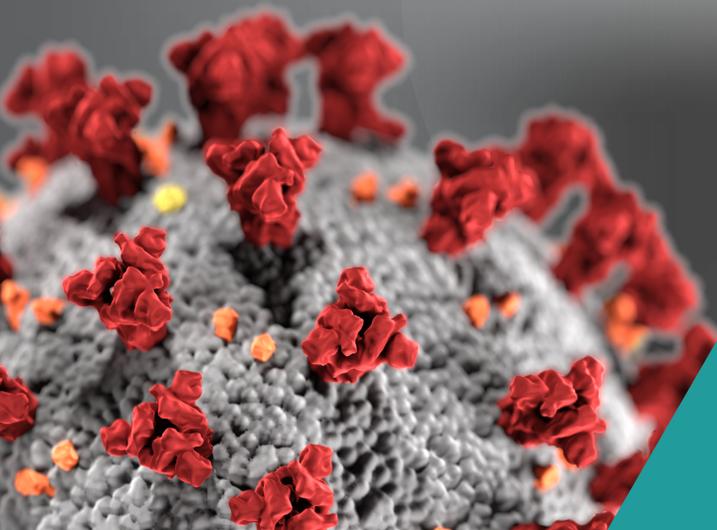


COVID-19: THE EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

ADMINISTRATIVE | PROFESSIONAL | MANAGERIAL

Pulse Survey #3
May 2020



INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY

Preface

HRC Associates is pleased to present the findings of our third pulse survey, COVID-19: The Employee Perspective. We surveyed 2,447 individuals representing multiple sectors throughout Trinidad & Tobago. The majority of respondents were Administrative Personnel, Professionals and Managers.

This survey was undertaken between April 29th and May 10th, 2020 and complements HRC's previous pulse surveys on the local and regional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, namely, "HR Response to COVID-19" and "COVID-19: CEO Concerns & Expectations" which were completed in March and April 2020 respectively.

The results of this survey provides insight into individuals' experience, concerns, and expectations as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We wish to thank all respondents for their participation and valuable insight.

May 2020

**HRC Associates Limited
Port of Spain
Trinidad**

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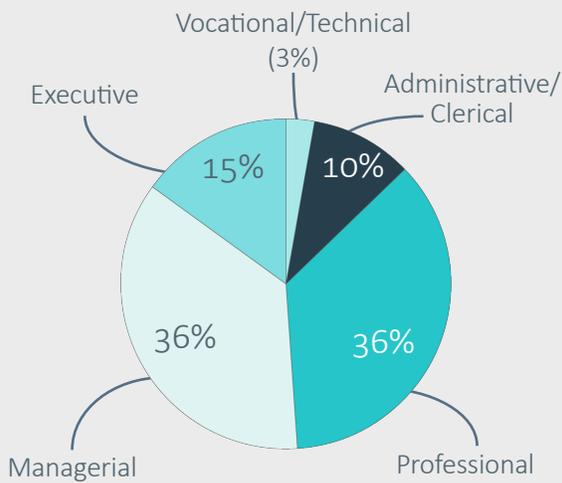
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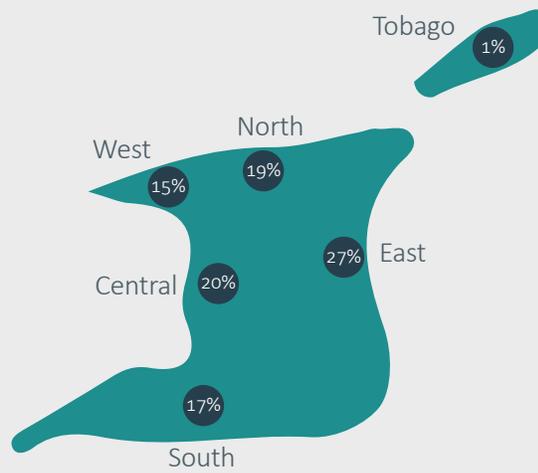
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PARTICIPANT PROFILE

