

QUEENSLAND TOURISM WORKFORCE CRISIS RESILIENCE & RECOVERY PROJECT

TOURISM WORKER DYADIC INTERVIEWS
& LAB STUDY REPORT



QUEENSLAND
TOURISM INDUSTRY
COUNCIL

The Voice of Tourism



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DATE 26 January, 2023

**PREPARED BY
The Queensland Tourism Industry Council
in partnership with The University of Queensland**

Cite report as

Robinson, R.N.S. Yan, H., & Jiang, Y. (2023). Queensland Tourism Workforce Crisis Resilience & Recovery Project: Tourism Worker Perspectives - Report 5, Queensland Tourism Industry Council: Brisbane.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live across Queensland, and recognises their continuing connection to the land, waters and culture. We also pay our respects to all First Nations people, past, present and emerging.

About the Queensland Tourism Industry Council

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is Queensland's peak tourism industry body and the leading advocate for Queensland's tourism and hospitality sector. QTIC represents the interests of the state's more than 60,000 tourism businesses and more than 800 members across Queensland working in all sectors of the tourism and hospitality industry.

QTIC acknowledges the generous contributions to this document made by many QTIC members.

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About The University of Queensland

For more than a century, The University of Queensland has educated and worked with outstanding people to create positive change for society. UQ research has global impact and is delivered by an interdisciplinary community of more than 1,500 researchers at 6 faculties, 8 research institutes and 100+ research centres.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the findings of two studies that focused on the pre- and amid-COVID-19 experiences of tourism workers. The objective of these studies was to give voice to workers.

The first study involved a series of interviews with workers who left tourism during the crisis and had not returned. The sample recruited was diverse in participant demographics, location, job roles and industry sector of employment. In total 16 participants were interviewed and nine of these nominated a 'significant other' – that is a peer, colleague or relative who could provide an objective perspective and so offer a 360-degree perspective on the participants crisis experiences. Participants were asked a) why did they leave tourism employment and b) what would bring them back. Common themes for leaving included financial worries, impacts on family, stress and burnout, a lack of flexibility from employers, and for some a culture of exploitation, especially from those participants that had worked in the hospitality sector. Driving changes the industry would need to make to entice these participants to come back to tourism employment were greater job security, better pay and promotional opportunities and more supportive workplace practices.

Some sector differences were reported by the participants. Redundancy was a core theme from those that worked in the travel sector, with the offering of voluntary severances for some participants having a positive impact on their family pressures. Service and association sector participants benefited from the employer's capacity to embrace more flexible workplace practices during the pandemic, but migrants in this sector reported unfair employment practices compared to their domestic colleagues. Accommodation employees fared better than their foodservice colleagues. Contingent employment in hospitality seemed a driver of insecurity and pay concerns, and for the foodservice sector themes of exploitation and harassment of various sorts was higher than for the other sectors.

The second study was conducted in a state-of-art Behavioural Lab, at the University of Queensland. There were two components. The first, recruiting 70 participants with amid-COVID frontline tourism and hospitality experience, used physio/psychological measures to test their emotional responses to working under the conditions at that time. The results showed that crisis and related response measures (e.g., wearing masks and PPEs) can create strong negative emotions among workers. Employees' negative emotional experiences, in turn, can (i) reduce their commitment and/or identification to the organisation and industry, (ii) make employees less resilient, and (iii) more likely to leave their current organisation or tourism/hospitality industry.

For the second component of the lab study the same 70 participants were presented visual and text sources of support scenarios. In terms of the sources of support, individual respondents seem to have depleted their 'self' resources so looked to co-workers and employers. The most common support from co-workers was that in the workplace, for example collegiality that fostered belongingness. The most effect sources of support from employers, as reported by the respondents, was social-psychological support, for instance caring about their health and wellbeing, and financial support. Financial support was not limited to pay specifically but could also be in the form of enabling shift-swapping with co-workers.

Finally, support from co-workers and employers can improve workers' job satisfaction and adaptive ability during crisis. By contrast, self-support is more damaging than helpful, as it can result in reduced job satisfaction, and reduced adaptive ability. Again, this is likely related to individuals having already depleted their internal resources and needing to look to external resources to cope. In terms of the type of support, workplace support and psychological support can enhance job satisfaction, while financial support will not. Workplace support can also improve adaptive ability. Likewise, financial support (taking multiple casual



jobs, taking colleague's shift, allocating more shifts) also requires more resources; thus, it can result in negative impacts on job satisfaction and adaptive ability.

In summary, the studies in this report have given voice to employee-specific concerns, which in some of the other studies (see report 4) are convoluted with operator and stakeholder perspectives. Overall, the two studies provide clear areas that industry and government, through policies and practices, can turn their attention to in relation to addressing broader employment issues that contributed to an amid-COVID resignation of many workers, and they are summarised at the end of this report. These studies also highlight aspects of tourism employment that again, industry and policy makers, can review to enhance the value proposition to attract these workers back to tourism industry.





INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

Queensland's tourism industry remains challenged into 2023 and beyond with workforce issues. Workforce resilience is required to build capacity in its recovery from the COVID-19 and post-pandemic impacts. Funded by the Queensland Government's Advance Queensland Scheme, and led by Dr Richard Robinson, of The University of Queensland (UQ), in partnership with Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), the ultimate goal of this research is to support an evidenced-based staged recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic impacts and to develop workforce resilience and recovery strategies to weather future external shocks via a [Queensland Tourism Workforce Strategy V2: A crisis resilience and recovery plan](#).

In the second year of the project, on which this report is based, there were four key deliverables, all designed to better understand the impacts of, resilience to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic. Firstly, a total of five consultation workshops with 55 participants (i.e., employees, operators/senior managers, stakeholders, educators, trainers, and council representatives etc) were conducted in each of five RTO regions: Gold Coast, Tropical North Queensland, Outback Queensland, Southern Queensland Country and Whitsundays. Secondly, an Australia-wide survey, sampling across all tourism sectors, aimed to understand industry access to, use of, attitudes and experiences with crisis support resources, and changes in their resilience and resilience-related factors. These two studies are summarised in Report 4 of the project. Thirdly, a series of (dyadic) interviews with tourism employees and their significant others were conducted to unpack why people left the tourism industry and what might bring them back. Fourthly, a laboratory (lab) study using cutting-edge psychophysiological measurements (in the UQ Behavioural Science Lab) was conducted to understand tourism employees' responses to amid-COVID working conditions and the perceived efficacy of different sources and forms of crisis-related support. This fifth report of the project focuses on the findings from these last two studies; the dyadic interviews and the lab study. Given access to workers during the in-region consultation workshops had proved problematic in year one of the project, in consultation with QTIC management, it was agreed a direct approach would be made to tourism workers – these two studies were therefore designed.

QTIC Chief Executive Officer's Foreword

To augment Queensland tourism's recovery and resilience following the disastrous impacts of the global pandemic, it is important to understand the lived experiences and valuable insights of those connected to the tourism sector and who were affected by the pandemic. For meaningful action and improvement to be made, it is imperative that industry and government formulate recovery measures based on the recommendations of those on-the-ground.

This report is the third of three and summarises the results of two 2022 studies: a series of interviews with Queensland workers who left the tourism industry during COVID-19 and have not returned, and a lab study of frontline tourism and hospitality workers who had experiences of working under COVID-19 conditions.

The research complements tourism operator and stakeholder perspectives by providing a deeper understanding of employees and their comprehension of life and career during a pandemic. Their critical



insights ensure a holistic approach to tourism's recovery. We hope this report will serve as a useful resource in driving meaningful recovery projects and future resilience developments.

For their efforts and work in furthering our understandings of the impacts of the pandemic, I would like to thank Associate Professor Richard Robinson and the University of Queensland research team. Collaborative, industry-led research projects, such as the one you are about to read, are fundamental in forming effective response strategies.

My thanks also go to the QTIC membership and staff, the Regional Tourism Organisations, and their members who dedicated their time in facilitating and participating in this valuable joint research project.

