




GLOBAL EMOTIONAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

August 2021

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Executive Summary

While the world is still reeling under the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and many organisations are stating that ‘work from home is the new norm’ or ‘most people will most likely work from home’ or ‘apply a hybrid model’ etc., it’s evident through current research that there has been an increase in stress, anxiety, home violence, divorces, counselling, and therapy sessions.

With this backdrop, seven Knowledge Leaders (KL) came together to establish the informal Global Emotional Impact Assessment (EIA) Survey. This report contains the EIA survey findings.

The Knowledge Leaders behind the survey/ report:

Daman Dev Sood, Dr. Reshma S, A.Alex Fullick, Dr. Aaron Gracey, Nalin Wijetilleke, Christine F Miller, Aravilla Tan

Key drivers to the EIA Survey creation:

1. According to multiple sources, there has been an increase in:
 - a. Domestic violence, and
 - b. Divorce rates have increased in some parts of the world.
2. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Kingdom (UK) had introduced a Ministry of Loneliness. Japan also introduced the same last year.
3. During a discussion with Daman, a Head of Crisis Management in Abu Dhabi stated that people were calling him during a peak period of lockdown (2020) almost crying wondering ‘what was happening to this world’. The individuals weren’t infected, but they were being emotionally impacted by what they were experiencing.


Employers did not have a choice last year, lockdowns were announced overnight, without prior notice – working from home was the only option. But when it has continued for long, have any employers asked any employees whether they are happy/ comfortable working from home (think of this question considering the above points – physical and IT infrastructure related challenges are not in scope of this study) – this fact has not been established yet.

So, this survey was designed and initiated by the seven Knowledge Leaders with an objective to bring this point (emotional impact) out and help organisations take informed, inclusive decisions.

The survey received **259 responses from 42 countries**. The authors would like to record their gratitude to all participants.

Key findings:

- *Age, qualification and working demographics indicate that the survey respondents were experienced people.*

- 
- *People in Education, IT, and BFSI sectors were emotionally impacted at a higher level, than many others.*
 - *People with no dependents were more stressed/ and/ or emotionally drained*
 - *Top good news was that the crisis (Covid-19 Pandemic) was not seen as the end of the world.*
 - *Top worry was the health and safety of the family members.*

The authors recommend that all organisations conduct Emotional Impact Assessment (EIA) at regular intervals to identify potential risks and impacts to employees, operations, and processes. The longer the Covid-19 Pandemic continues, the greater the emotional impacts will be on employees, and the greater impacts upon organizations. The Knowledge Leaders will be happy to design, develop, implement, and produce an EIA for your organisation.



Methodology

The survey was coordinated using the SurveyMonkey application platform. The Knowledge Leaders promoted the survey through their various professional social media networks; thus, participants were professionals with similar interests and backgrounds.

The duration was six weeks. The authors understood the seriousness of the survey topic and reluctance people may have in responding, though 259 respondents are considered a positive response.

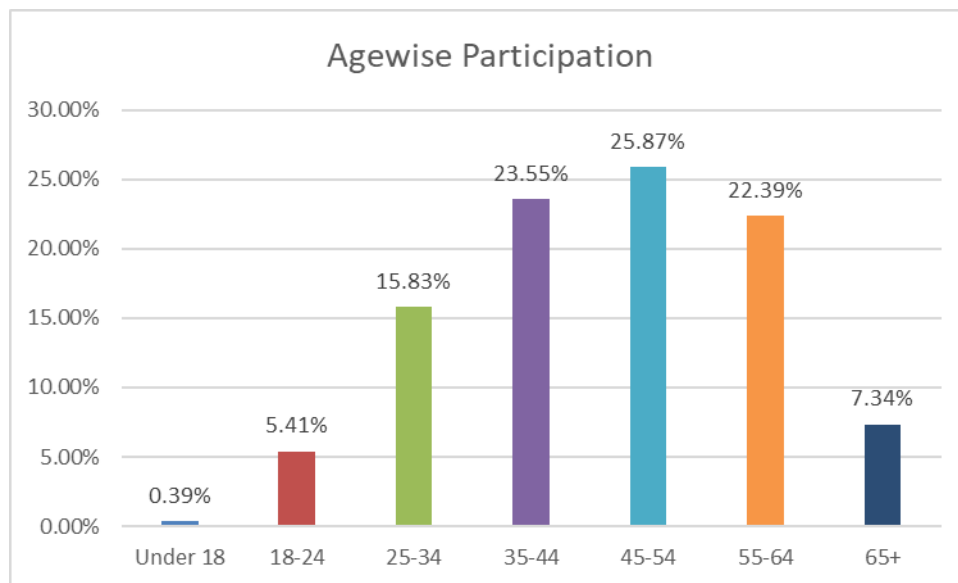
All information captured is fully confidential, as no PII was asked or captured.

The intention is to publish the report on open platforms, with the report receiving some data cleaning to remove noise.

All data analysis was conducted manually.

Detailed Analysis

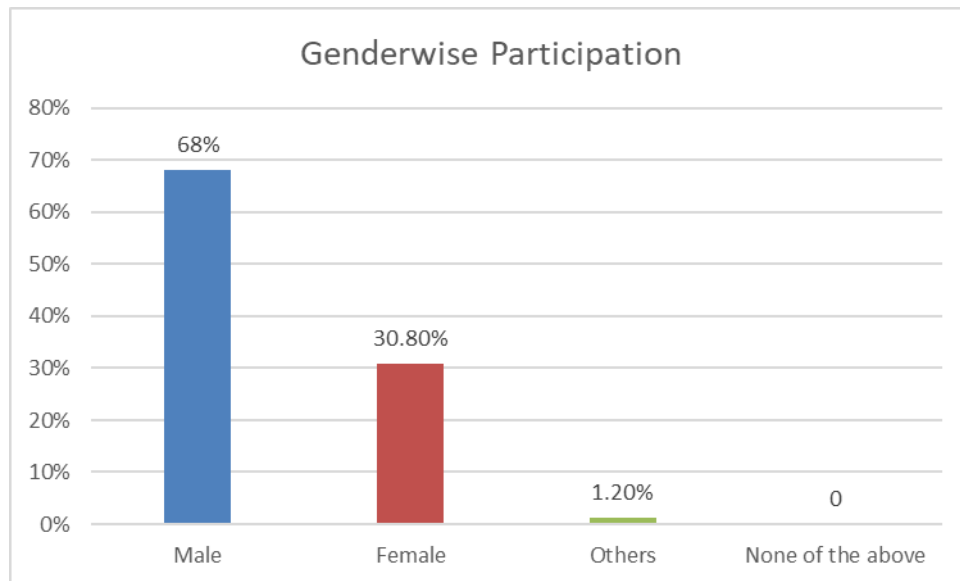
1. Age



Maximum respondents came from 45-54 age group. This means that the participants were experienced in their respective roles.

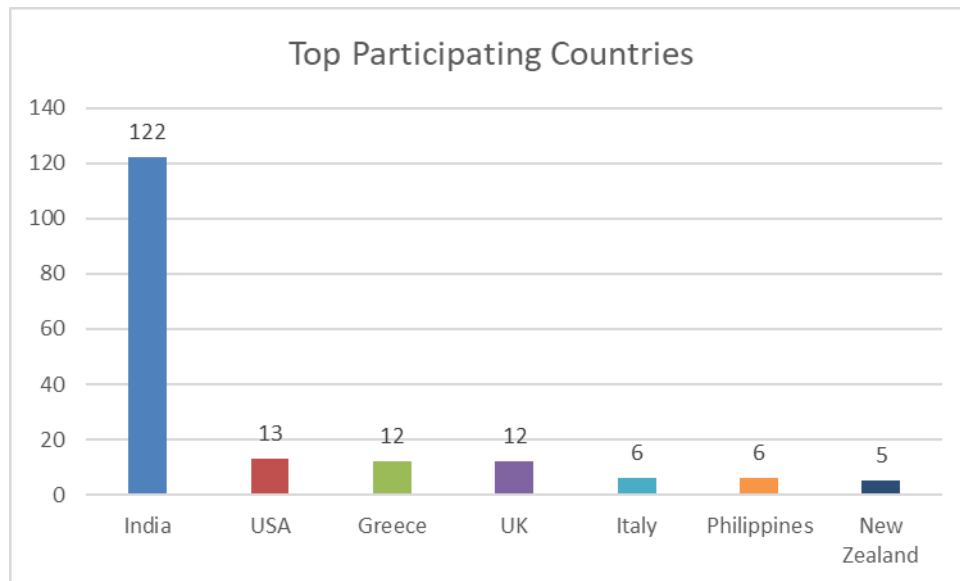
India, USA, and UK individually matched the overall numbers i.e., maximum responses came from 45-54 age group: Greece, Italy, Philippines, New Zealand got maximum responses from 35-44 age group.

2. Gender



68% responses came from males, while 30.8% were from females.