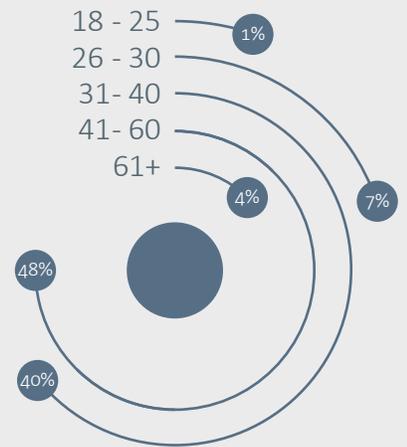
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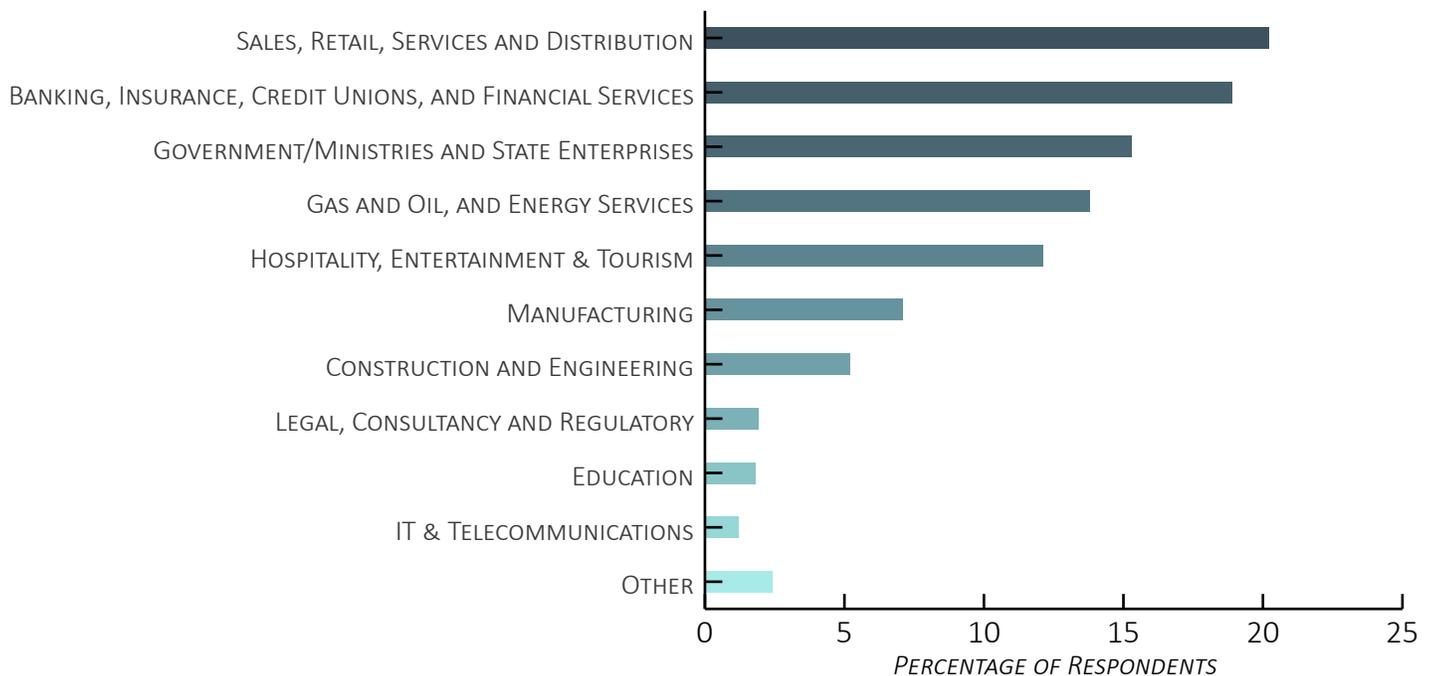
Respondents' Location



Age of Respondents



PARTICIPATION BY INDUSTRY



SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

74%

WORRIED ABOUT
JOB SECURITY

The majority of still employed respondents (74%) are at least somewhat concerned about job security as a result of COVID-19.

79%

NO CHANGE IN
SALARY/WAGE RATE

79% of still employed respondents reported that their salary/wage rate remains unchanged since the start of the Pandemic.

85%

WORKING FROM
HOME

85% of still employed respondents reported working from home at least part of the week. 90% of these employees are satisfied with their current arrangement and 91% would like to see work from home opportunities continue after COVID-19.

64%

EXPERIENCED NO DECREASE IN
PRODUCTIVITY WHILE WORKING
FROM HOME

26% of respondents reported experiencing no change in their productivity while working from home. 38% experienced an increase in productivity.

77%

AGREE THAT THEIR EMPLOYER
CARES ABOUT THEIR WELLBEING

77% of respondents are in agreement that their organisation cares about their overall wellbeing amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

SURVEY RESULTS

COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented disruption to “business as usual” for Trinidad & Tobago’s economy, organisations, and employees. Government-mandated health regulations, namely business closures and the stay-at-home order, coupled with decreased demand for many products and services, has had a significant impact on the operations of all organisations. In turn, this has affected employees, as salary and benefit cuts, temporary layoffs, and retrenchment exercises have been

used to contain costs and increase organisational efficiency. Employers were forced to implement greater “work from home” measures to maintain business operations. The majority of workers who are still employed have had to quickly adapt to new work arrangements and change the way they manage their time to remain productive while working remotely. As we near the “re-opening” of the economy, Management and Employees alike are contemplating a “new normal” in how we communicate, consume, and work.

COVID-19 AT A GLANCE

NUMBER OF CASES



CASES OF COVID-19: WORLDWIDE

Approximately 4.2 million as of May 11th, 2020.



CASES OF COVID-19: CARICOM

1,189 as of May 11th, 2020.



CASES OF COVID-19: TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

116 as of May 11th, 2020.

RELATED GOVERNMENT MEASURES



CLOSURE OF BORDER

Took effect from March 23rd.



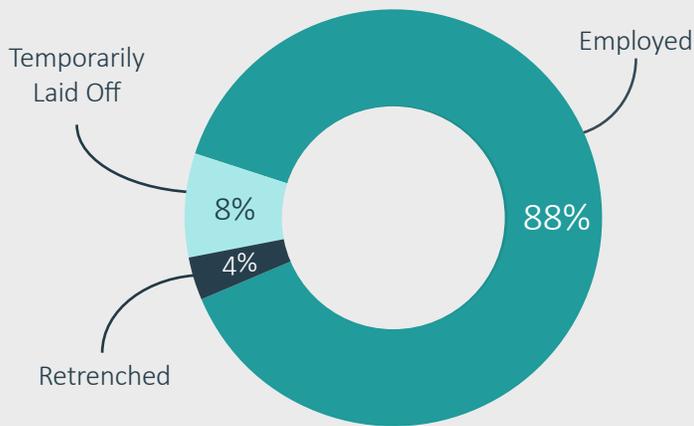
STAY AT HOME ORDER

Took effect from March 30th.



6-PHASE BUSINESS REOPENING PLAN

Phase 1 began May 11th.