Brett Fraser
Chief Executive Officer
Queensland Tourism Industry Council



METHODS & AIMS

This report summarises the findings from two studies; a set of dyadic interviews with tourism employees and their significant others and an experimental-design lab study using biometric devices to measure participants' emotional responses to a video and picture/text stimuli.

Study 1: Dyadic interviews

A dyadic interview methodology was designed to directly engage tourism workers. This involved recruiting a purposive core sample of participants who satisfied three criteria:

- a) they had worked in tourism prior to and/or during COVID-19,
- b) they had left tourism employment during the crisis, and
- c) they had not returned to tourism work.

Between September and November 2022, a total of 16 participants were recruited. Coming from a diverse range of tourism/hospitality sectors, including accommodation, food services, aviation, attractions/tours, and service organisations, nine participants also nominated a 'significant other' who were also willing to be interviewed – thus creating a dyad, or pairing, of a core participant and a 'significant other' (a professional or personal contact). These 'significant others' were able to offer a validation of the core participants' experience, fill in any gaps and offer alternative objective viewpoints – in a 180 degree-like exercise. An additional nine interviews were therefore conducted with these significant others', resulting in a total of 25 one-on-one interviews.

Study 2: Lab study using psychophysiological measurements

Between September and November 2022, a total of 70 participants who worked in the tourism and hospitality industry over the past two years were recruited for the lab study. The data collection was conducted in the behavioural science laboratory at UQ Business School. The study was composed of two sub-studies. In Study 2a, the aim was to understand the psychological status and emotional responses of tourism/hospitality employees to the work impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were instructed to watch videos involving scenarios of tourism/hospitality employees serving customers in a quarantine hotel; in the meantime, continuous facial expression, skin conductance, and attention measures (eye-tracking) were recorded and stored for analysis.

In Study 2b, the main aim was to identify the most effective "source and type of resources" for coping with employees' negative emotions triggered by an external crisis (i.e., COVID-19) and for improving their psychological well-being. Participants were asked to view and reflect on a total of nine scenarios with text and picture illustrations signifying different sources/types of support resources. Sophisticated lab equipment, to capture three data points, was used in both studies.¹ Together with the lab experiment, pre-and post-experiment surveys of participants were conducted to enrich and interpret the psychophysiological data.

This report begins with a summary of findings from the dyadic interview, which highlighted the key factors contributing to the so-called "great resignation" in the tourism and hospitality industry, followed with the key findings/interpretations from the lab study, which highlighted the emotional frustrations confronting tourism employees due to COVID-19 - and the resources and supports that may alleviate their distress and improve their well-being.

¹ 1) Shimmer+ GSR (galvanic skin response) to measure physiological arousal through the EDA signal (electrodermal activity); 2) Facial expression analysis technique to measure emotional arousal and facial responses, and 3) Tobii TX300 Eye-tracking (monitor-based) technique to measure visual attention and eye movements.



Lead singer performing on stage, wearing a straw hat and sunglasses, playing a white electric guitar.

Drummer performing on stage, wearing a grey shirt, behind a Pearl drum set.

Back of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a light blue top and a colorful patterned skirt, in the foreground.

Backs of several audience members in the foreground, including a person in a leopard print top and a person in a teal top.



2022 DYADIC INTERVIEW RESULTS

Recruitment occurred through several channels including the researchers' networks and via QTIC's newsletters. The lead researcher contacted each prospective participant and fully explained the research objectives and process, including their protections under university research ethics guidelines, and offered a 'cooling off' period to ensure participation was fully informed and entirely voluntary.

As shown in Table 1, the sample is diverse in terms of sector of employment (then and now), role and seniority. The sample ranged in age from late teens to their 60s, two identified as Indigenous, four participants were recent migrants and/or visa holders, and five worked in the regions. These profiles highlight the sampling strategy, which was to recruit a diverse range of participants. The objective of the study is not to generalise findings, but rather to capture rich and diverse stories regarding the two key research questions:

- Why did workers leave tourism employment?
- What would bring them back to employment in tourism?

There were two anomalies in the sample eligibility criteria. Pip² returned to café work for several weeks, as a casual, after six months as a legal secretary and an overseas holiday and before her current digital marketing venture. After recruitment for participation in this study and after working various roles following his departure from the Tours/Attractions sector, Matt accepted a caretaker role at a tourism property, where he remains. He was retained in the sample as he had just commenced his new role, his reasons for leaving tourism were still top-of-mind and relevant and his new role was very different in nature to his amid-COVID role.

Ten of the core participant interviews were conducted face-to-face and six were conducted via Teams®. Interviews typically lasted between 45 and 120 minutes and with participant consent were audio-recorded – with transcripts generated using voice to text software.³ At the conclusion of the interview most participants were asked if they would like to nominate a significant other, who would from their perspective (either as a personal or professional contact) reflect on the experiences of the core participant's COVID-19 induced work circumstances – to either validate responses, fill in gaps or provide alternative explanations. Nine participants consented to this option and nominated a professional or personal 'significant other'. The researcher repeated the recruitment protocols as described above, to ensure participation was entirely informed and voluntary. Of the nine significant others, seven were interviewed face-to-face, one via Teams® and one via telephone. These interviews were audio-recorded.

² All participant's names are pseudonyms

³ One participant declined consent for audio-recording so field notes were used in lieu of a transcript

Core Participant (Age)	Significant Other Participant	Tourism Sector	Tourism Role	Non-Tourism Sector
Amanda (50s)	Tania (former work colleague)	Transport	Manager (Finance)	Aged Care
Kevin (40s)	Daylene (former work subordinate)	Accommodation	Manager (Operations)	Real Estate
Carey (40s)	Tina (spouse)	Accommodation	Chef (Management)	Aged Care
Dot (30s)	Elizabeth (former work colleague)	Service/Peak Body	Membership/Events Officer	Government
Chelsea (30s)	-	Transport	Marketing Manager	Medical Charity
David (20s)	-	Accommodation	Supervisor (Operations)	Social Enterprise Co-Founder
Irene (30s)	-	Tourism NGO	Consultant	General Consultancy
Lisa (30s)	Mike (spouse)	Service/Peak Body	Marketing (Communication /Marketing)	Engineering Firm
Matt (40s)	-	Tours/Attractions	Marine Skipper	Property Management
Margaret (40s)	Mathew (spouse)	Foodservice (Restaurant)	Owner/Operator	Lawyer
Ovid (30s)	Donny (former employer)	Foodservice (Restaurant)	Waiter	Education
Sharon (60s)	-	Attractions	Executive	Consultant
Karen (20s)	Shelia (parent)	Foodservice (Tourist Venue)	Waiter/ Housekeeper	Agriculture (Administrator)
Haley (20s)	-	Foodservice (Pubs)	Bar Attendant	Animal Care
Jill (20s)	-	Foodservice (Retail)	Assistant	Unemployed
Pip (20s)	Eliza (sibling)	Foodservice (Cafes)	Wait Supervisor	Digital Marketing

Table 1. Participant Profile



'Family' and 'friends' was a core theme that had several dimensions. A key one, which many participants agreed on, was the impact of the demands of pre- and amid-COVID tourism work, on family. As Matt related:

"you know, I would do seven days or I'd change shifts. I'd be doing engines at 11:00pm. And, you know, skipping family things".

In Haley's case it was because during COVID she became totally reliant on them, like her sister, moving back into the family home – losing the agency and independence that encouraged them to take up employment as teenagers in the first place. For others, like Dot, who was isolated from her family:

"And then when it was like borders opening [and] some not... you're saying that I can't see my family [in Victoria] for Christmas?"

Meanwhile Dot was tasked daily with supporting tourism operators, whose businesses were moribund because of the international and interstate border closures. Lisa had a similar support role, offering support to clients, which took its toll:

"a number of our staff actually went through mental health coaching during this period, because of the conversations we were having with business owners".

However, this was not supported by the organisation via an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), so employees needed to source and organise their own counselling via general community services.