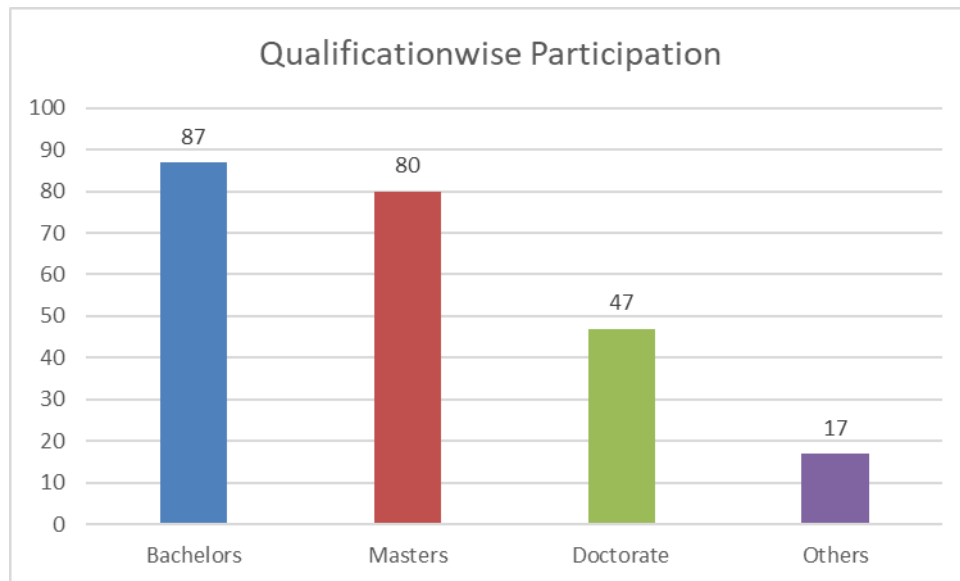
3. Country of residence



74% of the responses came from the top responding countries.

While the Knowledge Leaders reside in India, Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Philippines, it was surprising to see many respondents from Greece. At a later date, it may be interesting to analyse Greece with a separate EIA survey focusing on impacts post-Covid-19 Pandemic.

4. Highest qualification



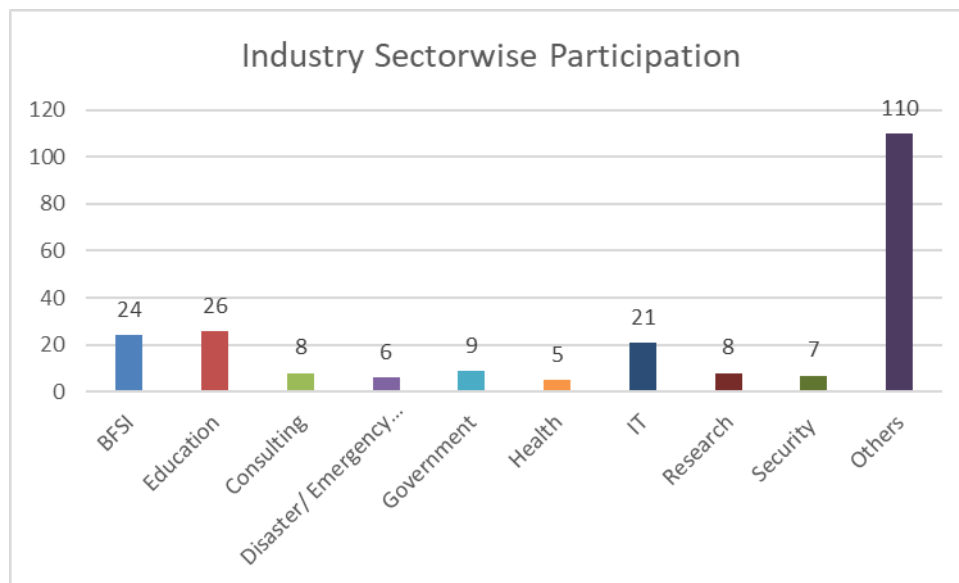
The respondents were most likely to have tertiary qualifications and at high levels (92.6% of all), validating the experience of respondents.

5. Occupation

The respondents were drawn from a good mix of occupations like:

Consultant	Teacher
Trainer	Business Continuity
Coach	Management
Professor	Researcher
CEO	Business
Service	Risk Management
Emergency Management	Counsellor
Student	Police
Crisis Management	Social Development
Scientist	Lawyer
Homemaker	Government Service
Doctor	CA

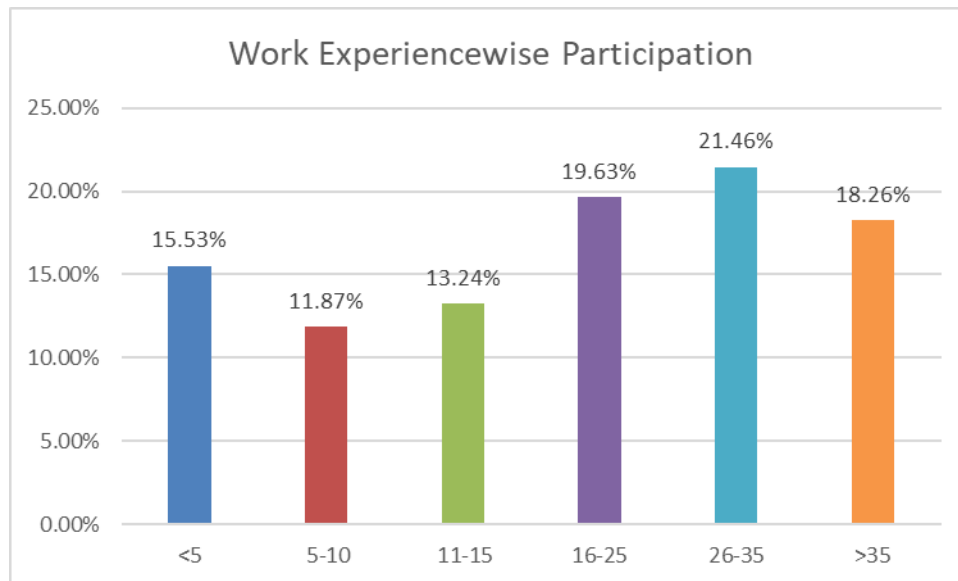
6. Industry Sector



50.9% responses came from 9 sectors, of these the top three sectors namely Education, BFSI (Banking and Financial Services Industry), and IT (Information Technology) accounted for 62.3%.

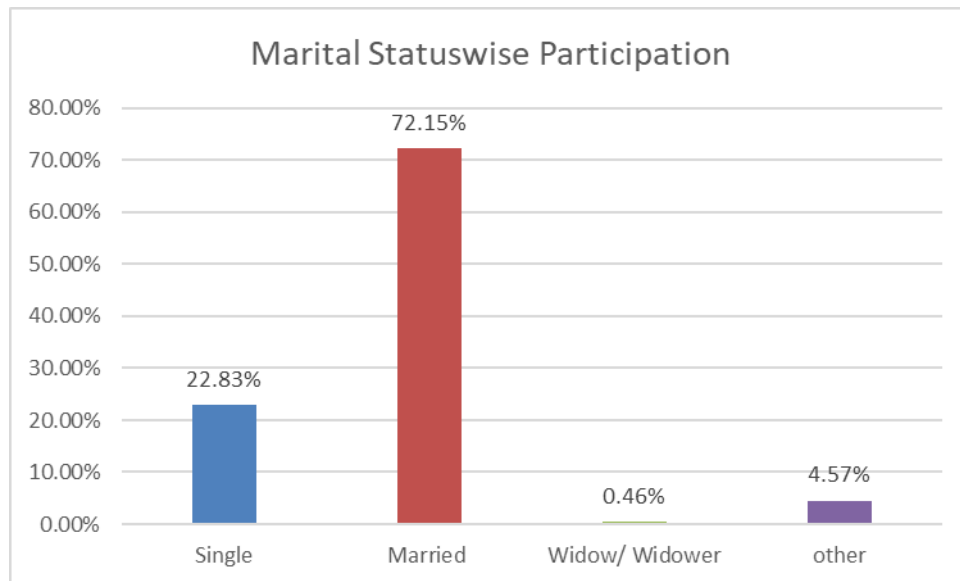
It can be inferred that our approach was to these key sectors, but that was not the case intentionally, hence the second inference is that *the people in these 3 sectors were emotionally impacted at a higher level, than many others.*

7. Years of working experience



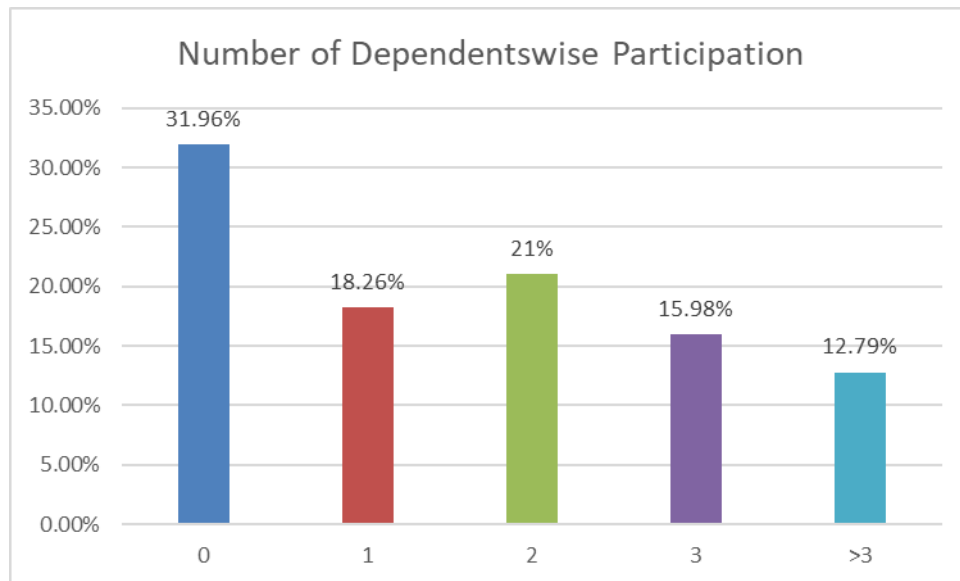
Nearly 73% respondents (72.59%) had over 10 years of working experience, validating once more the experience level of respondents.