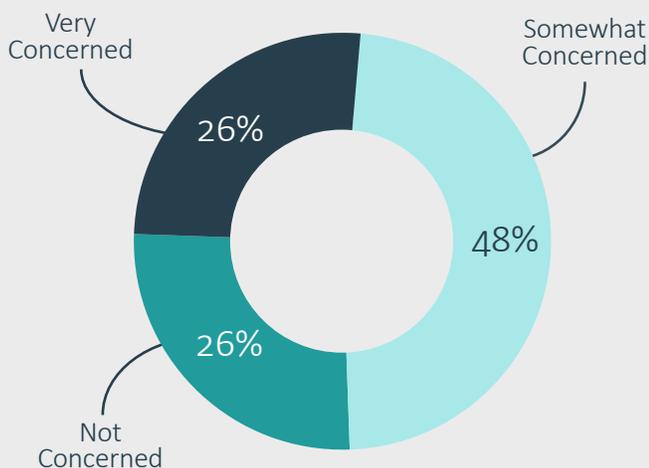
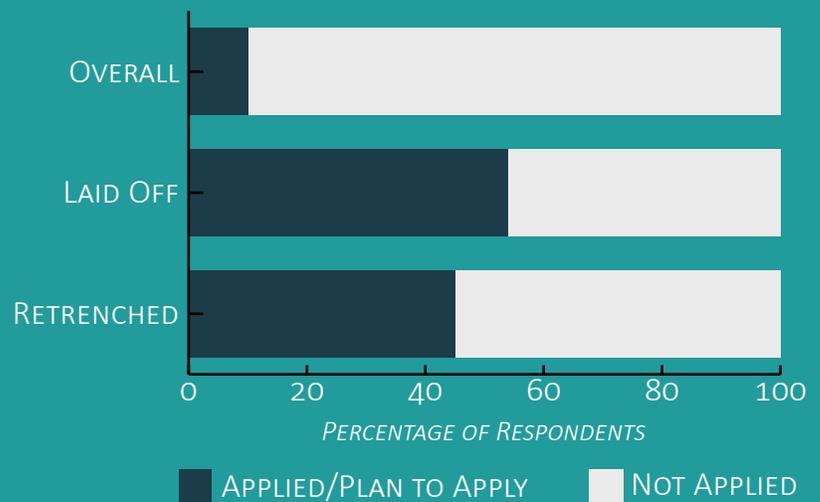


EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Of the 2,447 participants surveyed, 88% are still employed, 8% were temporarily laid off, and 4% were retrenched since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SALARY RELIEF GRANT

10% of overall respondents stated that they have applied or plan to apply for the Salary Relief Grant offered by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago (GORTT). Of those individuals, the majority were either temporarily laid off (44%), or retrenched (17%).



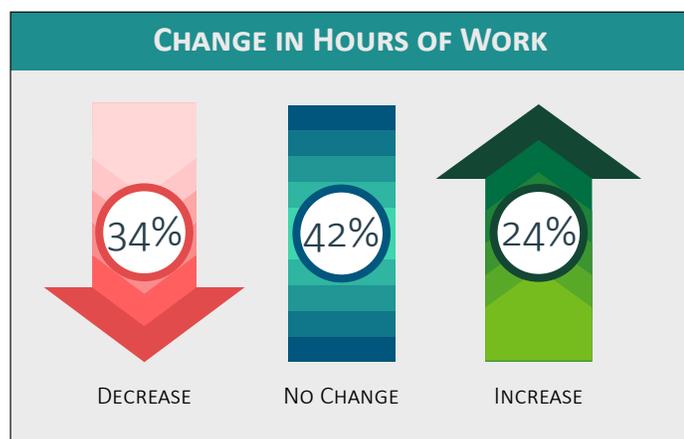
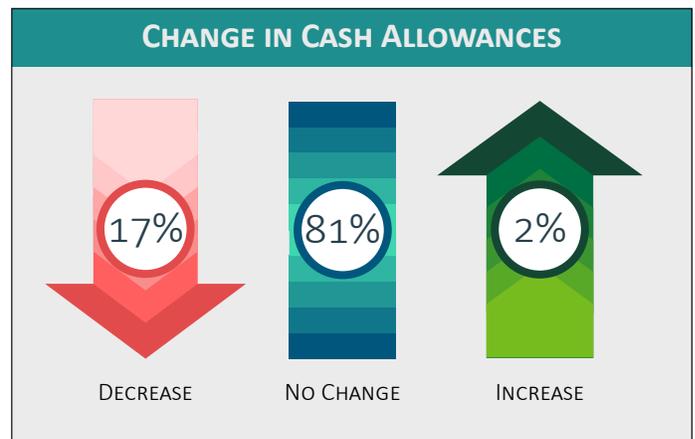
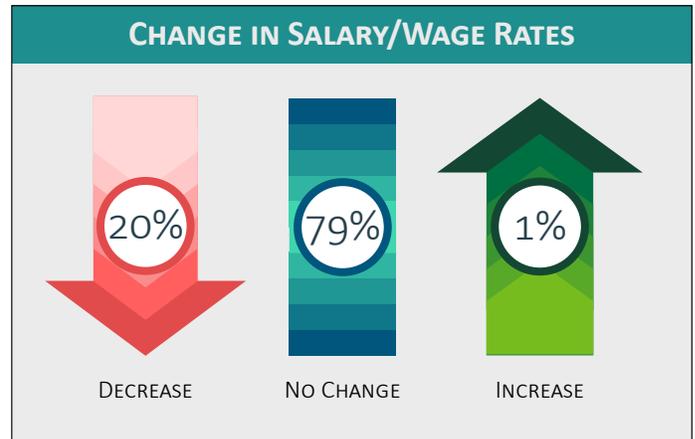
JOB SECURITY

The majority of still employed respondents (74%) are at least somewhat concerned about job security as a result of COVID-19. 26% of individuals were more optimistic, stating that they did not share such concern.

