neighborhood. About 11% of the fears related to the economic profile, also the people of the peripheral area feared that the cost of houses and rents, and living costs would rise even more in the future (70% of comments).

Small Towns In the small towns, most of the fears concerned the territorial profile (22%) and the psychological profile (22%), the anthropological profile (19%), the demographic profile (17%), the economic profile (13%). In the territorial profile, 48% of the comments related to pollution, residents of small towns fear that typical territorial characteristics of good climate and green spaces will be lost, in short, that what is defined as "an oasis of peace in nature" will disappear.

Among the psychological profile, 32% of the fears focused on the rise of crime (drug dealing, robberies, assaults), 24% of the concerns of the psychological profile regarded the deterioration of the feelings about their own town. They mainly feared that people would feel even more isolated, not very fulfilled, and need to move away from the town to have a satisfying life.

Comments related to the anthropological profile regarded the fear of the loss of values (29%), tradition, customs (24%), and history (29%) of the small towns. Residents feared especially to lose the sense of peacefulness that characterizes small town will. Comments regarding the demographic profile related (58%) to migration flows and immigrants. Residents feared that migrants could replace the original Italian local community because many Italians in the future will leave the small towns to accomplish their life goals. In

the economic profile, most of the comments concerned occupation issues, especially fears of a low employment rate, difficulties finding a job, and the rise of undeclared work (53% of the comments).

The main results on the fears of the three communities, classified according to the seven profiles, are shown in Figure 3.
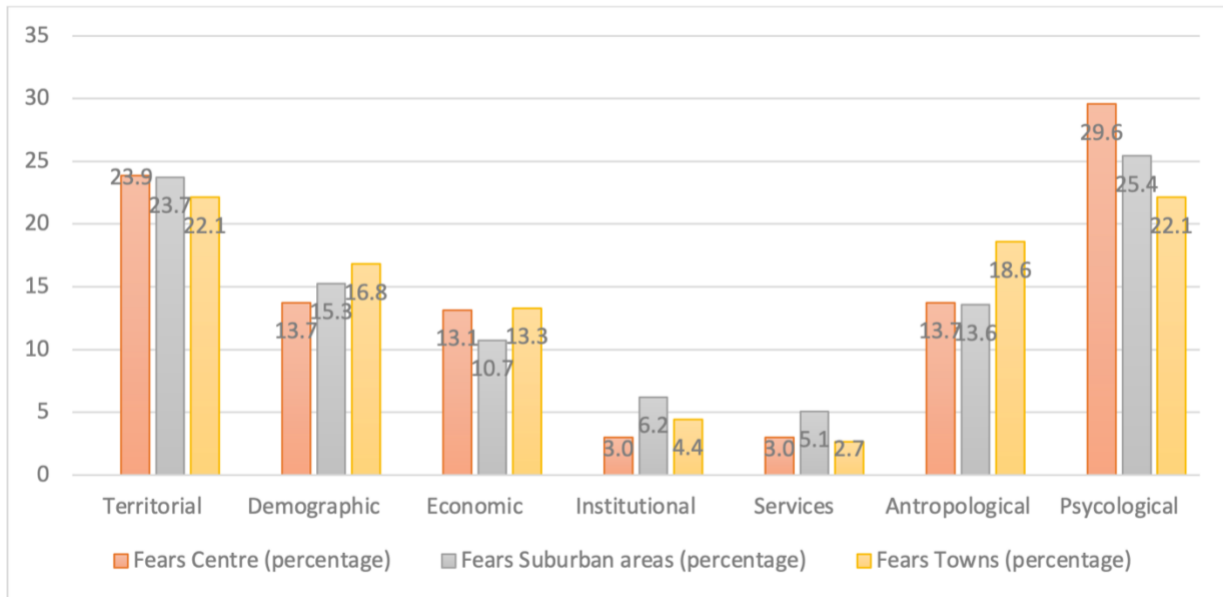

Figure 3: Fears for the future in Rome Centre, Peripheral Areas, and Small Towns

Discussion

To promote a sustainable future, we need to involve community members and understand their perception of their Community's future and especially their desires and fears for the community they live in (Francescato et al., 2021). The community in which persons live can significantly impact their mental wellbeing (e.g., Diez Roux & Mair, 2010).

The profile of the future fostered deep and considered reflections of residents on the possibilities of their communities. One of the first steps to become more empowered is defining your vision of the future and direction (Francescato et al., 2007; Francescato & Mebane, 2016). Members in the groups revealed in their feedback that exchanging considered reflections, experiences, and feelings on their local community's future broadened their

understanding and thinking of the community. In their feedback, they observed that listening to other community members' thoughts sometimes triggered impressions of their community they previously underestimated or did not consider. Moreover, hearing stories and opinions from different people who lived in the community with whom they usually did not interact also offered an opportunity to look at the community from different perspectives and choose solutions they would never have considered before. Giving voice to minority groups stimulated the production of new narratives for their communities. Participants also reported that participating in the project created ties among residents that shared a dream or problem.

Discussing their hopes and fears, in several cases, community members could identify the means and ways to achieve the desired

objectives through self-determined and self-sustained projects. During their analysis of their collective desires or problematic issues (fears), members of the groups were helped by the community psychologists facilitators to distinguish among projects that they could manage on their own, projects that needed the creation of networks and resources outside the community, and issues that needed to be addressed at an institutional and political level. Making this distinction helped members not to feel powerless to change the situation since they focused on objectives they could master.