8. Marital status



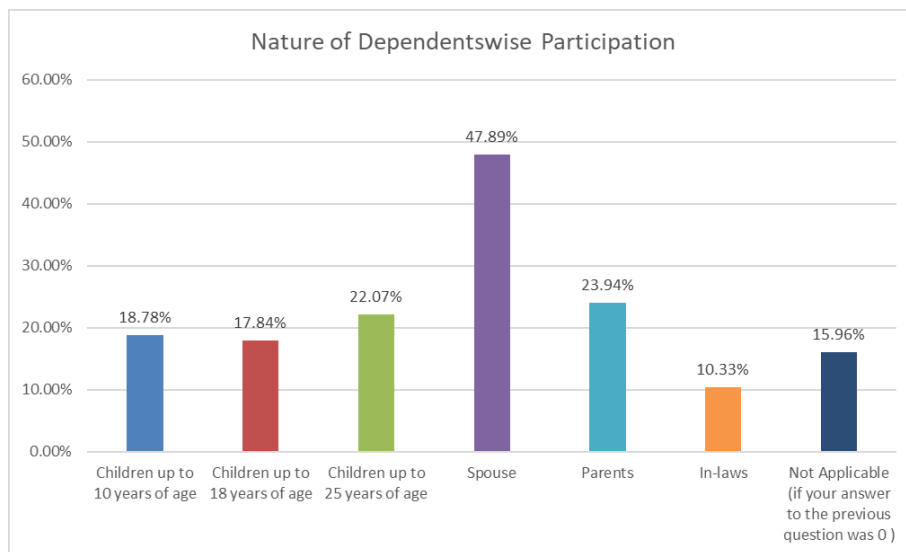
72.15% of the respondents were married. This is generally expected that the 35+ age group would have this marital status (79.15% responses in our survey were from 35+ age group). While married people would be considered matured/ emotionally strong, it *seems they were impacted more than others. This can be explained with the additional responsibilities they may have - of children, parents, in-laws etc.* 68% participation in our survey was from people having dependents.

9. Number of dependents



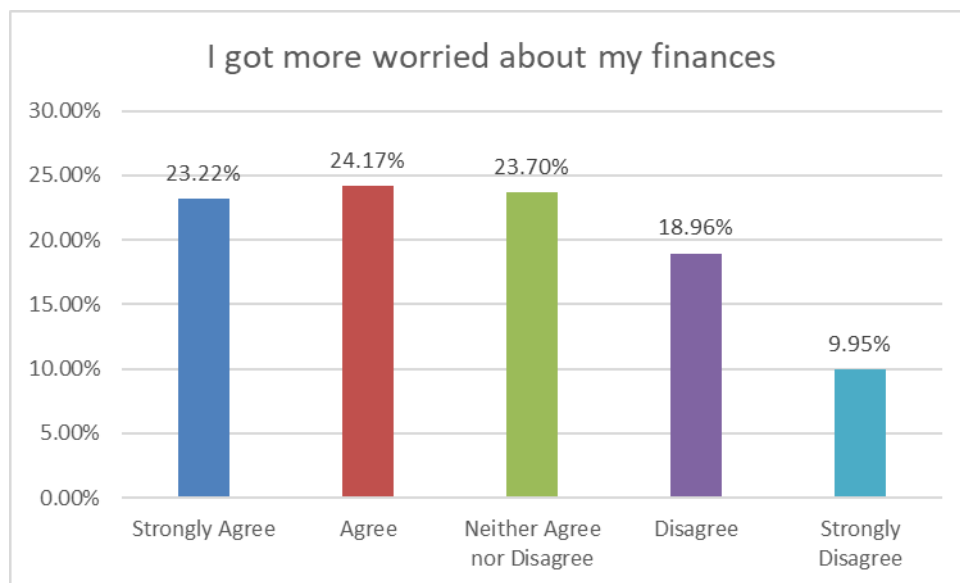
Maximum responses came from people with no dependents, *which could mean they were more stressed and/ or emotionally drained*. This in itself shows that people need others to share their emotions and feelings with, be those good, bad, or ugly. The dependents in our survey included parents, spouse, and in-laws in addition to children.

10. Breakdown of dependents



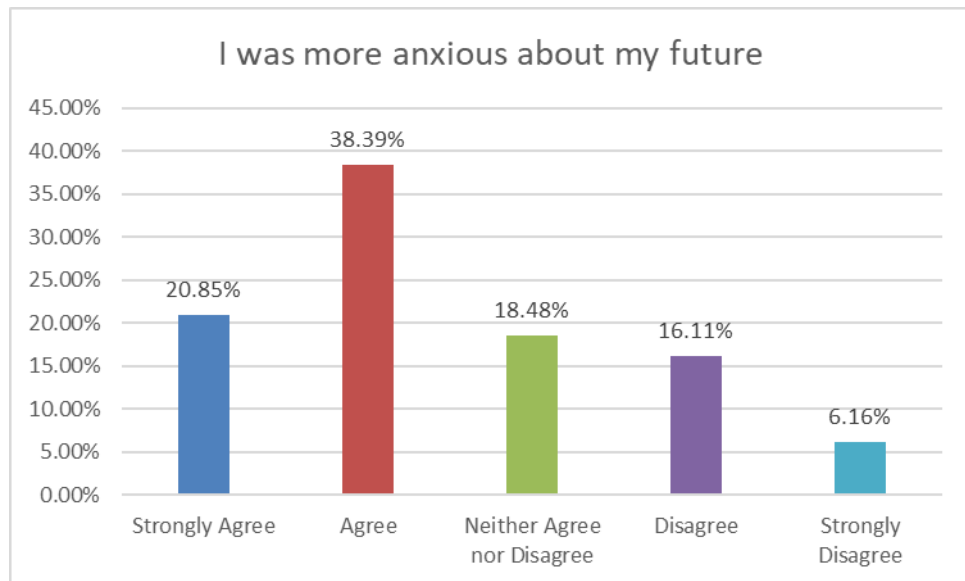
Nearly 60% of participants have dependent children and young adults. Nearly half of participants reported having a spouse. Nearly a quarter of participants support their parents.

11. Worry about finances



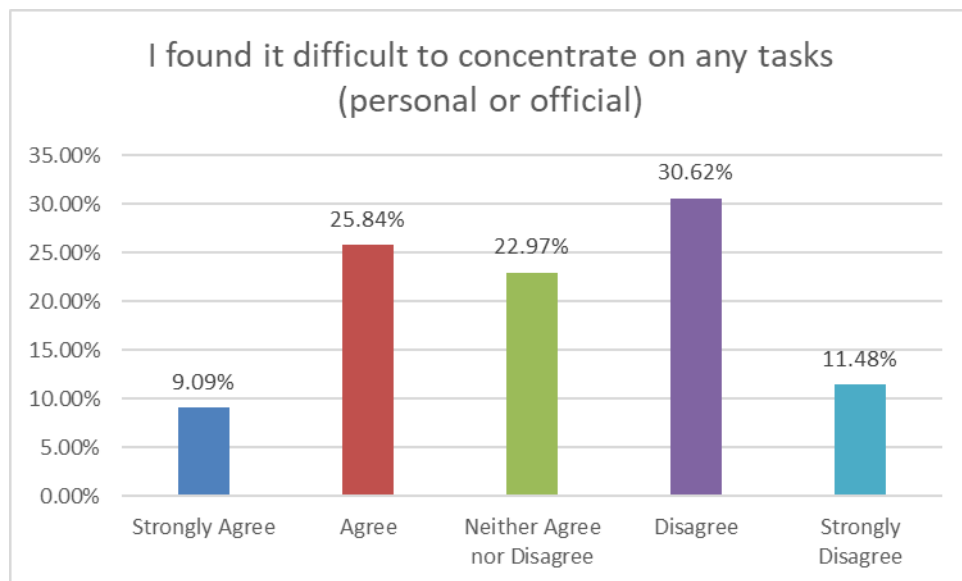
Almost 50% (47.39%) of participants agreed that they were worried about finances, which is one of the biggest worries during the Covid-19 Pandemic. There were multiple financial impacts including low bonus, no bonus, salary delays, salary cuts, no work-no salary, job loss, and increased expenses – just to name a few. Other situations and crises may not have similar financial impacts.

