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The relationship between career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction for hospitality students in times of Covid-19

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the antecedents and effects of hospitality students’ coping mechanisms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The relationship between career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction is explored to unveil students’ adaptability during times of crisis. The findings confirmed that hope is an important driver of resilience and life satisfaction. Despite all the negativity and uncertainty about jobs and careers during the COVID-19 pandemic, resilience has a double acting effect on the students’ life satisfaction via individual and community resilience. Critical implications for academic institutions and the hospitality industry are presented. As the industry recovers from the pandemic and moves toward normality, the potential impact of career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction on future job pursuit and career magnetism towards particular industry or organizations should be considered.

1. Introduction

During 2020, the COVID-19 virus has spread globally, forcing leaders and universities into drastic measures affecting how citizens and students interact socially, educationally, and occupationally (Zhai & Du, 2020). The disease’s unexpected and extensive outbreak continues its serious impact on all university operations, directly affecting all students’ lives (Lederer et al., 2021). Education institutions shut down their campuses, shifted to online education, and sent students home as campuses had become high-risk environments for COVID-19 transmission (Viner et al., 2020). The abrupt academic changes within national and international colleges caused severe repercussions of anxiety and psychological stress to students’ lives (Cao et al., 2020). Despite social distancing, interventions can effectively slow the spread of infection (Glass et al., 2006), they also increase students’ social isolation, influencing their psychological and mental health wellbeing (Van Bavel et al., 2020). Unsurprisingly, the COVID-19 crisis boosted students’ feelings of depression, anxiety, stress, loneliness, confusion about the future, loss of hope, and even suicidal thoughts (Elmer et al., 2020; Son et al., 2020).

Since the hospitality industry is heavily dependent on consumer mobility, the COVID-19 mandatory restrictions have critically affected hospitality and tourism students with additional challenges in finding jobs and internships during the pandemic (Dani et al., 2020), amplifying the adverse effects of insecurity within current and future workers (Baum & Hai, 2020). Notwithstanding, during moments of accentuated crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic psychological coping mechanisms become essential. Now more than before, cultivating hope becomes more revelatory (Mostafanezhad, 2020), as it is the sense of hope that assist individuals overcome difficult times with a future-looking perspective that triggers positive and forward-looking achievements (Snyder, 2002; Snyder et al., 2002).

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1991). Meanwhile, resilience can serve as a buffering factor against stress (Rushon et al., 2015). Especially during this unprecedented pandemic, hope-related thoughts can engage students and individuals in goal-related processes to maintain their personal and social wellbeing in their pursuit of life satisfaction (Bernardo & Mendoza, 2020). Therefore, understanding the antecedents and effects of the coping mechanisms of hope, and how they can influence hospitality students’ challenges and concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, is imperative not only to colleges and universities maintain their enrollments and revenue sources, but also to equip them with tools to continue acting as a vital source of competent graduates to nurture the tourism and hospitality industries growth in the years ahead.

The need for this understanding sets the theoretical positioning for this study, alongside the belief that tourism and hospitality educators have a critical role in keeping up their students’ resilience and hope, which influences students’ life satisfaction. Further, there is a need to understand how the higher education sector and the hospitality industry as a whole have born up under the pressures of the pandemic. That is, as well as the tourism businesses, institutions of higher education have also been significantly impacted by COVID-19. To cope with the stress and anxiety caused by COVID-19, college students had recourse to various self-help techniques and mechanisms with hope as part of the coping mechanisms (Son et al., 2020).

This study aims to investigate the antecedents and effects of coping mechanisms of hope and resilience and how they can affect hospitality and tourism students’ satisfaction with life. To test these relationships, this study presents an in-depth literature review of the theories and relationships involving career adaptability as an antecedent of individuals’ hope. Secondly, this study investigates the most relevant findings on how students’ hope effected their individual and community resilience. And thirdly, it provides evidence of studies hypothesizing the effects of individual and community resilience on the relationship between hope and individuals’ satisfaction with life. In this sense, the proposed model to test these relationships in Fig. 1 intends to understand how tourism and hospitality students’ perceptions of challenges, faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, can impact their ability to continue their studies, keep pursuing their careers, and look for future jobs.

2. Literature review

The career adaptability of hospitality students has been lately associated with their future work self-salience and proactive career behavior (Lu, 2020) and their career anxiety and future perspectives (Boo et al., 2021). Also, recent studies have reviewed the literature of all relationships that career adaptability could have had a significant influence (Chen et al., 2020; Rasyidi et al., 2021). To support the model suggested in the present study, among the most contemporary articles, Di Maggio et al. (2021) have found robust evidence that career adaptability is indirectly, through hope, related to life satisfaction. Furthermore, Santilli et al. (2020) revealed empirical evidence that career adaptability is directly and indirectly, through resilience, related to students’ life satisfaction.