Future interventions could take into account the data of this first research. Instead of performing a general Community Profiling, they could focus on collecting more data on the profiles that residents in the different areas felt were relevant for the future of their communities. Though they are several similarities among the three communities, we can notice that concerning the desires, people from the Center focused more on the territorial profile, they wanted to promote interventions to reduce pollution and increase green areas, to maintain parks better, to keep the neighborhood cleaner and keep the roads in better conditions. The second profile mainly mentioned was the psychological one; feeling safe and secure is a critical foundation for living better in a community. Residents wished to feel more confident in the future and meet more with people that lived in the same area.

In the Peripheral poor neighborhoods, the main focus is on the services, especially the cultural and educational areas. The residents wished for wider educational opportunities. They pointed out that education could be an important contributor to a successful career and lower the social class gap. They also hoped for more cultural activities like the wealthier, more central neighborhoods. These findings can be in part explained by the urban sprawl in the last years brought urban

the expansion of peripheral areas that lead to the development of large neighborhoods with few services (Lelo et al. 2016) The second profile mainly mentioned was territorial; people wished for better maintenance and proper management of the neighborhood and the buildings and reduced air pollution (by increasing, for example, public transport and bicycle lanes).

Overall, communities in the Center and peripheral areas share the vision of a better urban/territorial organization (less traffic and architectural barriers, pollution, and environmental degradation); in small towns, people tend to mention more positive territorial aspects related to the beauty of surroundings and opportunities for enjoyment of nature. We can hypothesize that in urban areas of the city, where there is a higher concentration of population with respect to smaller towns, problems related to pollution and local degradation are more felt.

In the small municipalities, the economic issue seemed more central; hopes for the future were focused primarily on occupation growth; this can be in part justified by data from Istat (2017) that reveals a lower-income average in the majority of the municipalities. They had several business ideas that could contribute to job creation, cultural preservation, and economic growth, from investing more in locally produced products (oil, bread, cheese, hams, cheese) to revitalizing the artisan sector (e.g., glass, ceramics, mosaic, handmade toys workshops). Moreover, they felt it was crucial to find new means to attract more tourists after the summer season since the city of Rome catalyzes the tourism of the entire province (Istat, 2017). The second profile mostly mentioned was the service one. Residents felt that more recreative and cultural activities (the most popular ones are in the Capital) should be promoted to increase the participation in community, thus avoiding that certain categories that have less

access to cultural or welfare services (e.g., poor elders or families) risked being marginalized from society.

On the whole different identity markers (belonging to communities in the Center, in peripheral areas, and small municipalities) provide in part distinct ideas about hope for community development. In small towns, attention is focused more on creating work suitable for the expectations of young people (that often tend to emigrate to Rome to find jobs). Residents of peripheral areas are interested mostly in programing more cultural events in the future and increasing the educational offer to reduce the educational gap between downtown and urban suburbs. For residents in the Center, the problems of air pollution and keeping green areas healthy are the central themes to be addressed in the future.

Future C.P. programs taking into account the results of this project could gather more data on the profiles that seemed more relevant for the residents (for example, for the Service profile in the peripheral area, they could distribute questionnaires to residents with children on the satisfaction of the education offer, which schools/courses they would like to have in the area).

The main fears (1st and 2nd profile most mentioned) for all three communities are more similar since they focus primarily on the psychological and the territorial profile. Our study shows in all three areas the need for community building initiatives to improve the safety of the community (e.g., organizing block parties and other ways to engage with members of the community, neighborhood watch system), and territorial improvements (e.g., creating more green areas, bicycle lanes, walkways, water refill stations, community clean-up days).Feeling safe is considered a key element for sustainable communities and is related to positive mental health outcomes (Alik & Kearn, 2016).

The territorial profile was often mentioned among the fears and the desires, revealing the importance of a greener community for citizens of the three areas. Research has shown an association between health and greener spaces (Mebane, 2020; Twohig-Bennett & Jones). Climate change has become the most significant threat, and as Reyes Cruz (2020) points out, its effects could continue to grow and worsen over time if we don't take urgent action to prevent the breakdown of the earth's climate. There is a strong need for residents to meet these global challenges. C.P. can have an important role in building a future of climate justice (Reyes Cruz, 2020; Francescato, 2020). Community members take a more significant role in pursuing green goals when they are actively involved in developing environmental projects.

Overall our Community Profiling praxis-oriented project moves beyond the concept of knowledge generated by external professionals to "local knowledge" created by members of the community discussing the future of their community, reflecting, finding new understandings, and identifying together priorities to obtain change. The focus groups give voice also to marginal members of the community (immigrants, elders, housekeepers) and their vision of the future, enabling them to participate in the construction of shared desires and social changes for the community. Finally, Community Profiling can promote in communities and neighborhoods self-determination, defined by Ortiz-Torres (2020) as the ability to identify needs of their contexts and respond in ways that enable communities to take control over lives and act for collective wellbeing.

One last reflection on our community profiling experiences. Members in our groups differed in age and gender and given the gender and old-young divides, in a familial patriarchal society as Italy, some of them mentioned how meaningful had been to them

to be able to share a reflective experience with people of different age and gender who were not their relatives. These findings support the belief of Sonn (2016) that we have "to construct a community psychology that values a plurality of epistemologies, methodologies (De Sousa Santos, 2007, 2009), and relational ethics (Dussel, 1985; Montero, 2007)" (p.312). Enhancing and reviving different knowledge types can help communities create sustainable futures; community psychology profiling can be a valuable tool for uplifting communities.

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