12. Anxiety about future



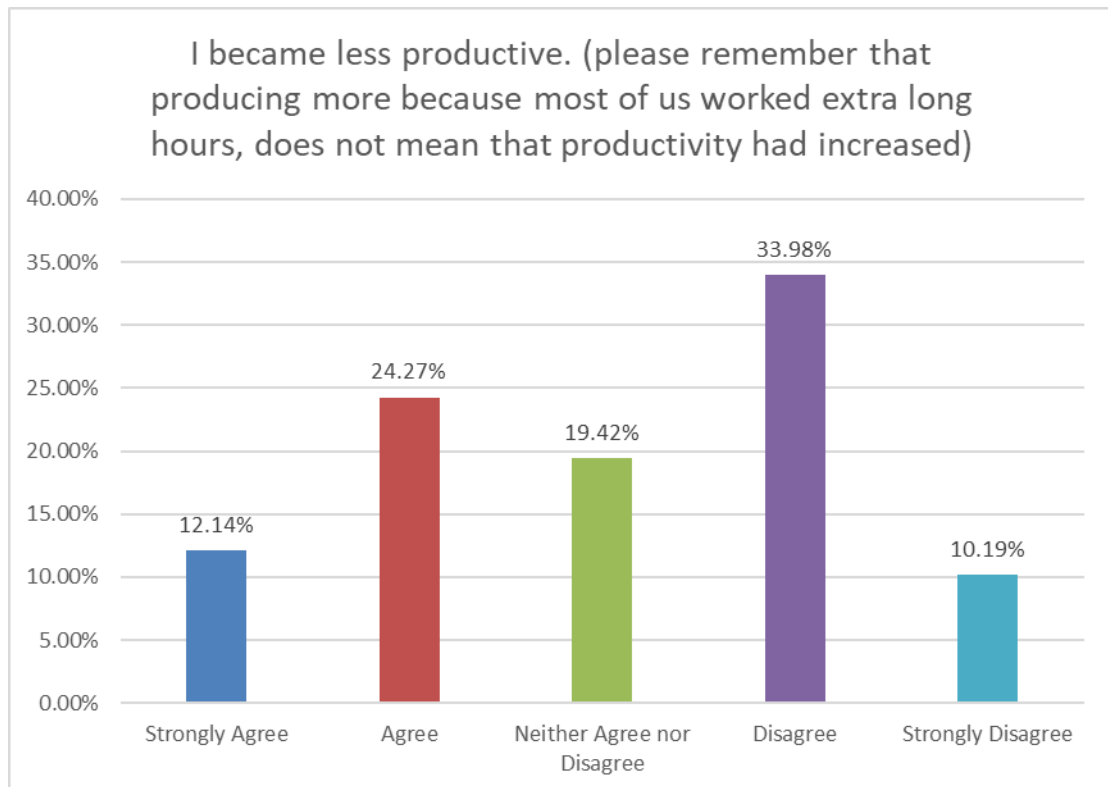
Nearly 60% of participants reported high levels of anxiety. This could be a contributing factor for many other impacts experienced around the globe (e.g. the increase in violence in the home, relationship breakdown and suicide rates plus an increasing demand for counselling and other mental health services.).

13. Concentration on tasks



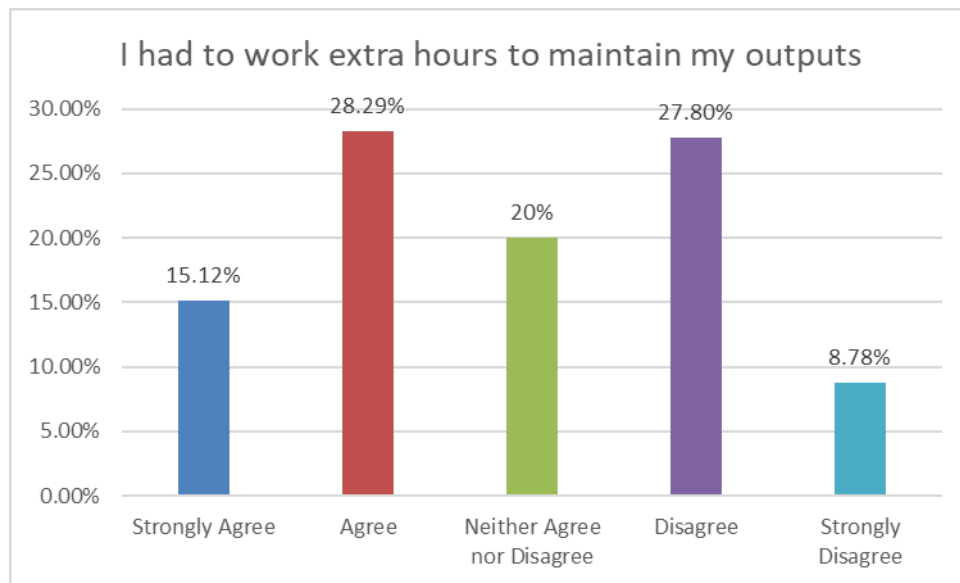
It appears that the people controlled their concentration to large extent (42% respondents disagreeing that they had impact on their ability to concentrate on a task).

14. Impact on productivity



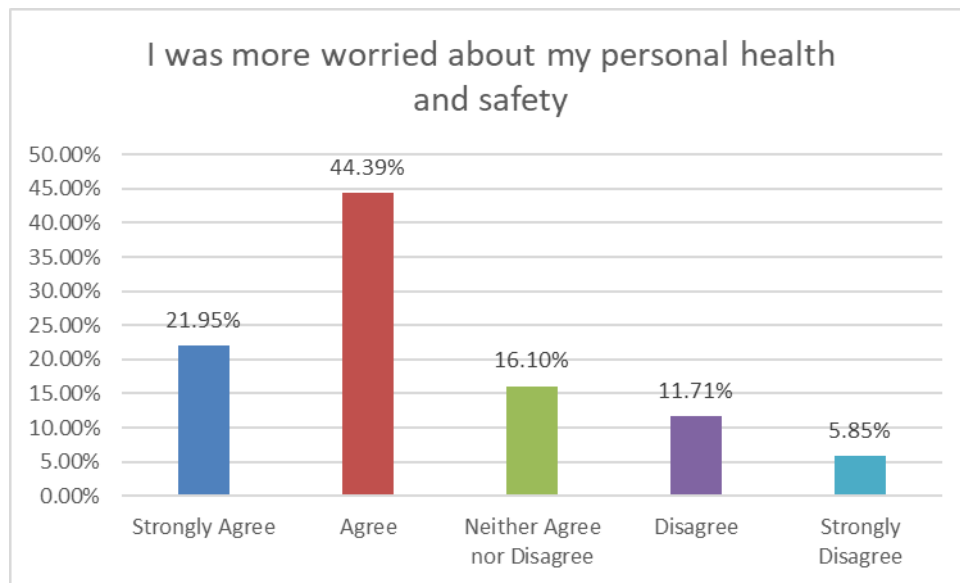
Some large global corporates claim that their employees' productivity increased while working from home or remotely. The authors have a different view – the output might have increased because people worked many extra hours. Some employees have complained that they are not working from home but living at work. They are looking forward to returning to their office to re-establish boundaries between work and their home lives. Our survey results reported close to half of respondents (44.17%) disagreeing that their productivity decreased. Perhaps it is difficult to admit that one's productivity fell.

15. Extra work to maintain same output



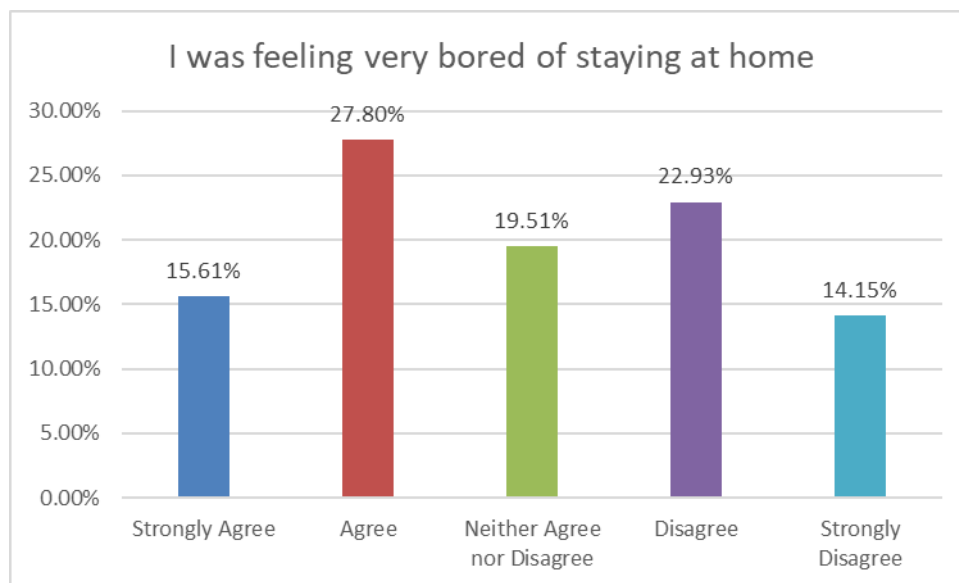
Over 43% respondents said that they had to work extra hours to maintain the same outputs.