IMPACT ON COMPENSATION

In our April survey, 93% of Executives expressed at least some concern in controlling their organisation's cash flow and 91% cited that they were considering various cost containment measures. One such measure would be a reduction in salary/wage rates and cash allowances for employees. While most of the still employed respondents (79%) stated that there has been no change to their salary/wage rate, 20% reported that their salary/wage rate had been decreased. It is worth noting that of the respondents who experienced a decrease in their salary/wage rate, 39% were employed in the Sales, Retail, Distribution and Services Sector. Additionally, only 1% cited that their salary/wage rate was increased.

Similarly, the majority (81%) of respondents stated that there was no change to their cash allowances. 17% reported a decrease in cash allowances- with the most respondents (34%) operating within the Sales, Retail, Distribution and Services Sector- and a mere 2% cited that their cash allowances had increased since the COVID-19 outbreak began in Trinidad & Tobago.

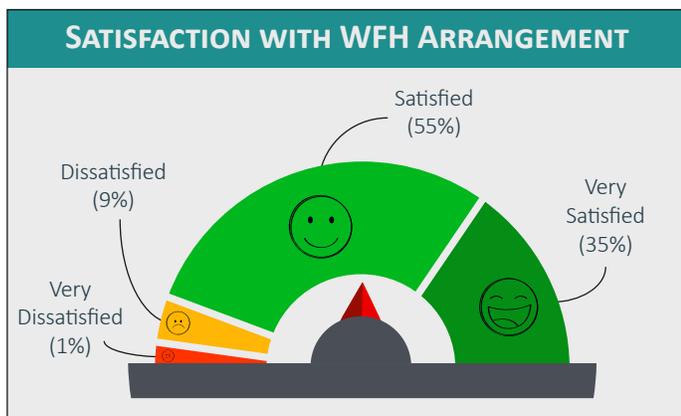
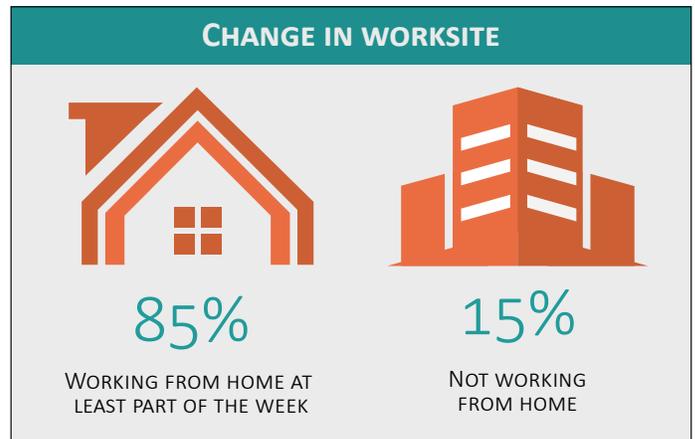


IMPACT ON HOURS OF WORK

55% of Executives surveyed in April anticipated that a reduction in total employee work hours would continue/become necessary in the coming months. 34% of still employed respondents cited that their work hours have been decreased in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. 24% reported that their hours have increased while 42% stated that there have been no change to their total hours of work.

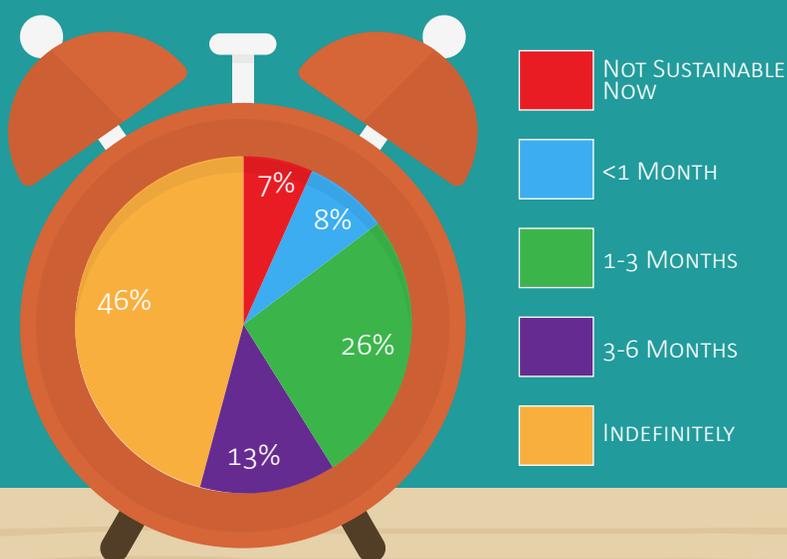
WORKING FROM HOME

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, many organisations are offering various alternative work arrangements (flexible worksites, flexitime, staggered shifts, compressed workweek, etc.) for the first time on a large scale. In March, 98% of organisations surveyed stated that they were allowing at least some of their employees to work from home. It was found that 52% of respondents are working from home all days of the week, 33% are working from home part of the week, and 15% are working from their office or worksite.