'Stress', 'pressure', 'difficult', 'burnout' and a range of other related terms evident in the word cloud spoke to both the pre-COVID and then COVID-induced conditions of work. Carey had a well-established career with a MNH hotelier. His response, signalling why he left his hotel job, was typical:

"I was looking for mind numbing work. I was looking for work, so I didn't have to think. I didn't have to use my brain. I was a bit, burnt out. Well not a bit. I was burned out. Yeah."

Other key themes evolved like the nature of being short-staffed compromising professionalism, as Matt related:

"Sounds a bit over the top but, whether you call it guilt or shame or something. When you take people out [on tours] and it's not what they expect... Yeah, it probably, probably, leads to the burnout as well, you know"

The pressure also manifests in the way managers treated their staff. Matt was concerned that he felt "like you're gonna snap at someone at any second. Once it gets too stressful".

'Value' was another theme that had several dimensions. One impact was the loss of the value that tourism generated for communities, by for instance, the closure of iconic products. Sometimes, whole families and large segments of communities, were dependent on large tourism enterprises, which if reliant on the international market simply closed. Sharon related that when the business she worked in as a senior manager, which depended on international tourism, closed due to the pandemic impacts, the effects were more profound than expected:

"So I was saying all the social, you know, the other stuff that people out there in the broader community thinking it was just a tourism business."



'Flexible', was a theme related by several participants in the context that they felt flexibility was defined by business and on their terms, in the pre-pandemic operating environment. This manifest in itsy-bitsy rostering of 2-3 hour shifts, perhaps twice a day and spread across a full week. Or on the other hand rigid 9-5 working hours with no flexibility to work from home or take an hour or two out of a day to attend a medical appointment or suchlike, and make the time up later.

"I think there might be opportunities to handle it in a better way or to show more flexibility and sometimes to be just nice or... and more caring for your staff and their personal you know, things I have to do." (Irene)

'Exploitation' was a common theme, especially for those working in food and beverage and accommodation. Working more hours than they were paid for and experiencing sexual harassment and bullying were reported by some participants. Migrants, in particular, reported exploitation. Irene reported, reflecting on experiences of her friends and peers as well as her own, that migrants were "expected to work longer and for less"... "they exploit a little bit the immigrants, so you don't get the best payment or it's cash in hand... [and hearing] from other friends. They were exploited quite a bit and not treated that well." (Irene) Associated with this theme was workplace culture, again predominantly in the hospitality sectors. Pip described a driver of her decision to leave was to make a clean break from her seemingly obligatory participation in a night-time economy workplace drug culture. "... I had the drugs and I would just have to do [it]... what I was not loyal to the employers"

B) WHAT WOULD BRING THEM BACK

In many respects the response to this question is captured by imagining the opposite of the reasons why participants left. Some themes that extended on the reasons to leave, however, are briefly identified below.

'Security' was perhaps the biggest issue and a real challenge for an industry whose default employment model is built on contingent work forms to provide organisational flexibility.

'Pay' was another issue with a couple respondents saying that they would earn 25-30% more for the exact same role (e.g., Sales & Marketing) in another industry. Now working in real estate after a 20 year career in hotels, Kevin said "you don't wanna go back... It's [his new job] good, but actually it's good pay".

'Promotion' was a key barrier to returning – a major reason Chelsea had left her transport job, despite being with the firm for 12 years, was that she was passed up for a promotional opportunity. David, even though he had been identified as a future leader within his group, highlighted that career progression opportunities would need to materialise for him to return: "Yeah, opportunities, it would definitely have to be more senior management, finance, office manager, maybe even a small property..."

'Support', on the other hand, Lisa reported was something that she really cherished in her new role, hinting that this was missing in her two decades of hospitality and tourism employment. "And I [now] have a direct line manager who is ridiculously supportive even [though] I've only been there two months"



'Money' is a key feature of the foodservice participant experience, as reported earlier, contingent employment is often the employment norm for these workers. As highlighted earlier, many in this sector were unable to access JobKeeper, so this spilled over into 'stress'. Of all the sectors foodservice most prominently features various forms of 'harassment', including of a 'sexual' nature often attributed to 'drunk' customers. A negative workplace 'culture' featured in foodservice as well as a lot of other negative language, for example 'terrible' conditions, 'horrible policies' invoking feelings of being 'vulnerable' and 'resentful'. Overall, these participants reported the most challenging experiences compared to the participants from the other sectors reported above.



2022 LAB STUDY RESULTS

The findings of the lab study were organised around three questions,

1. What is the impact of COVID-19 safety procedures on tourism/hospitality employees' commitment to their organisation and occupation?
2. How do tourism/hospitality employees emotionally react to COVID-19 safety procedures?
3. Which type and source of support are viewed as most effective among tourism/hospitality employees?

Demographics

We recruited participants who have worked in the hospitality/tourism/leisure industry. The average age is 24 years old; 70% of them are female. Participants have worked in their current organisation for an average of 1 year 2 months and in the hospitality/tourism industry for 3 years 1 month.

Key Finding #1

Attitudes toward COVID-19 safety procedures

- Using hand sanitiser and wearing a mask were perceived as the most useful among the seven COVID-19 safety procedures; they were also the most widely adopted safety procedures in the workplace.

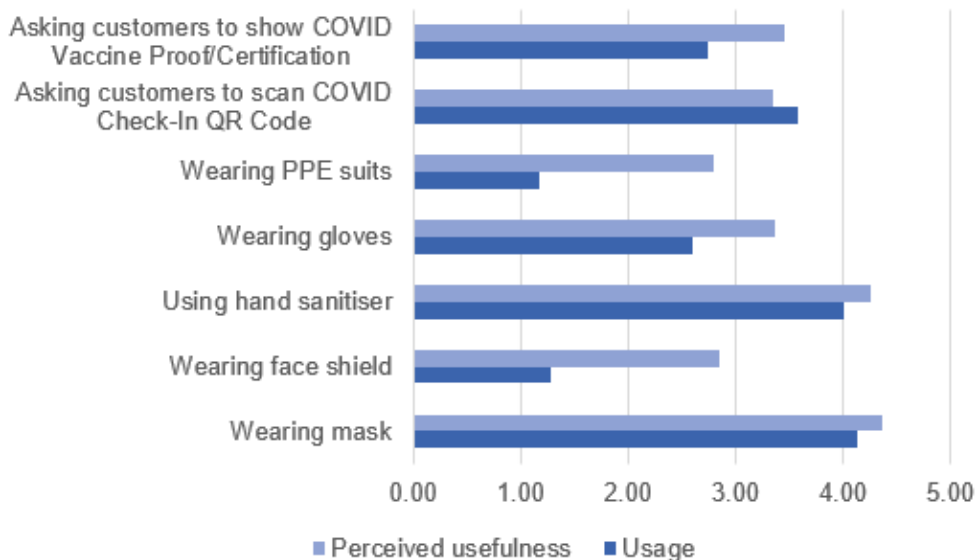


Figure 8: Perceived usefulness and actual usage of COVID-19 safety procedures

Key Finding #2.1

Emotional reactions to video clips of a quarantine hotel (self-reported)

- Most respondents reported strong feelings of sadness and fear when watching the quarantine hotel video, where hospitality workers were wearing PPE to serve clients (see Figure 9). A follow-up open ended question asking respondents to reflect on the Quarantine Hotel video also shows that respondents find the scene where the frontline staff wore full PPE for service and maintenance most memorable (see Figure 10).