16. Worry about personal health and safety



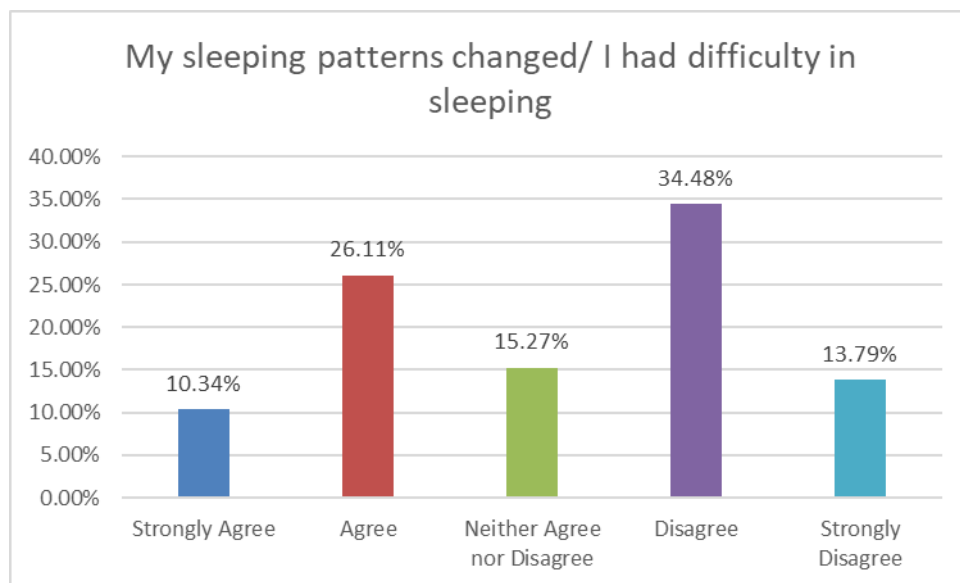
One of the main concerns was personal health and safety with 66.34% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing this was one of their worries. Mental ill-health may be the next global health challenge once the current pandemic starts to abate.

17. Boredom



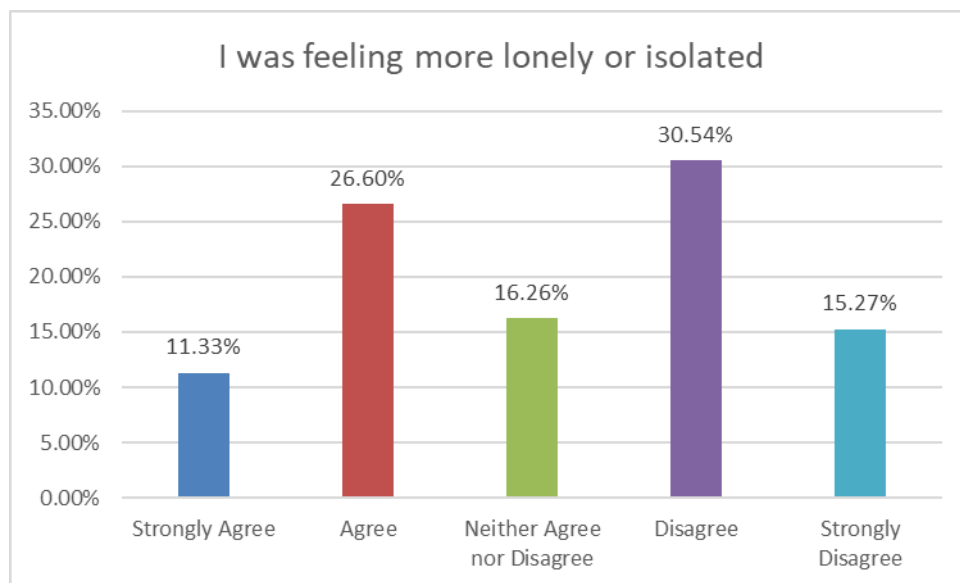
There is a general perception that people had extra spare time to spend with their families. The authors have a contrary view. With so many webinars and training sessions online, the time saved on work related travel was invested in attending webinars and other online trainings rather than invested in time with their family. 43.41% of respondents agreed that they felt bored staying at home.

18. Sleeping patterns



Over 48% of respondents claimed not to lose sleep over the challenges of Covid-19 Pandemic, working from home, and more. This contradicts some media reports.

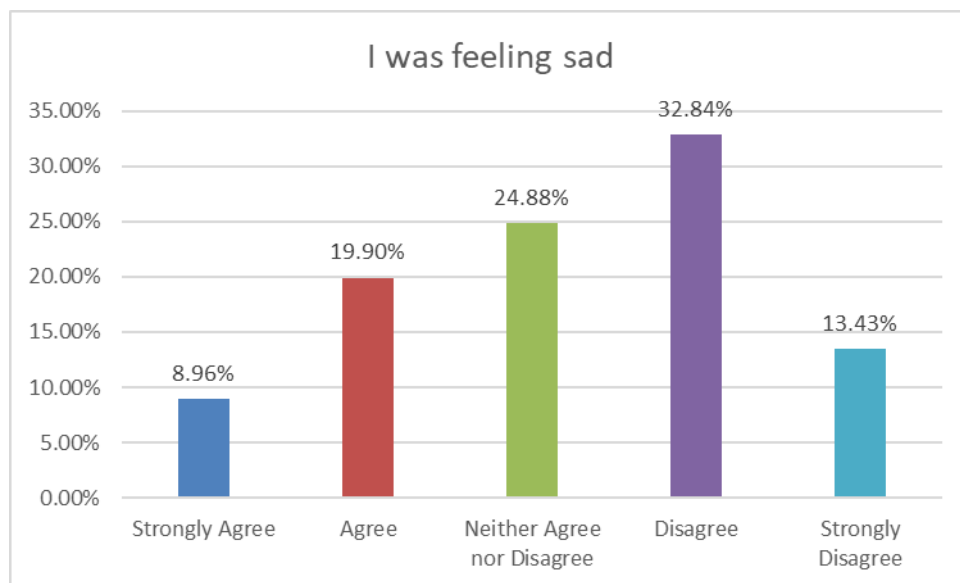
19. Loneliness



Loneliness has been a particular concern for single person households during Covid-19 lockdowns. Perhaps single person households were under-represented in the survey respondents.

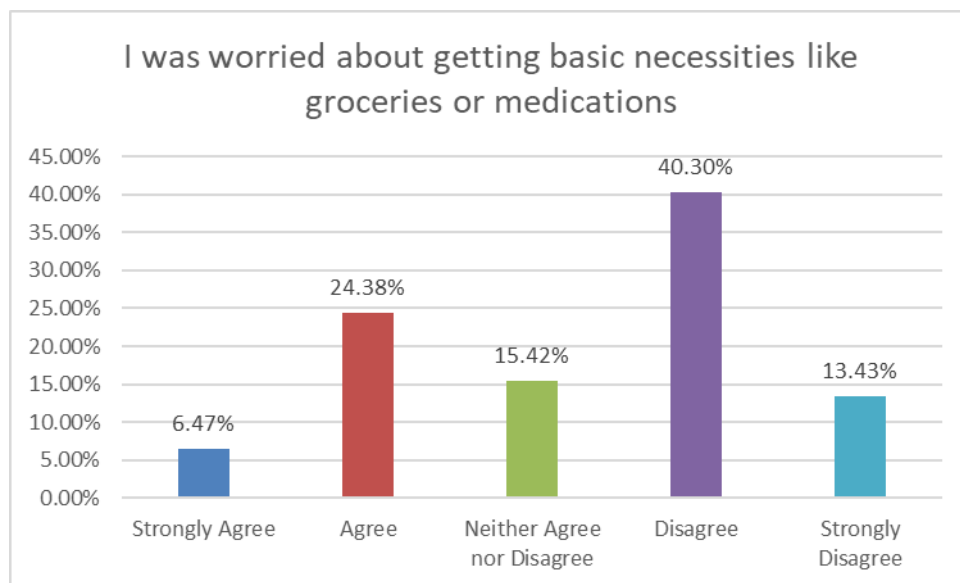
Nearly 46% of respondents disagreed that they were feeling more lonely or isolated. The Authors noted that many people found ways of keeping themselves busy – online games, family get-togethers (virtually), webinars (up to 3 in a day!), other online trainings and more.

20. Sadness



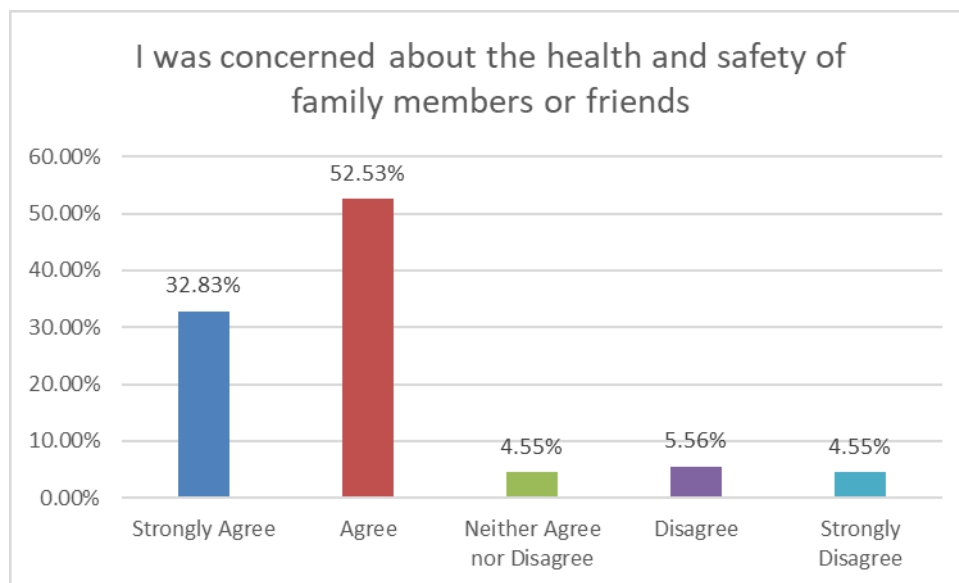
Sadness also did not appear to be a challenge with 46.27% respondents disagreeing that they felt sad. Around 25% respondents were indecisive (neither agreeing nor disagreeing).