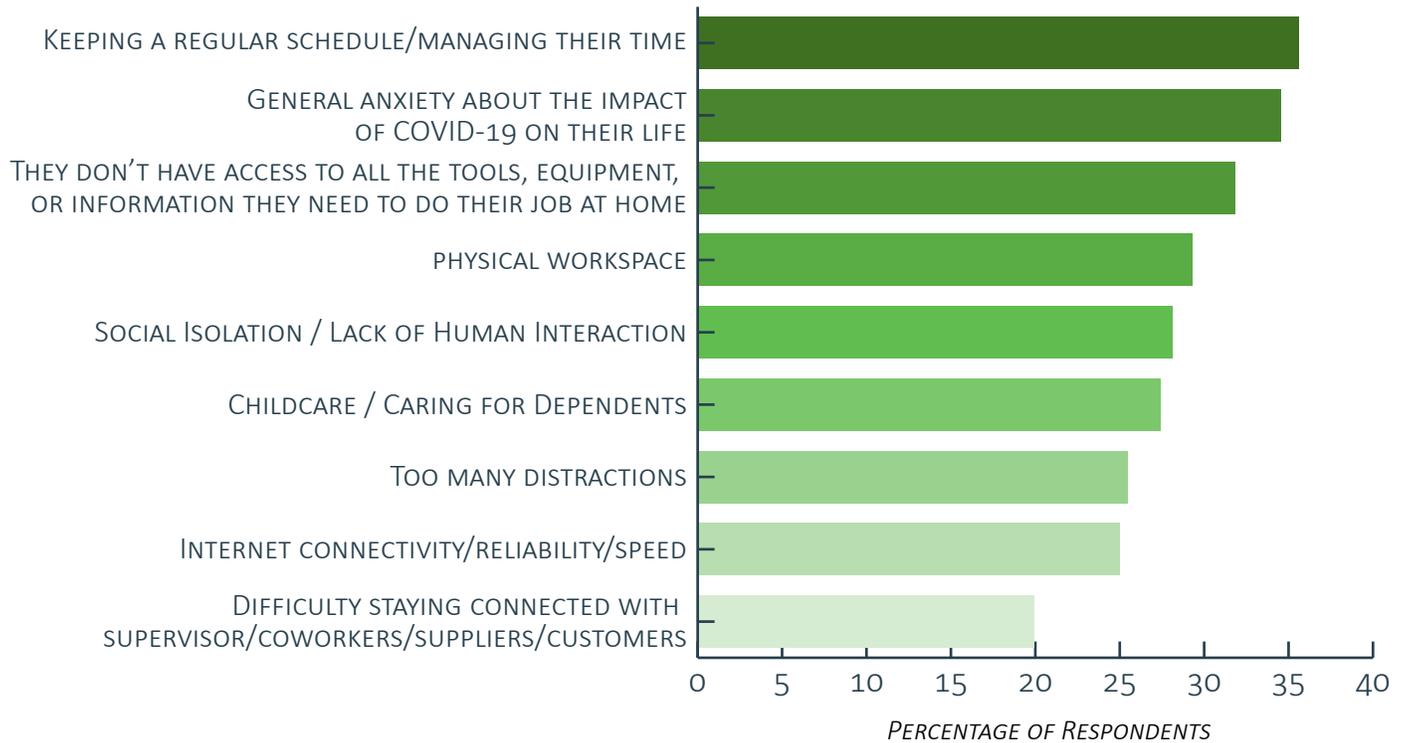


Of those who are working from home (WFH) at least part of the week, the vast majority (90%) are satisfied with their current arrangement. 46% are confident that they can maintain performing their job duties adequately while working from home indefinitely. The majority of respondents (91%) currently working from home believe that their company should consider implementing increased levels of “work from home” opportunities after COVID-19.

HOW LONG CAN EMPLOYEES MAINTAIN THEIR JOB DUTIES ADEQUATELY WHILE WORKING FROM HOME?



WHAT ARE THE MOST CHALLENGING FACTORS EMPLOYEES ARE FACING WHILE WORKING FROM HOME?



The 3 most challenging factors that respondents are experiencing while working from home are: keeping a regular schedule/managing time; general anxiety about the impact of COVID-19 on their lives; and not having access to all of the tools, equipment, or information they need to perform their job at home.

In our April survey, 75% of Executives expressed concern regarding a decline in employee productivity as a result of remote working. 36% of employees surveyed reported that working remotely has decreased their day-to-day productivity while 38% reported that their productivity had increased. 26% stated that there was no change to their productivity levels.

HOW HAS WORKING REMOTELY IMPACTED EMPLOYEES' DAY-TO-DAY PRODUCTIVITY?