The relationship between students’ career and hope during the COVID-19 pandemic has also been tested among hospitality students. For example, Zhong et al. (2021) found that hope is a powerful predictor for hospitality students’ career loyalty. Furthermore, the effects of hope have been vastly associated with individual and community resilience, which, in turn, can predict their life satisfaction. These positive relationships have been tested within elderly adults (Morandi & Ghodrati, 2020), homeless youths (Rehman et al., 2021), and within Latinx college students (Karaman et al., 2020). The positive effects of hope on resilience have been revealed as one of the most significant predecessors of people’s life satisfaction (Akbar et al., 2014; Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015; Beutel et al., 2010; Cohn et al., 2009; Ginevra et al., 2018; Karaman et al., 2020; Kirmani et al., 2015; Strauss et al., 2015; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Also, career adaptability has been revealed as a significant antecedent of hope (Santilli et al., 2014, 2017). Recent studies among adults with substance use disorder (Di Maggio et al., 2019), and middle school students (Santilli et al., 2020), have found that career adaptability, through the indirect relationship of hope and resilience, has a positive influence on people’s life satisfaction.

Several theories have associated career adaptability, hope, and resilience with life satisfaction, and the academic community has advanced various conceptual and perception-based research predicting the post-COVID-19 period in the hospitality industry (Gössling et al., 2020; Gretzel et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2020) and hospitality education sector (Qiu et al., 2020; Tiwari et al., 2020). There is a critical need to understand how hospitality students’ hope, career adaptability and resilience can influence their careers and their satisfaction with life, especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. To fill this gap the proposed constructs and hypothesized relationships are discussed below.

![Fig. 1. Proposed model and hypothesis.](image-url)
2.1. Career adaptability

Super and Knasel (1981) coined the term “readiness to cope with changing work and working conditions” as the first official definition of career adaptability (p. 195). Savickas (1997) describes career adaptability as an employee’s ability to manage his/her career development successfully. In this sense, the psychosocial construct of career adaptability denotes the resources individuals need to manage current and anticipated career transitions (Savickas, 1997, 2005). In career construction theory, adaptability resources aid in the formulation of adaptive behaviors that individuals direct. In other words, these resources are employed as self-regulation strategies or strengths which assist individuals in expanding, improving, and finally implementing their work self-concepts in occupational roles, which results in their personal work, career, and life advancement. Nowadays, job transitions are more likely, whether by choice or necessity, especially in light of the struggling work economy, such as the COVID-19 state (Rossier et al., 2012). When dealing with such situations, individuals must be able to adapt quickly and effectively to cope with more frequent work transitions. Being career adaptable offers a framework for how individuals see their futures and supports interventions that are based on individual needs (Rottinghaus et al., 2012). As a result, career adaptability significantly influences individuals’ hope-driven motivations (Santilli et al., 2014, 2017).

Career adaptability resources are formed by self-regulatory and psychosocial competencies that help individuals shape the adaptive strategies and actions that are geared towards their adaptation purposes (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). According to the career adaptability lifespan, life-space theory introduced by Savickas (1997), four self-regulatory and psychosocial competencies constitute the career adaptability construct. Individual differences, growth, self, and meaning are the four segments of the lifespan, life-space approach to understanding and intervening in career adaptability. They represent four perspectives on relevant aspects serving as a bridge construct to integrate the uncertainty engendered by observing vocational action from four different perspectives (Savickas, 1997). Therefore, career adaptability has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct since its inception, consisting of various dimensions that represent a variety of factors such as personality, motivation, readiness, strengths, habits, and attitudes (Hartung et al., 2008).