21. Worries about basic necessities



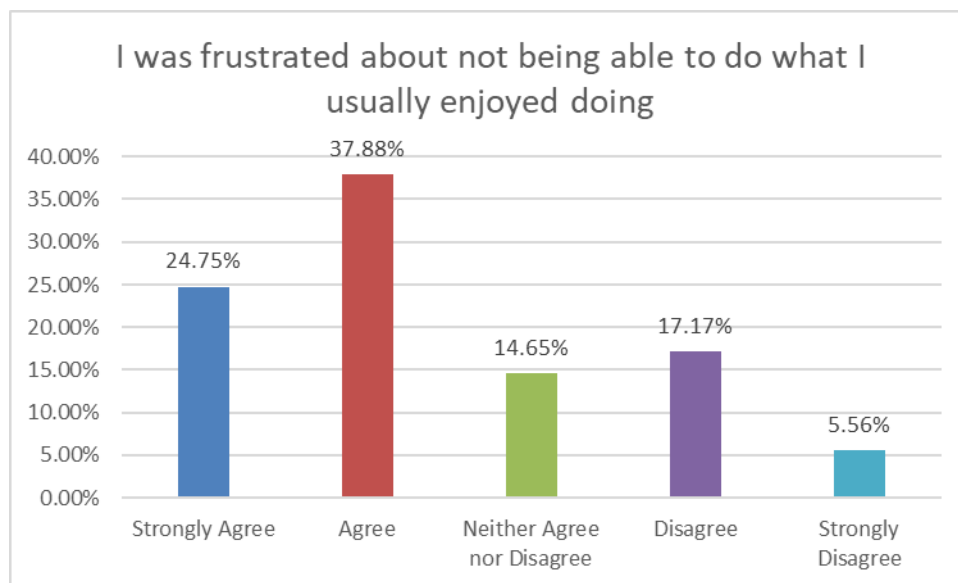
This is a good news survey result. Fulfilling basic necessities (the shortage of groceries and medications) did not become a challenge for most respondents (almost 54%). This could be the a 'pat on the back' for the governments and businesses that maintained basic supplies despite lockdowns. The Authors also appreciate the heroic efforts of producers, air and maritime cargo, truck/ train drivers and grocery store workers who were deemed essential and exempted from lockdown to ensure continued availability of basic necessities.

22. Worries about health and safety of family members



From responses to question 16, respondents were less concerned for their personal health and safety, but *more concerned for the health and safety of family members or friends (over 85% saying so)*. This result may also be linked to another finding where 55% respondents were worried about the breakdown of society (see analysis of question 24 results).

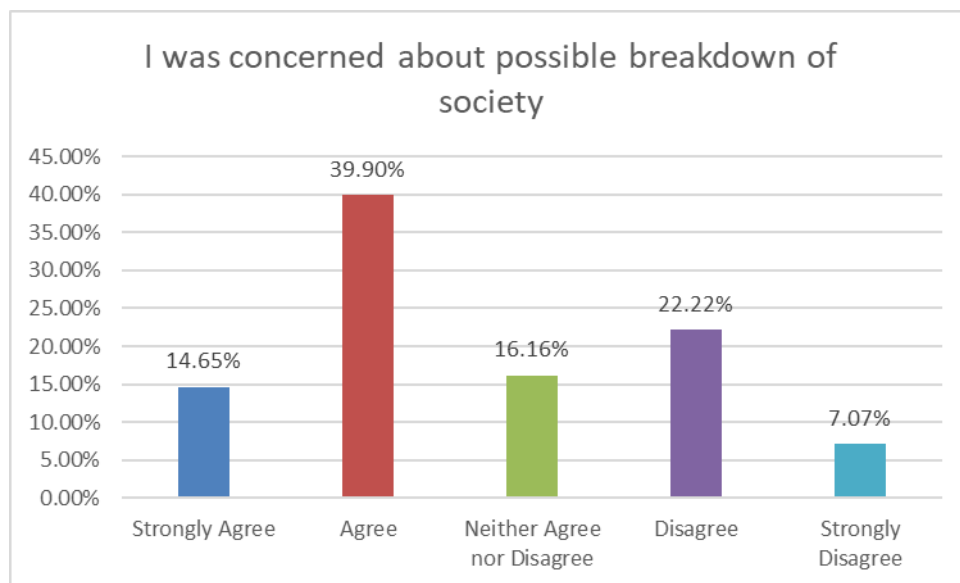
23. Frustrations about not doing what I enjoyed in the past



Where does your enjoyment lie – at home/ at office/ outside home? At least the survey said, ‘it was not home’ (assuming it was lockdown/ working from home for many across globe). Around 63% of respondents expressed frustration over not being able to do what they usually enjoyed doing.

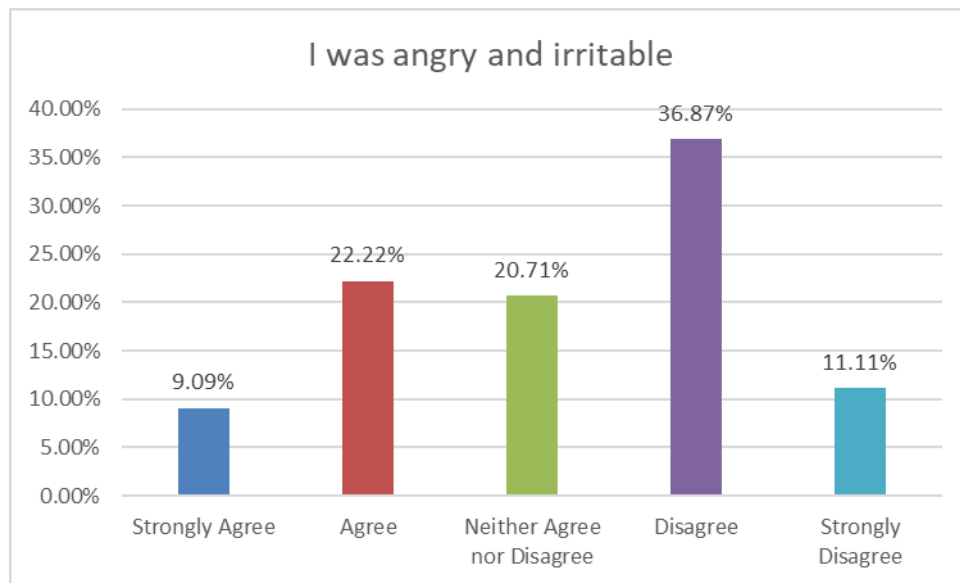
The Authors noted that though many employers assisted in obtaining the right resources for their employees to work remotely, frustrations related to completing work activities continued to exist. This may be due to employees not working under ‘normal’ circumstances, challenges with bandwidths to maintain fast and stable internet connections. Another interpretation of this result was the lockdowns were too long. Many are eager to close the incident ‘Covid-19 Pandemic’, hoping that this crisis has abated, and no other crisis is expected to be this long. But what about ‘slow burn’ crises such as climate change or global warming?

24. Concern about breakdown of society



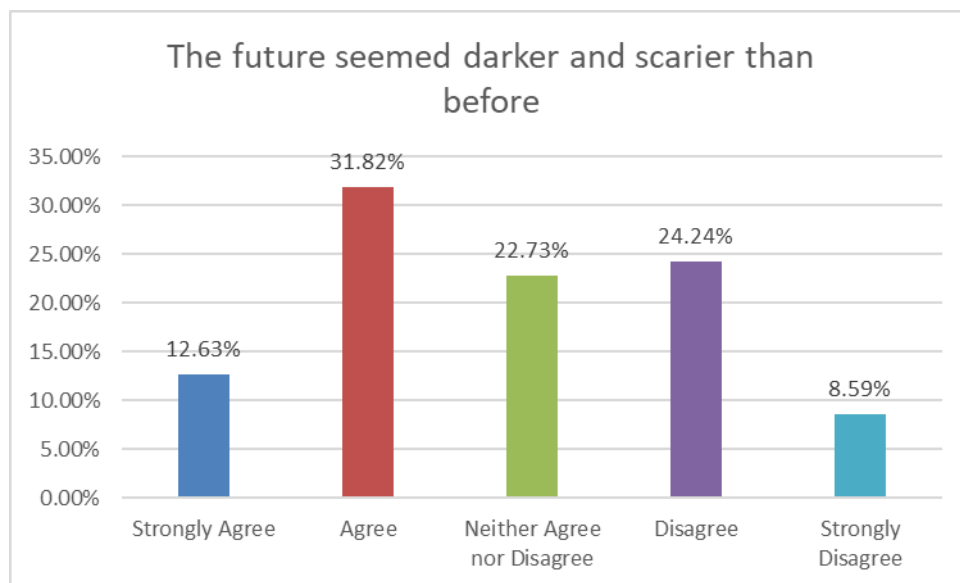
About 55% respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Covid-19 Pandemic could result in possible breakdown of society. The Authors consider these views may be due to respondents, who were not infected themselves, but were concerned about the large numbers of sick and dead people across globe, which has emotionally impacted almost everyone globally.