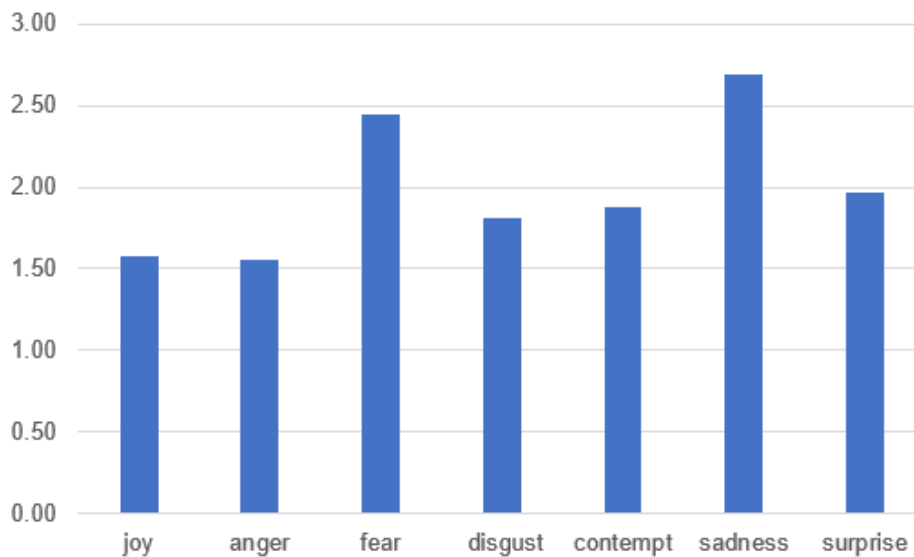


Figure 9: Respondents' feelings when watching the quarantine hotel video



Figure 10: Respondents reported the most memorable scene in the video

Key Finding #2.2

Emotional reactions to video clips of a quarantine hotel (measured by biometric devices)

To gain more insights into respondents' facial emotional reactions to the stimuli (i.e., quarantine hotel video), we used iMotion software and the embedded facial coding technique (AFFDEX) to perform further facial expression analysis of 7 core emotions (joy/happiness, confusion/anger, fear, disgust, contempt, sadness, and surprise) (see Figure 11 & 12).

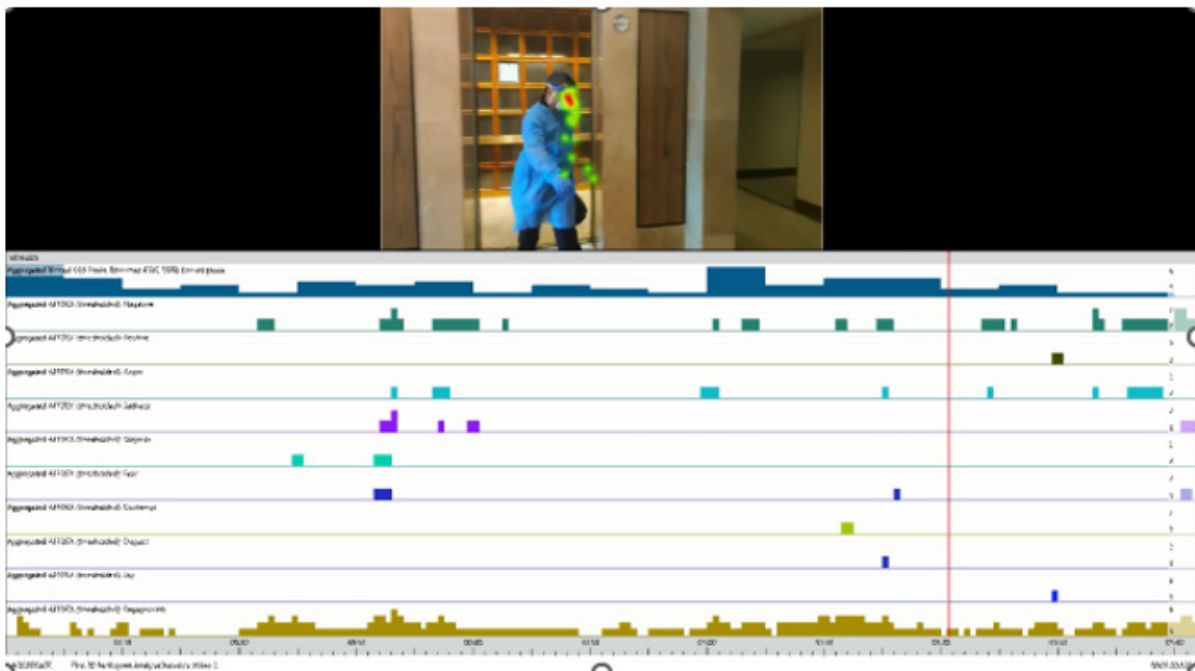


Figure 11: Example of facial expression coding of participants' emotional reactions to the video

- The results from iMotion facial expression analysis (see Figures 12 and 13) records that respondents experience a high level of negative emotions in response to the scenes in the quarantine hotel video (e.g., 'amber zone', PPE). In particular, they experienced strong feelings of fear, sadness and anger.

4 We compare the quarantine hotel video and baseline on 1) the aggregate numbers of observations of a particular emotion that above the threshold (#); 2) the aggregate amount of time displaying a particular emotion out of the total time recorded for stimulus (Time %).

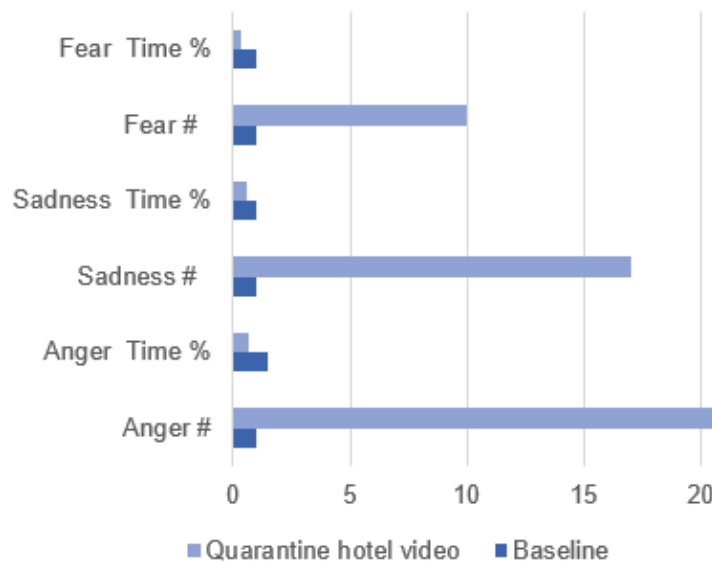


Figure 12: Discrete emotion count and time percent: quarantine hotel video vs baseline video

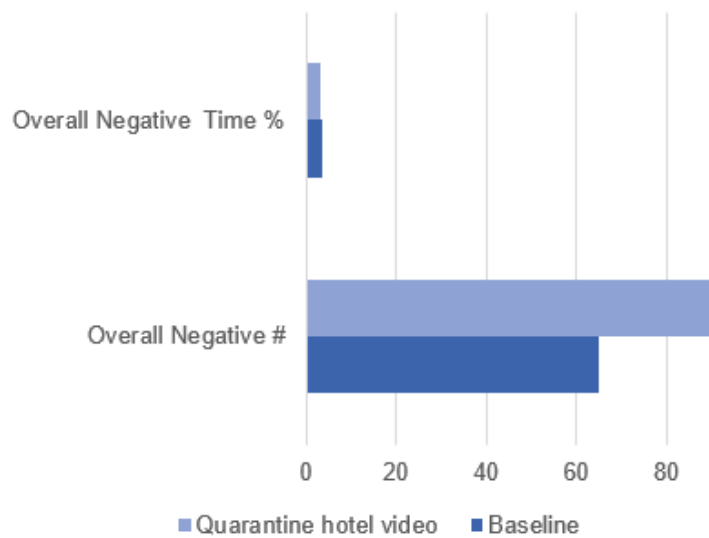


Figure 13: Overall negative emotion count and time percent: quarantine hotel video vs baseline video

- In addition to facial expression analysis, we also measured respondents’ emotional intensity, using GSR devices (see Figure 14), which capture emotional arousal via levels of perspiration on the surface of skin. The results show that, in comparison to the baseline video, the stimuli from the quarantine hotel triggers high intensity of emotional responses among respondents.