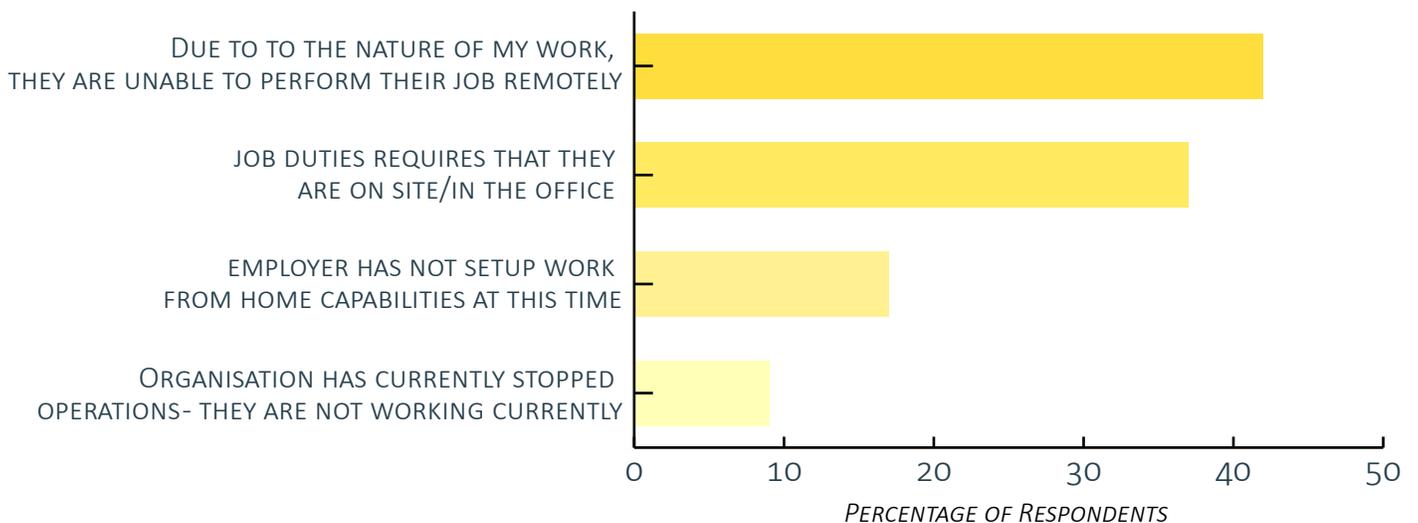


WORKING FROM THE OFFICE

15% of currently employed respondents stated that they are not working remotely at this time. When asked why they are unable to work from home, 42% stated that they are unable to perform their job remotely due to the nature of their work, 37% cited that their job duties require that they are on-site/in

the office, 16% reported that their employer had not set up work from home capabilities, and 9% expressed that their organisation had temporarily ceased operations.

WHY ARE EMPLOYEES NOT ABLE TO WORK FROM HOME?



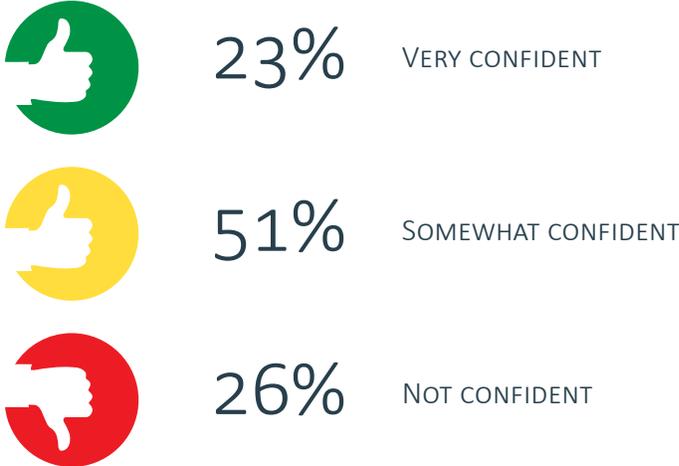
In our March survey, HR professionals reported on the various measures their organisations had implemented to ensure the wellbeing of their employees when in the office/on-site. Such measures included greater availability of handwashing and hand-sanitisation units, reconfiguring common areas and workstations to promote social distancing, and the adoption and promotion of video conferencing in lieu of face to face meetings. 75% of employees reported that they are at least satisfied with the initiatives their employers have implemented to ensure their safety while on-site/in the workplace.

TEMPORARILY LAID OFF WORKERS

In our April survey, 34% of Executives expected that they would need to temporarily layoff some staff within three months. In line with this expectation, 8% of respondents stated that they were temporarily laid off as part of their organisation’s response to the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of temporarily laid off employees came from the Sales, Retail, Services, and Distribution Sector (39%), the Construction and Engineering Sector (16%), and the Hospitality, Entertainment, and Tourism Sector (15%).

Most laid off employees (51%) were somewhat confident that their employers would call them back out to work. 23% were very confident while 26% were not confident.

HOW CONFIDENT ARE TEMPORARILY LAID OFF EMPLOYEES THAT THEIR EMPLOYER WILL CALL THEM BACK OUT TO WORK?



TEMPORARILY LAID OFF EMPLOYEES’ SECTORS



39%

SALES, RETAIL, SERVICES AND DISTRIBUTION



16%

CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING



15%

HOSPITALITY, ENTERTAINMENT & TOURISM



30%

OTHER SECTORS

RETRENCHED WORKERS

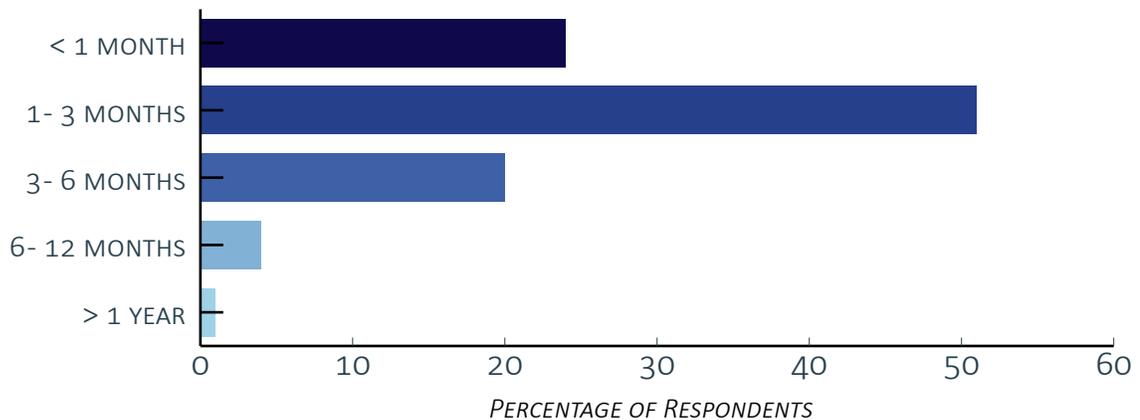
30% of Executives in our April survey were anticipating some staff retrenchment within the following 3 months. Only 4% of respondents reported that they had been retrenched as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on their organisation. The majority of retrenched employees came from the Sales, Retail, Services, and Distribution Sector (30%); the Gas & Oil and Energy Services Sector (21%); and the Hospitality, Entertainment, and Tourism Sector (20%).

84% of retrenched employees reported that they did not receive a severance package or gratuity upon their separation from the organisation. Only 2% stated that they were offered career management

services/outplacement services by their former employer.