Following the four-dimensional approach, the career construction theory described career adaptability as the attitudes, habits, and competencies that people use to match themselves to jobs that are right for them (Savickas, 2002). The four adaptability dimensions, also known as the 4Cs, are concern, control, confidence, and curiosity. Concern deals with being aware of and planning for the necessity of a future vocational path. Control is defined as the subjective feeling of self-governing and decisiveness in planning for a future vocational path. Curiosity is defined as the tendency to explore one’s environment. And finally, confidence is the subjective feeling of being capable of solving concrete career problems. A closer understanding of students’ career adaptability is a powerful tool to investigate how they handle their career transitions, career resilience, and hope (Buyukgoze-Kavas, 2016; Ginevra et al., 2018; Karaman et al., 2020; Wilkins et al., 2014; Xu et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has established an extremely stressful situation, especially for hospitality and tourism-related students, due to increasing conditions of job insecurity, job loss, unemployment, and underemployment (Kang et al., 2021). In this sense, the investigation of career dimensions is needed to understand how students’ career adaptability can influence their hope. First, concern is a critical variable amidst a disease pandemic that temporarily closed almost every hospitality activity (Boo et al., 2021; Pathak & Joshi, 2020; Zhong et al., 2021). Moreover, students need to grasp a thorough understanding of their future endeavors, anticipate what may lay ahead, and formulate preparatory strategies and pathways for what might come next (Strauss et al., 2012; Sverko & Babarović, 2019). Control is considered relevant during stressful situations because in addressing self-discipline, effort, and motivational perspectives, individuals may assume the responsibility for shaping themselves and their environments in order to confront upcoming issues and undertake adaptation steps (Savickas, 2002; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). A sense of curiosity can serve as the fuel that allows an individual to pursue avenues of personal and professional knowledge that increase his understanding of the environment in which he seeks to thrive (Hirschi et al., 2015; Savickas, 2005). Finally, students’ confidence is equally imperative to understand and learning new skills should be engaging and comforting. Students should build and sustain the confidence to make advantageous, viable choices – and ultimately seek to assure happiness in their life (Johnston et al., 2013; Jung et al., 2015; Walker & Tracey, 2012).

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the academic literature had widely employed the hospitality setting to investigate employees’ career adaptability. Rasheed et al. (2020) surveyed 4100 frontline employees in the hotel industry in China to reveal that career adaptability is negatively related to employee turnover intentions via orientation to happiness. Karatepe and Oluğbade (2017) found contrasting results among 287 full-time frontline employees of an African five-star hotel, suggesting that career adaptability triggers turnover intentions, while it has no bearing on career satisfaction. Safavi and Bouzari (2019) conducted a study with 193 frontline employees in five-star hotels in North Cyprus in three different waves through a two-week time lag finding strong evidence that career adaptability influences employees’ competency and varies widely even among the same company workers. Another study by de Guzman and Choi (2013) found significant evidence of the strong relationship between career adaptability and employability skills for students majoring in hospitality and tourism. Notwithstanding, there is no evident previous research regarding the hospitality field’s exploration of students’ dimensions of career adaptability on students’ hope.

2.2. Hope

The concept of hope has engaged the attention of researchers and practitioners in psychology, medicine, and sociology for at least the last 20 years, and a relatively universal agreement on the essential characteristics of the concept of hope has been achieved. Although hope is considered multidimensional by the majority of researchers, the vast majority of studies employing this concept refer to hope as a cognitive capacity that encompasses both agency thinking, that is, the will to succeed, and pathway thinking, that is, the
perceived ability to identify and pursue the path to success (Snyder, 2000; Snyder et al., 1991). Therefore, hope is associated with the research and conceptualization of the perception that one can reach desired goals (Snyder, 2002).

Snyder (2002) also proposed the idea of hope theory. Viewing goals as the central organizing principle behind human behavior formed the backbone component of the hope theory (Snyder, 2002). Cognitively, the hope in Snyder’s model consists of two separate elements. The first element is the individual capacity to generate successful pathways by which goals can be attained. However, goals cannot be achieved just by creating pathways. The second element is the motivational component since individuals should have confidence in choosing the right pathways with which to reach their desired goals (Snyder, 2002). Therefore, hopeful thoughts reflect the belief that the selected pathways to desired goals can be used to develop, sustain, or increase the motivation to achieve. According to the hope theory, the motivational component is the agency, which refers to the perception of having the capacity to utilize one’s pathways to achieve desired goals. There is a consensus that hopeful people are prone to using words such as “I can do this” and “I will not give up” (Kirmeni et al., 2015). In this sense, when hope is accessed, it is possible to better cope with a stressful situation in that the expectation of a positive outcome is promising. Given such an expectation, the individual is motivated to act in the face of uncertainty. Individuals possessing elevated levels of hope may view stressors as more challenging (rather than threatening) and thus are more disposed and motivated to resolve stressful issues in favor of solutions.

Snyder’s model consists of two separate components: the cognitive component and the motivational component. The cognitive component includes the individual’s capacity to generate successful pathways to achieve desired goals, which is also known as the perception that one can reach desired goals (Snyder, 2002). This perception is formed through the hope theory. The cognitive component can be divided into two parts: the first part is the individual’s capacity to generate successful pathways to achieve desired goals, and the second part is the individual’s capacity to utilize the selected pathways to achieve desired goals. The second part is also known as the motivational component, which refers to the perception of having the capacity to utilize one’s pathways to achieve desired goals. There is a consensus that hopeful people are prone to using words such as “I can do this” and “I will not give up” (Kirmeni et al., 2015). In this sense, when hope is accessed, it is possible to better cope with a stressful situation in that the expectation of a positive outcome is promising. Given such an expectation, the individual is motivated to act in the face of uncertainty. Individuals possessing elevated levels of hope may view stressors as more challenging (rather than threatening) and thus are more disposed and motivated to resolve stressful issues in favor of solutions.