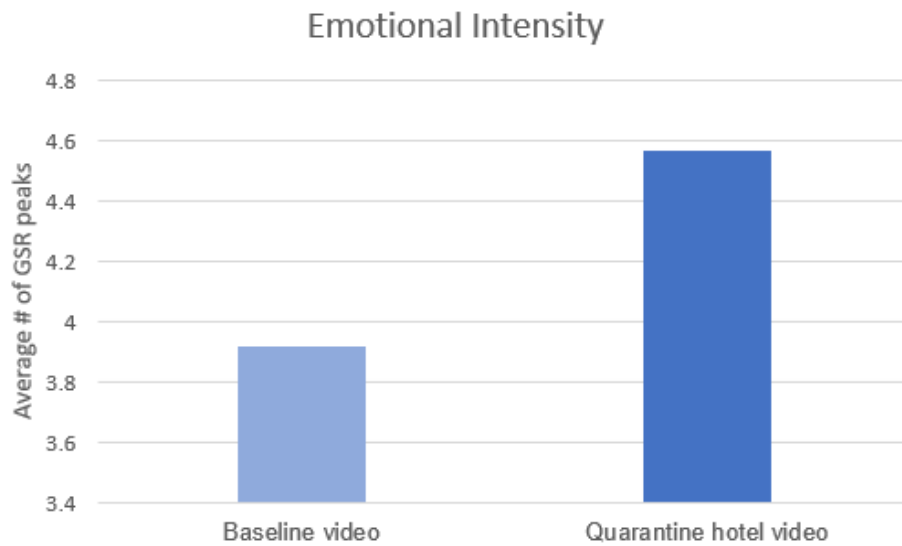
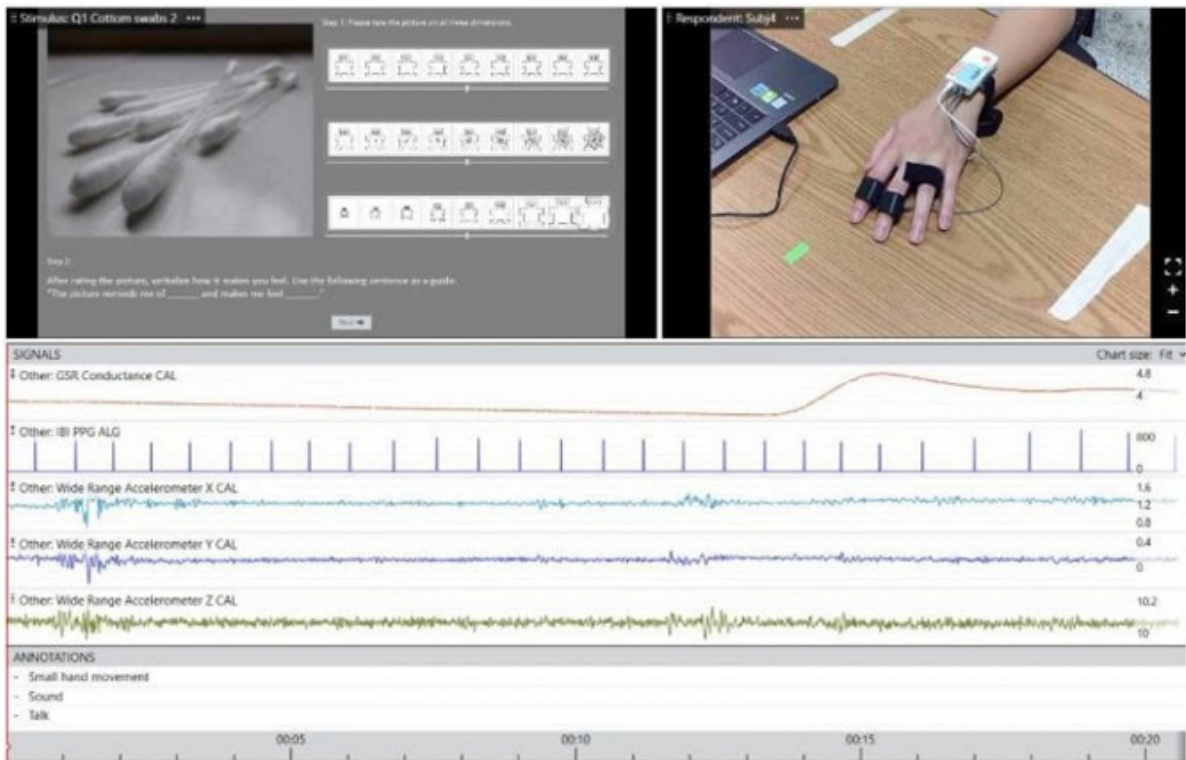


Figure 14: Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) for emotional intensity

- To better understand participants' emotional journey while being exposed to the quarantine hotel video, we also measured emotional intensity on a moment-to-moment basis, combined with eye tracking analysis.
- Consistent with the recalls from respondents, the scene where the frontline staff was wearing full PPE for service and maintenance triggered the most intense emotional arousal.

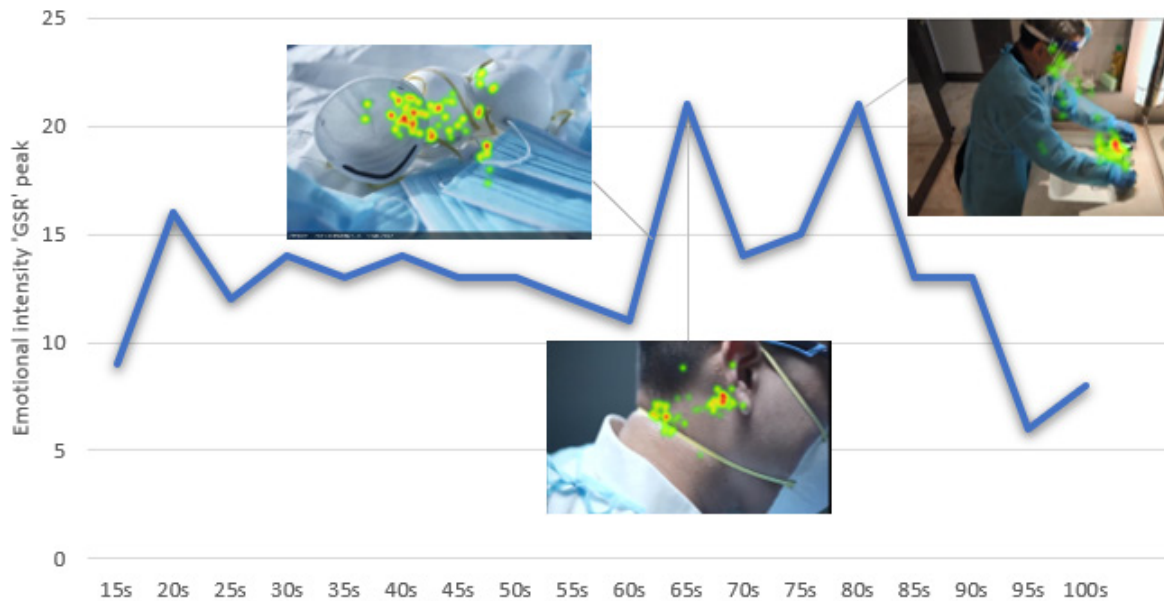


Figure 15: GSR for emotional intensity moment to moment

Key Findings #2

COVID-19 safety procedures and workforce resilience, commitment to and intention to leave the hospitality/tourism jobs

- Commitment to the current organisation: we asked respondents to imagine if they were working at the quarantine hotel in the video episode and then asked them to rate their commitment to the hotel and hospitality/tourism jobs on a scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 5 (extremely likely). The results indicate a consistently low level of organisational commitment (mean = 2.96) and professional commitment (mean = 2.50).
- Consistently, on a scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 5 (extremely likely), half respondents indicated that they would consider switching to an alternative to the hospitality/tourism industry jobs (see Figure 16).