13% of retrenched workers reported that they have an alternate source of income to support themselves and their dependents. When asked how long they believed they would be able to sustain their acceptable standard of living before acquiring another job, most respondents said 1-3 months (51%). 24% stated less than one month, 20% said 3- 6 months, and 4% said 6- 12 months. Only 1% of the respondents expected that they could maintain their standard of living for more than 1 year.

HOW LONG CAN RETRENCHED EMPLOYEES SUSTAIN THEIR ACCEPTABLE STANDARD OF LIVING BEFORE ACQUIRING ANOTHER JOB?



RETRENCHED EMPLOYEES' SECTORS



30%

SALES, RETAIL, SERVICES AND DISTRIBUTION



21%

GAS AND OIL, AND ENERGY SERVICES



20%

HOSPITALITY, ENTERTAINMENT & TOURISM



29%

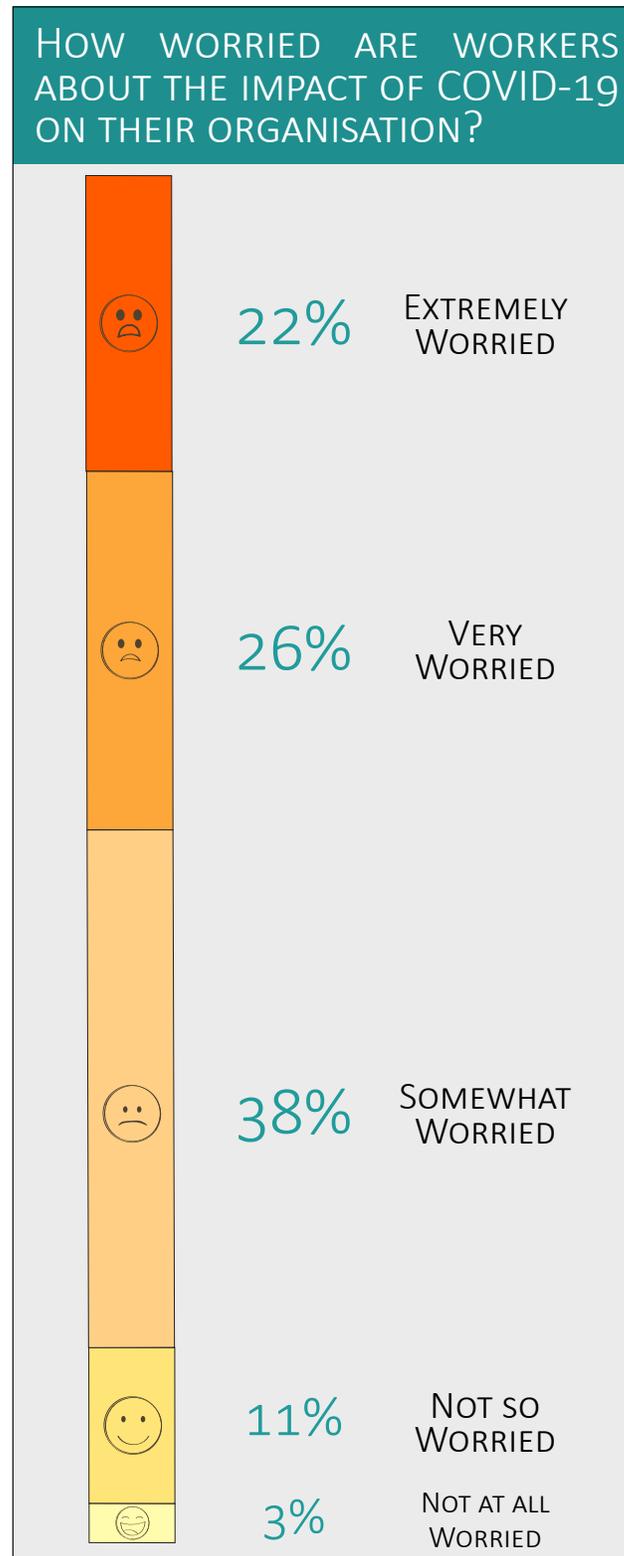
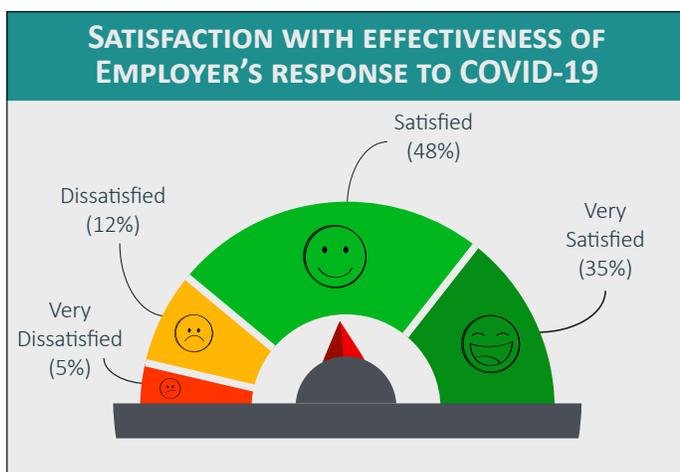
OTHER SECTORS