25. Anger & irritation



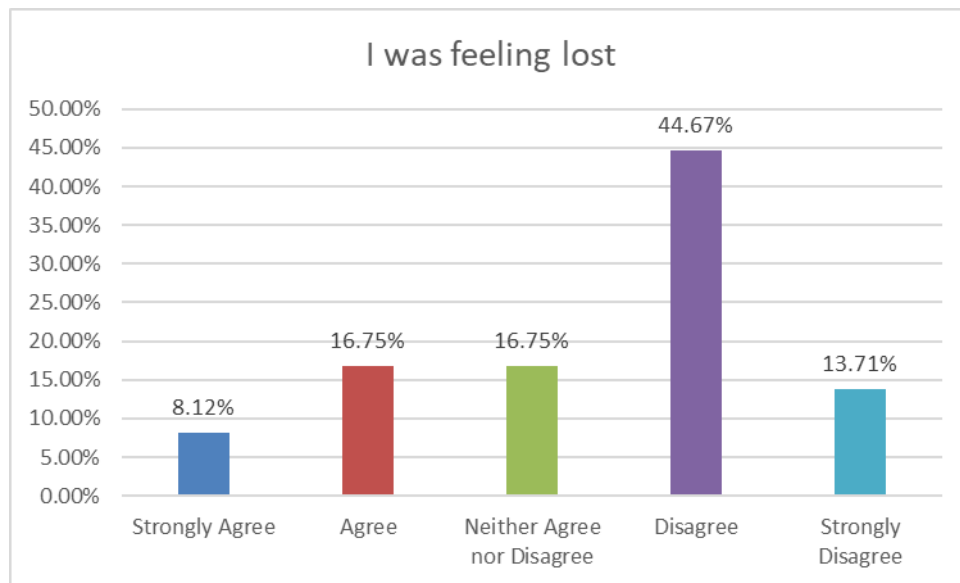
About 48% of respondents disagreed they were angry or irritable. The Authors noted that nearly 21% neither agreed or nor disagreed when responding to this question. There may be many interpretations for this result such as differing definitions or cross-cultural difference of what being angry or irritable means.

26. Future



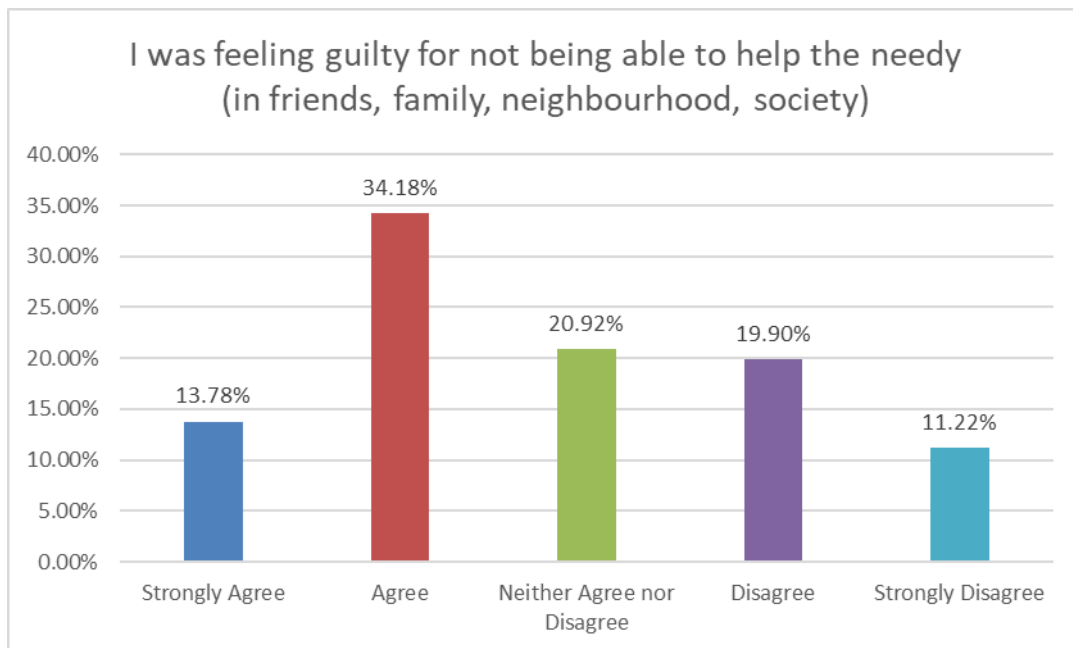
Nearly 45% respondents saw a darker and scarier future with another significant number (close to 23%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

27. Feeling lost



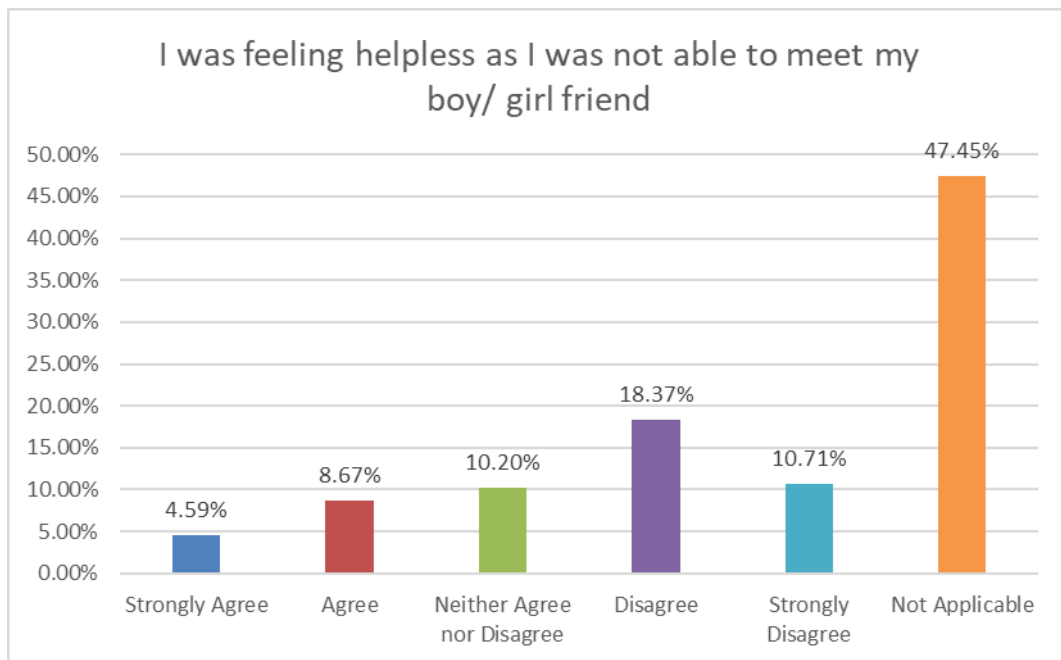
The Authors interpreted this result as good news; over 58% of respondents did not feel 'lost'.

28. Feeling guilty to not help others



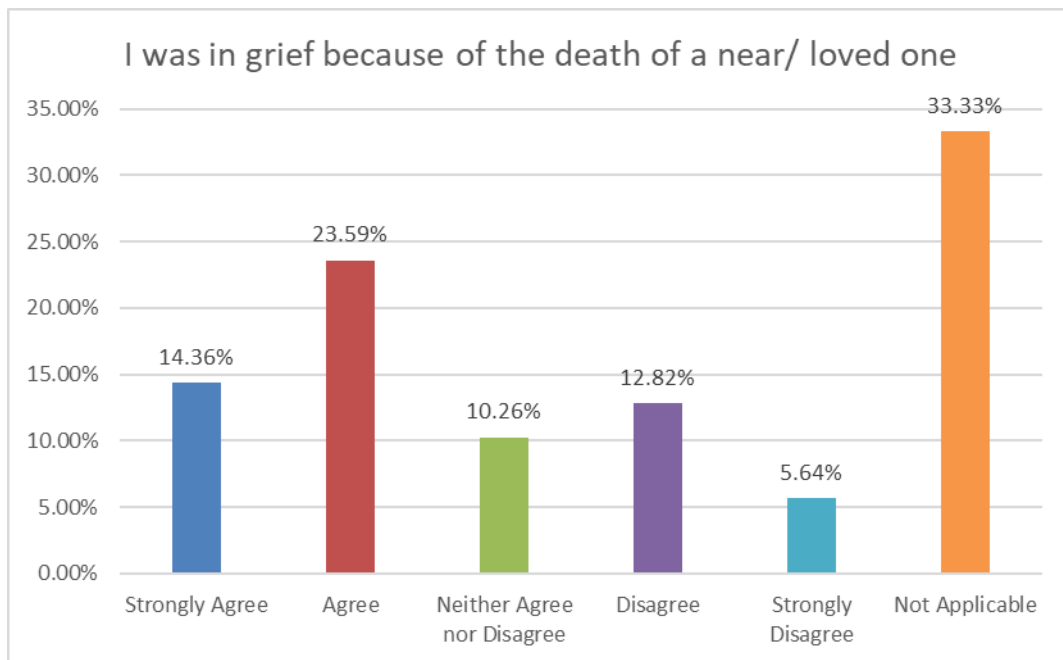
Nearly 48% of respondents reported feeling guilty that they were not able to help those who were in need. The Authors wondered about the remaining 52% - are they not concerned about the others in need? Or do they think there is little that they as individuals can do to help? Do they expect their governments to assist those in need?