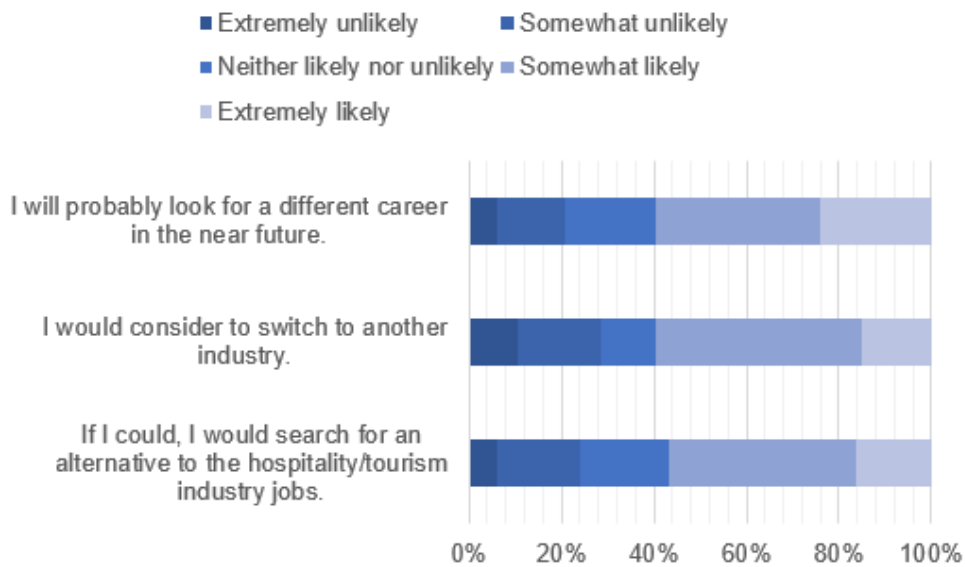


Figure 16: Intention to leave the hospitality/tourism industry jobs

- In comparison to the low commitment, respondents reported a high resilience and believed that if a similar crisis happens, they will be more resilient (see Figure 17).

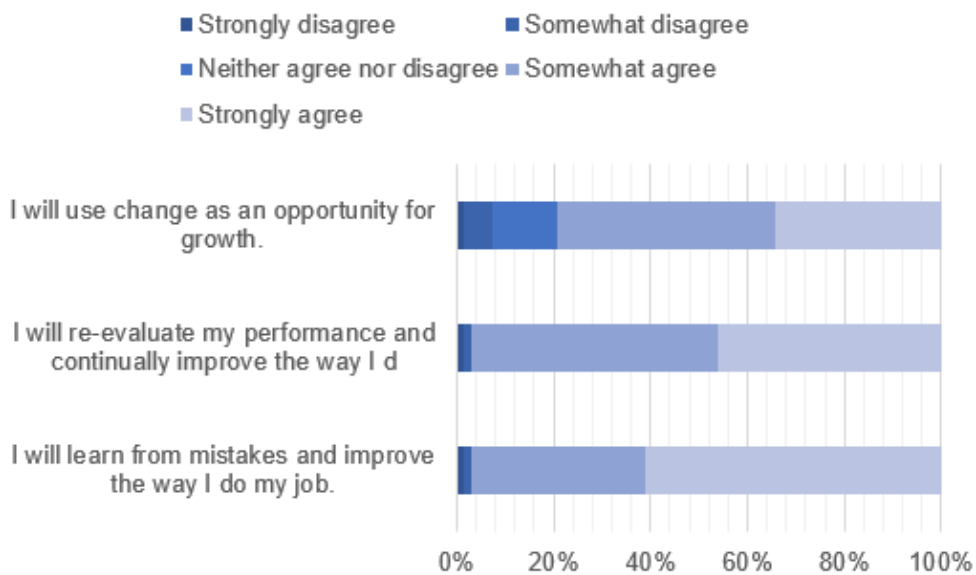


Figure 17: Perceived resilience

Key Findings #3

In the second part of this study, we investigated the effectiveness of nine different type of supporting resources, in terms of the effect on their job satisfaction and adaptability.

Type	Social-psychological	Financial	Workplace
Self	Supporting oneself with rest times, regular meals, making changes to anything that exhausts me, helping to feel refreshed and motivate one to look after themselves.	Working multiple casual jobs to survive from the lack of stability and guaranteed working hours in current job.	Learning new skilled to become a multi-skilled employee, taking advantage of free training or other learning opportunities to enhance future employment prospects.
Coworker	Having colleagues who care about you. Having regular meetups during COVID makes you feel less isolated and opportunities for everyone to check in on each other.	When you cannot afford car repayments on limited shifts, your colleague offers one of their shifts to you to help you with your financial difficulties.	Having a strong sense of team belongingness, where co-workers always support each other, by sharing the workload, or discuss mistakes together in an open environment.
Employer	Your employer cares about your wellbeing and mental health and understand the stresses experienced amid COVID. They catch up with you regularly and in both work and personal life, and provide suggestions on how to deal with stress.	Financial support provided by your employer during COVID, such as other working opportunities in other departments, free internal training, and subsidised staff rental accommodation.	Having a genuine workplace relationship where you feel safe, valued, and trusted. Your employer respects your need for autonomy, and providing flexible work arrangements, empowering you as an employee to make decisions. Contributions are also recognised.



Figure 18: Impacts on job satisfaction

- Among the nine supporting resources presented to the respondents, they report higher level of job satisfaction (i.e., above the baseline) for coworker or workplace-related supports, while a lower level of job satisfaction for self-relied supports.
- One potential explanation to this results is that employees are likely to experience resource depletion during the crisis; thus, any self-relied supports tend to further drain their resources and lead to more frustration

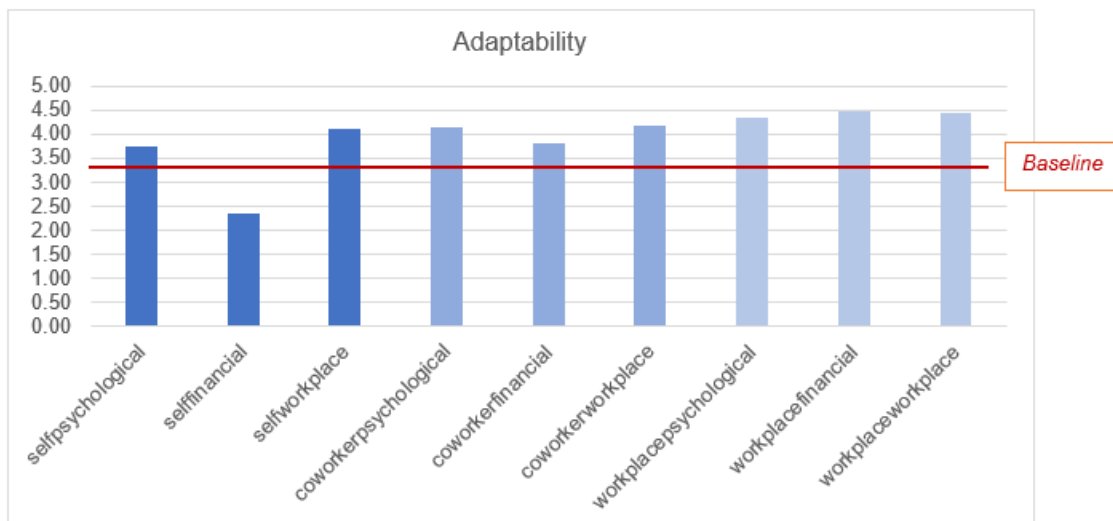


Figure 19: Impacts on adaptability

- Consistently, respondents are likely to become more adaptable to the changing environment when they received coworker or workplace-related supports, rather than self-related supports.



Key Findings #4

Scenario Comparison Findings

To gain better insights into tourism and hospitality employees' attitudes towards different types of support interventions, short semi-structured interviews were conducted after completing the survey digitally. The main purpose was to investigate their thoughts on their three most liked and three most disliked support interventions from their perspective as an employee who have worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic since it first began in February 2020.