SATISFACTION WITH EMPLOYERS' COVID-19 RESPONSE

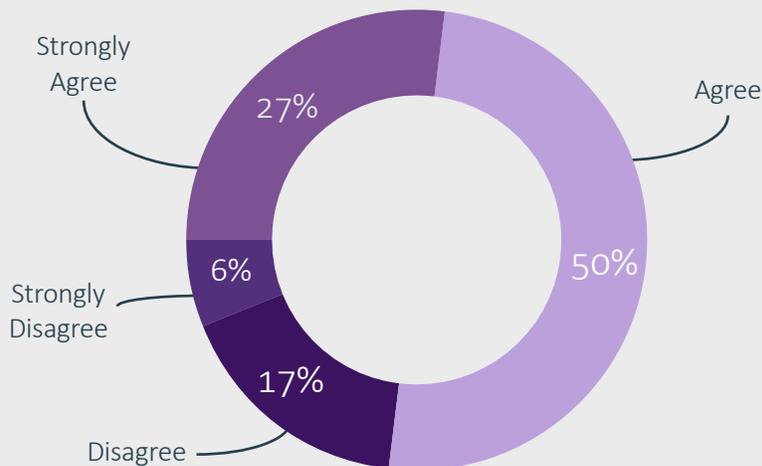
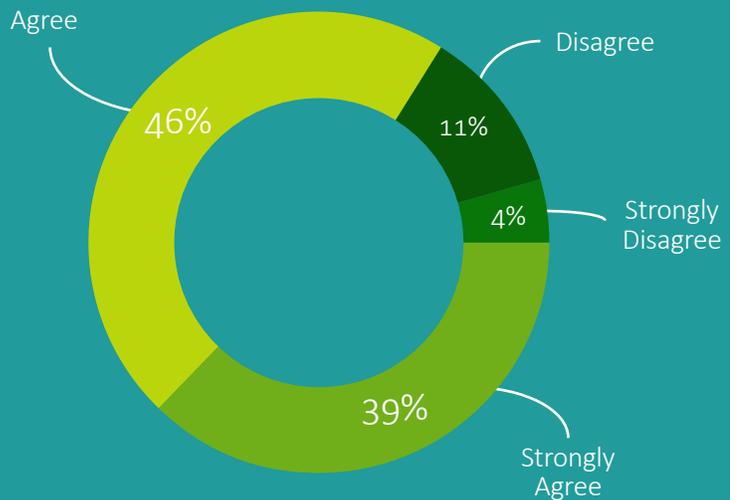
83% of Executives in our April survey indicated that they were seeing a decrease in demand for their company's products and/or services. 75% of Executives in the same survey expected that there would be a decrease in their projected 2020 revenues. Understandably, the majority of respondents (86%) are at least somewhat worried about the impact of COVID-19 on their organisations.

Overall, most employees (83%) are at least satisfied with the effectiveness of their employers' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and 85% of employees agree that their organisations care about their overall wellbeing.

In our March survey, 60% of organisations reported that they were maintaining daily communication with employees regarding COVID-19 and the company's response plan using multiple mediums such as email, posters/signage, text/instant messaging, and online meetings. 77% of employees agree that Management has kept them informed of the organisation's COVID-19 response and any adjustments.



“MANAGEMENT KEEPS ME INFORMED ABOUT THE ORGANISATION’S COVID-19 RESPONSE AND ANY ADJUSTMENTS.”



“MY ORGANISATION CARES ABOUT MY OVERALL WELLBEING.”

CONCLUSION

We found that there was much similarity in the employee experience and participants’ responses, regardless of job level or geography. Currently, there is great concern regarding the future of their respective organisations and for their own jobs. For many employees, especially younger professionals, COVID-19 represents the first time they are experiencing such collective economic uncertainty.

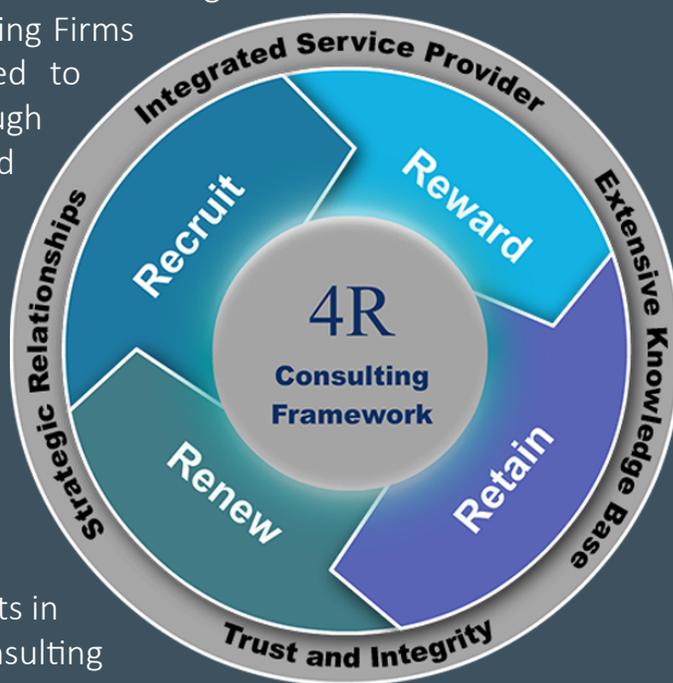
Management’s efforts to protect their employees’ wellbeing and keep them informed have been well-received by the employees themselves and found to be effective. This pandemic has undoubtedly affected the lives and livelihoods of Trinidad and Tobago’s employees and there appears to be a general consensus that COVID-19 will permanently alter the way we will conduct business and work in the future.

ABOUT HRC ASSOCIATES

Founded in 1990, HRC Associates is one of the leading Executive Recruitment & Management Consulting Firms in the Caribbean. We are deeply committed to providing quality services to our clients through adherence to the highest professional and ethical standards at all times.

Our 4R Consulting Framework – Recruit, Reward, Retain, and Renew allows us to offer customised and integrated recruitment and management consulting services focusing on the HR and Organisation Value Chain of our clients.

Our consultants and alliance partners are experts in translating strategy into action through a consulting based process that aligns the people, culture, organisation and work processes to your business' strategic intent.



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