29. Helpless to meet boy/ girl friend



The highest percentage of responses fell in 'not applicable' category for this question. Looking at the profile of the respondents (majorly over 35 years of age), we could conclude that their relationship status was beyond boy/ girlfriend labelling, but what about younger people still seeking their life partners?

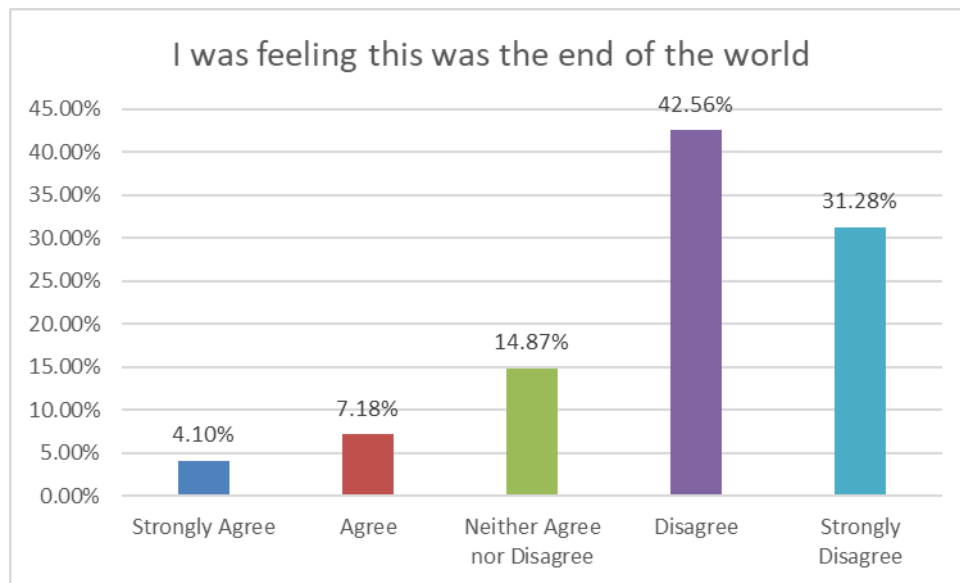
30. Grief due to loved one's death



This comes as good news that 62% respondents did not go through this grief.

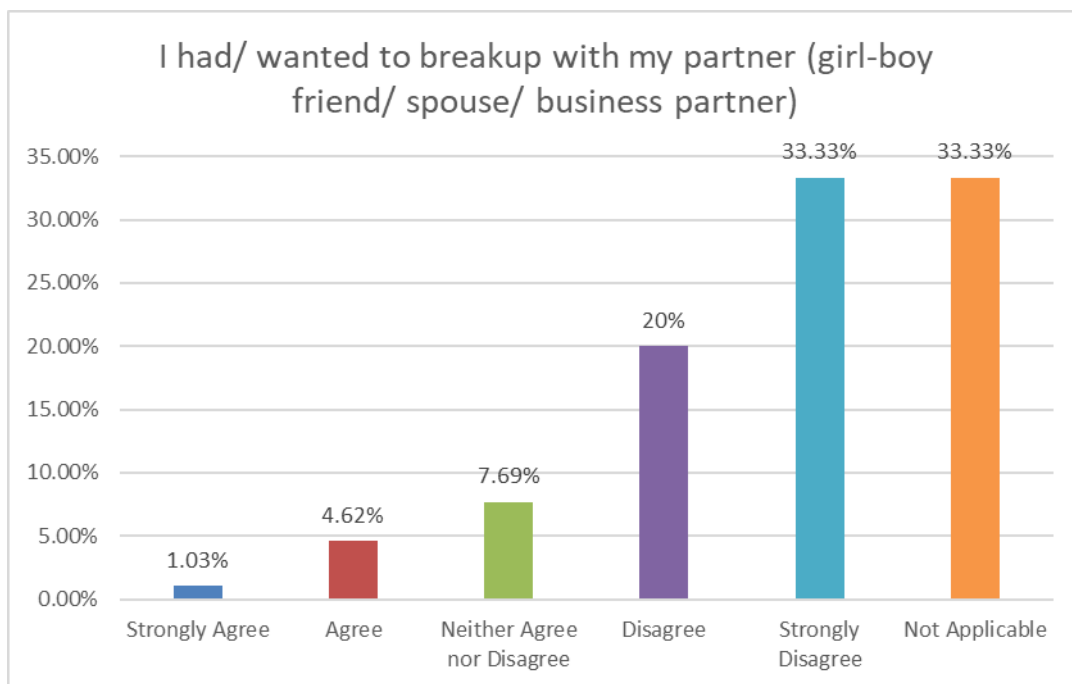
The Authors would like to put on record their condolences for those (about 38% respondents) who lost their loved ones during Covid-19 Pandemic period. These deaths may not be directly due to Covid-19 but may be due to overwhelmed health services. We wish these respondents and their loved ones well in their individual grief 'journeys'.

31. I saw end of world



A large number of respondents (around 74%) did not see Covid-19 Pandemic (worst phase) as the 'end of the world' – and this is good news once again. This becomes more interesting finding in light of responses to previous questions - darker and scarier future (see Question 26 - 44.45% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing), breakdown of society (see Question 24 – 54.55%), and health and safety concerns for family members (see Question 22 - 85.36%).

32. Breakup with partner

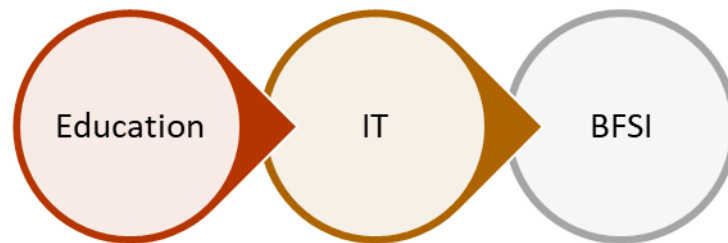


The Authors were relieved to learn that over 53% respondents did not note significant impacts on their intimate relationships due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For those that did, this in itself could have drained people emotionally. A large percentage of respondents (33.33%) marked 'not applicable'. These respondents may not currently be in a relationship or business partnership.

Conclusions

The global population was stressed in many ways during Covid-19 Pandemic. Similar emotions can flow through any other crisis which is why the Authors invested time in this project. Emotional Impact Assessment (EIA) offers a way forward to be employee friendly businesses and other organisations. Employee care is not limited to financial benefits but also offering emotional support to their employees. The Authors believe that doing so makes employees resilient, and in turn, businesses, and other organisation more resilient.

age, qualification and working demographics indicate that the survey respondents were experienced people



people in the above 3 sectors were emotionally impacted at a higher level, than many others.

people with no dependents were more stressed/ and/ or emotionally drained

Good news	Less good news
1. The crisis was not seen as end of the world	1. Health and safety of family members
2. People did not feel lost	2. Personal health and safety
3. Basic supplies such as groceries and medications continued to be available to most respondents during the Covid-19 Pandemic	3. Not able to do what I enjoyed
4. Breakup with partner was not a concern for many respondents	4. Anxiety about own future
5. Few respondents experienced the loss of a loved one	5. Possible breakdown of society

These findings will aid personal resilience enhancement by businesses and other organisations. The Authors believe that Resilient People make Resilient Organisations.

For much of the last 18 months during lockdown periods much time was spent at home, including working from home. Employers need to ask their employees whether they are happier working from home, in their offices or a hybrid arrangement with a combination of both. How might hybrid working be managed? Discussing employees' needs and expectations with their employers is essential to maintain safe, healthy, and productive workplaces as we start to move forward beyond the current Covid-19 Pandemic.

These findings also hint at increased need of talking about mental wellbeing of the employees. Businesses may need to increase their focus, and budgets to support their employees' mental health, well-being and productivity working at home or in more traditional locations.

The above findings are based on a small sample of respondents drawn from 42 countries. The Authors note that cultural differences (organisation and country level) play important role in emotional resilience/ levels of people. Hence, *one of the first recommendations is to conduct an Emotional Impact Assessment (EIA) at each organisational level - findings may be different, hence the actions would need to be different.* The authors (the Knowledge Leaders) will be happy to design, develop, deliver, and analyse the emotional impacts for any organisation.

The Survey/ Report Team:



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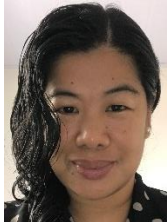
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The following sources had an impact in conceptualising this EIA Survey:

- a) <https://www-forbes-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2020/09/28/google-ceo-sundar-pichai-calls-for-a-hybrid-work-from-home-model/amp/>
- b) <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/healthcare-systems-and-services/our-insights/national-surveys-reveal-disconnect-between-employees-and-employers-around-mental-health-need?cid=other-eml-alt-mip-mck&hdpid=feffe0c0-d33d-4603-a9d6-3abce5530846&hctky=12603601&hlkid=0ab86643467e4a9082e6c25651075f81>
- c) <http://www.emro.who.int/violence-injuries-disabilities/violence-news/levels-of-domestic-violence-increase-as-covid-19-pandemic-escalates.html>
- d) <https://www.karger.com/Article/FullText/514341>
- e) <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2024046>

- f) <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201203-why-the-pandemic-is-causing-spikes-in-break-ups-and-divorces>
- g) <https://www.deccanherald.com/international/world-news-politics/how-the-covid-19-pandemic-led-to-the-rise-and-fall-of-divorces-in-us-966201.html>

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