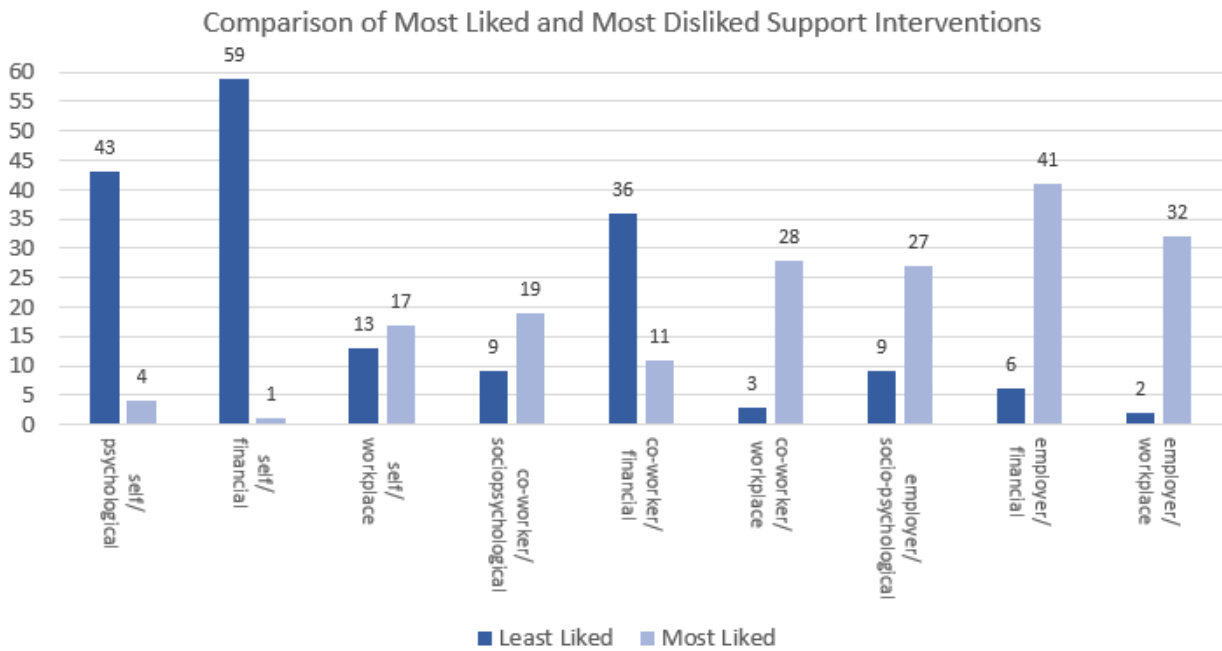
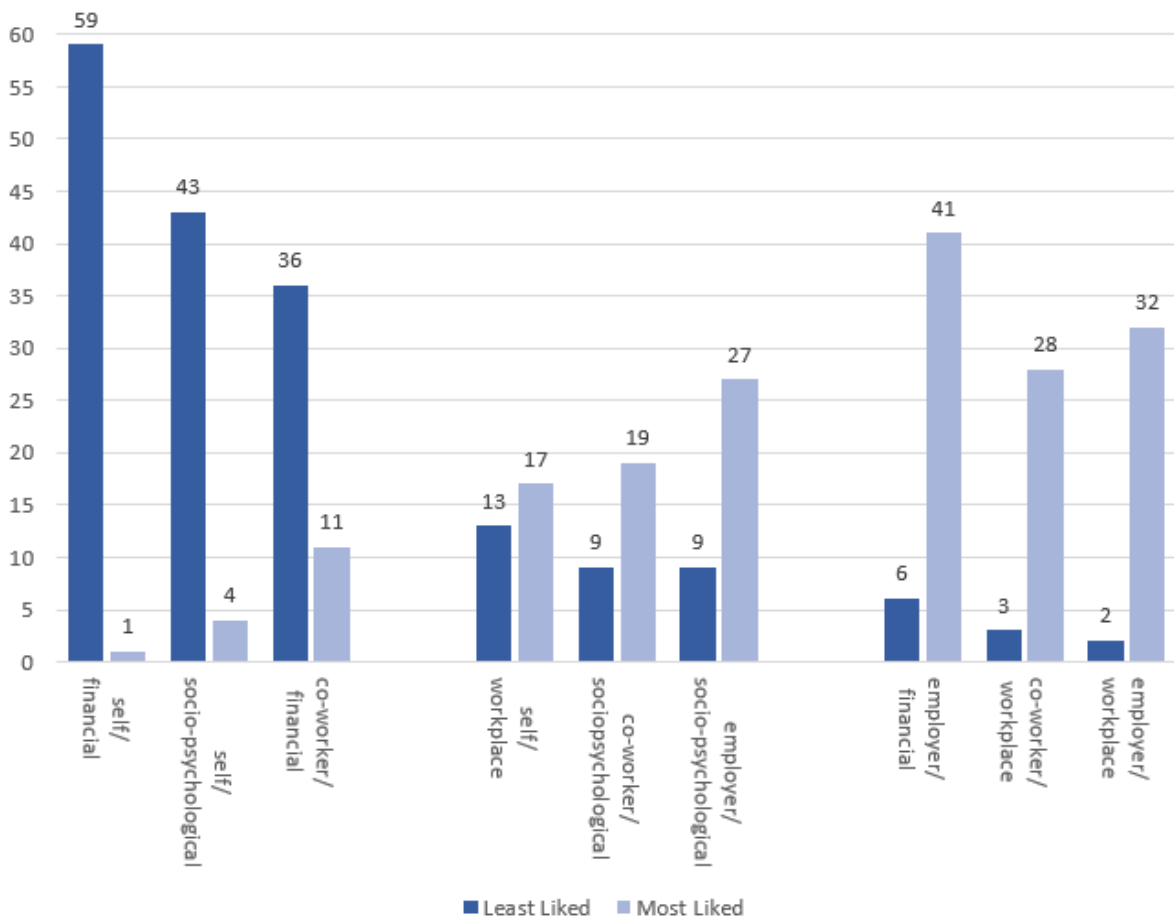


Figure 20: Liked and disliked support interventions

Comparison of Most Liked and Most Disliked Support Interventions



Of the 60 participants interviewed, the three interventions that were most liked were (each participant were asked to select three most liked scenarios):

1. Employer financial support (n=41)
2. Employer workplace support (n=32)
3. Co-worker workplace support (n=28)

When asked to choose three that they disliked the most, many had difficulties selecting a second or third intervention type. However, self-initiated financial support was the worst received out of all. The final three that were most disliked were:

1. Self-initiated financial support (n=59)
2. Self-initiated psychological support (n=43)
3. Co-worker financial support (n=36)

Prevalent themes and direct quotes from participants are provided in Tables 2 and 3.



Themes	Supporting Quotes
Scenario #8: Employer financial support (n=41)	
Theme 1: Relieve financial stresses in both work and daily life	<p><i>"...during COVID times people are pretty tight on money, and rental accommodation could be problem. [finance]is a really important thing...the first thing you have to think about is, where do you have to live, and if you have a cheaper place to live, it is almost the first thing you want to have as a benefit..." (P55)</i></p> <p><i>"...this is like tangible and economic way to support the employees. When people are losing jobs and losing the amount of working hours, then this way, like the financial support would be the one that keep them and their family going." (P61)</i></p>
Theme 2: Internal trainings provision assist upskilling	<p><i>"...like the different opportunities when you get to work in other departments, everything is closed down, so you had to find new jobs... I didn't really have those skills as other people did. So, my work hours were cut a bit. The internal training [is important] because upskilling is important, so you have all those different jobs." (P39)</i></p> <p><i>"...during the lockdown times you can't really work. If we have internal training (which is free), it would be great because you're doing something and investing in yourself which will help you earn more money later on." (P55)</i></p> <p><i>"...it shows a sense of caring...if there isn't a job available for me in my current department, it's good to help me to get an extra income." (P46)</i></p>
Scenario #9: Employer workplace support (n=32)	
Theme 1: Team engagement and being valued can increase performance	<p><i>"It's really valuable to have a workplace where you do feel safe, you feel like a valued team member, you feel like you're like contributing and you're like part of a team, like where people actually value the work that you do." (P31)</i></p> <p><i>"I really value a workplace where like I feel like I'm being looked after, and I really value good management and care of staff. Because as kind of a manager myself, I try to do that [for my employees]; it makes me want to come to work... they're going to be better when they perform and feel like they're valued." (P49)</i></p>
Theme 2: Flexible work arrangement is crucial	<p><i>"I like the flexibility of it, the work arrangements. Uhm, it is nice to have like, the recognition but more so that just, how unsure everything was I guess, a little bit, is with COVID. Knowing that, okay, you're not like looking over your shoulder all the time. And so, you get sick, that's not just 'it' for you or if something happens. Yeah, more so just the security of it. (P37)</i></p> <p><i>"During COVID, there were all sorts of stress, it's not just we got to do this Room 10 in X amount of time but more so other sort of stresses coming from their own personal life...I think work arrangements amid COVID, being flexible is particularly important..." (P58)</i></p>
Scenario #6: Co-worker workplace support (n=32)	
Theme 1: Genuine/positive co-worker relationships help to share the workload and give feedback	<p><i>"I found in hospitality... it was like really helpful when you work together with your co-workers and giving each other feedback and constructive criticism, in a way that's really supportive without being accused of doing something wrong, more just like, how can I improve on myself and it like helped me to do my job better." (P31)</i></p> <p><i>"...if I have a good relationship with my colleague, and even like outside work, I can ask for help. I think relationships really help in different kind of situation. If I'm in a good teammate situation, and there's a pandemic, of course, it's a good thing." (P42)</i></p>
Theme 2: Having co-workers to provide support and being able to interact with them during uncertain times was welcomed	<p><i>"I liked this one, because it's got a sense of teamwork and I liked the belonging and I think in during COVID, we have lost a lot of interaction and this is saying, even though there is COVID, they are still collaborating and having some social aspect" (P20)</i></p>

	<p><i>"In my past experience I think, I think like teamwork is the one of the important thing in during the career because people like me and colleagues will have to support each other to each other during the work and especially the COVID-19 period because yeah, because it's a very hard time and I know everyone is in a very difficult situations. So, we have to like support each other to get through this hard time. So that's why I pick this scenario." (P23)</i></p> <p><i>"...when I work in a job, it's not just about money, obviously, like money is important, but also about the people that I work with. Because I want to go to work and feeling happy to meet my co-workers, you know, like, it's like joining a family, rather than just like work colleagues. So, you know, so I feel like this social element is important to me...like, if I go to work somewhere, I want to see like, happy face, and then I'm happy to meet them." (P61)</i></p>
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Table 2: Most liked scenarios for employees

Themes	Supporting Quotes
Scenario #2: Self-initiated financial support (n=59)	
Theme 1: Unsustainable lifestyle with multiple jobs	<p><i>"...because I wasn't getting the hours towards the end ...the workplace support was lacking. I guess that's why I had to get a second job...both mentally and physically, it was really, really hard. I was so rundown and overwhelmed..." (P43)</i></p> <p><i>"If there's no guaranteed work hours, not really any stable income. And you have to have multiple jobs. No one really likes doing that." (P59)</i></p>
Theme 2: Situation uncertainty incited concerns on job stability	<p><i>"...this is a very tough time because at that moment. Like we all taking leaves during the time, some of my co-workers they really like, getting stressed on paying the bills or financial issues that they have to find more jobs to work with. But at that time, they can't really find one. They kept saying, there's no job in my city. I feel like they can only support by themselves, which is stressful." (P51)</i></p> <p><i>"it's talking about the instability, which I think was the main problem that arise during this COVID pandemic, job become unstable and very irregular and casual." (P52)</i></p>
Scenario #1: Self-initiated socio-psychological support (n=43)	
Theme 1: Self-care is important, but measures and programs for prevention is key	<p><i>"...they should have some kind of programs, systems to help me deal with it...as an adult, you should cope with your emotion, your feelings, your stress, by yourself. Well, that's your responsibility, but at the same time at the workplace, stress should also be coped well." (P55)</i></p> <p><i>"...things should be put in place to prevent workers from feeling that way to start off with? You know, taking time to have regular meals or rest times that should be kind of... should be doing that anyway... if you get to that point, there should be things that are in place to sort of prevent you from feeling that way further, you don't have to sort of employ self-healing techniques for that." (P58)</i></p>
Theme 2: Feeling of helplessness and lack of support from external groups	<p><i>"I feel like there's, a lot of the onus is on the worker themselves in this situation. It's like they have to, I feel like most workers already do try and take care of themselves, and it's more like, there's nothing that's really helping the individual here." (P48)</i></p> <p><i>"I feel like in this situation I don't feel that company or the workplace have a lot of care about me..." (P55)</i></p>

Scenario #5: Co-worker financial support (n=36)	
<p>Theme 1: Earning sufficient income should not come at the cost of other co-workers</p>	<p><i>"It shouldn't be the other colleagues to give up shifts, I think that in the workplace, perhaps the worker should discuss with a manager and say, 'hey this job actually isn't financially supporting me, is there a solution that you could help me with?'... So as nice as it is for colleagues look out for each other it's not their responsibility to determine whether somebody pays their car bills." (P45)</i></p> <p><i>"I would feel almost slightly guilty about taking a shift away from them. Because that means they're not going to get the income that they need as well. I'm sure there's something else that they could have found (e.g., another shift or role) instead of taking shift away from someone else." (P49)</i></p>
<p>Theme 2: Emotional burden to others</p>	<p><i>"it feels like this is like an emotional burden to others... Like I wouldn't see my colleagues as someone that I will seek help for in regards to this kind of situation. Because they themselves has their own life difficulties, so I don't want to like, bother them." (P29)</i></p> <p><i>"And I- didn't know, I was a bit upset with this one because it's again with like feeling pity for the other co-workers, so like even if you needed a shift, but you think they're struggling more so you just give it up...I would appreciate it because I needed it but then I would still feel bad that they were like giving [a shift] up." (P39)</i></p>

Table 3. Least liked scenarios for employees





BEST POLICY & MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WORKFORCE RESILIENCE

During the research fieldwork, analysis, discussions and interpretation, a number of actions and supports were identified to support a continued recovery. The following section summarises these points.

POLICY SUPPORTS

- Develop support mechanisms that reach end users more directly
- Find channels to get information regarding support more directly to end users
- Improve consistent messaging across levels of government and stakeholders
- Work collaboratively across levels of government to address housing and other infrastructure issues that impede employment opportunities
- Work collaboratively across levels of government and other stakeholders to make accessible mental health & wellbeing supports
- Reduce administrative burdens on end users and intermediaries
- Tackle deep seated structural and cultural issues that COVID-19 and the current labour/skills crisis have compounded, to create fair work for all
- Find ways to give and listen directly to the worker voice

DESTINATION SUPPORT STRATEGIES

- Bring together stakeholders to address housing and other infrastructure issues that impede employment opportunities
- Work as an intermediary to make accessible wellbeing programs, in-person where possible, to regional employees and organisations
- Collaborate with organisations and event organisers to formalise and support volunteer workforces

MANAGERIAL PRACTICES

- Acknowledge security/finance are major issues for employees and consider contract rather than contingent work arrangements whenever possible
- Promote inclusive workplaces welcoming to employee's family and friends
- Consider that promoting learning and change organisational cultures promote employee and organisational resilience
- Adopt a balanced flexibility approach, recognising the 'new normal' worklife balance much of the workforce has embraced
- Be aware that masks, PPEs and other COVID 'artefacts' can trigger trauma in employees
- Encourage co-workers to develop a collegial culture fostering teamwork and belongingness



EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS

- Adopt a renewed focus on the positive affordances of tourism work – fun, collegiality, mobility, transferable skill development
- Take the opportunity to promote the benefits and excitement of tourism work with peers, family and community stakeholders
- Consider joining a union or collectivist group while being open with your employer/s
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harassment in the workplace and maintain boundaries

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Acknowledgements

The authors of this report are deeply grateful to the CEO, of Queensland Tourism Industry Council, Brett Fraser, and his staff who have supported this research partnership. We also gratefully acknowledge support from the CEO and staff of the Regional Tourism Organisations who assisted in securing venues and recruiting participants. The lead on the project is indebted to the dedication, expertise, and skills of Hongmin (Jess) Yan, who is funded by the project as the research fellow, and Dr Yawei Jiang, the ex-Post-doctoral research fellow of this project, who continues with her valuable contributions.



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