Several hospitality-related studies have adopted the concept of hope, using both hope theory or as a component of the psychological capital construct, to investigate students’ or workers’ behavior towards their ability to generate successful pathways to achieve their goals. For example, Yavas et al. (2013) used 183 full-time frontline employees working in 5-star and 4-star hotels in Northern Cyprus to find strong evidence that hope significantly moderates the effects of stressors and exhaustion on frontline hotel employees turnover intentions. In their study, the authors suggested that hospitality managers consider candidates’ hope levels during employee selection and hiring. Another study conducted by Rehman and Mubashar (2017) with 200 employees from different hotels of Lahore, Pakistan, found similar results, revealing that hope and optimism moderated the relationship between job stress and turnover intentions. Also, Paek et al. (2015) surveyed 312 frontline staff from 15 five-star hotels in Seoul, Korea, finding that individuals with high psychological capital (which includes hope) are more engaged with their work and more likely to display job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. Despite these previous studies, there is a lack of investigations on the antecedents and effects of hope on hospitality students, particularly amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the construct of hope has yet to be proposed to mediate the relationship between students’ career adaptability and resilience. In this sense, this study proposes to use hope as the critical construct linking components of students’ career adaptability (i.e., concern, control, curiosity and confidence) to their individual resilience, community resilience, and finally to their overall satisfaction with life.

Beyond the hospitality setting, the relationship between career adaptability and hope was empirically tested in few but revelatory studies among high school students. While Wilkins et al. (2014) and Strauss et al. (2015) have found that hope is an antecedent of the four dimensions of career adaptability (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence); other studies supported the opposite causal relationship. For example, Santilli et al. (2017) found significant evidence on 726 Italian and 533 young Swiss students that career adaptability positively influences students’ hope and optimism, which, in turn, also positively affected students’ life satisfaction. Similar results were found by Santilli et al. (2014) in their investigation of workers with mild disabilities. They found that the four components of career adaptability (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) were strong predictors of workers’ hope, which, in turn, mediated the relationship between workers’ career adaptability and life satisfaction.

Based on the arguments above, and aiming to explore how the dimensions of career adaptability can influence hospitality students’ hope amidst the most severe disease pandemic of the century, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1. The concern dimension of career adaptability has a positive relationship with students’ hope
H2. The control dimension of career adaptability has a positive relationship with students’ hope
H3. The curiosity dimension of career adaptability has a positive relationship with students’ hope
H4. The confidence dimension of career adaptability has a positive relationship with students’ hope

2.3. Resilience

Resilience has been examined from various disciplines, and it is generally defined as the ability to deal with instability and remain successful while coping with changes (Luthans et al., 2006). Other scholars described resilience as the reinforcing capacity to persist (Senbeto & Hon, 2020) or the positive adaptation despite adversity (Kirmeni et al., 2015). Resilience has also been defined as a state of mind that helps the person become actualized and promotes altruism (Richardson, 2002). Moreover, resilience in education is also defined as “the ability to succeed academically despite presence of stress and obstacles that makes success difficult” (Kwek et al., 2013, p. 113). In a complex and changing environment, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the state of personal resiliency is of particular importance because it dictates how individuals respond and adjust (Hartley, 2012). This become central because of the COVID-19 pandemic, given the students exposure to severe uncertainties, increased academic pressures, social isolation, and financial challenges among others.

One perspective of resiliency was given by Werner (1995), who conceptualized resiliency in three ways. First, as intellectual, social, emotional, and moral outcomes despite a high-risk status. Second, a sustained capability in challenging circumstances. Third, coming to terms with emotional recovery from previous abuse. Similarly, Rutter (1979), one of the pioneer’s scholars on resilience, argued that resiliency factors occur at three levels, individual, family, and community level. At the individual level, resilient behavior comes when individuals, driven by hopefulness or optimism, believe that they have or can reach life goals. Since it is considered difficult to
segregate the effect of hope and optimism on individual resilience, scholars have suggested relating the hope’s role to the individual resilience level (Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2009). At the family level, how the family traditions, social and economic resources link and communicate internally and externally may help individuals pursue resources to find solutions to difficult situations (Ungar, 2011). Individuals and families are interconnected and affected by their culture and physical environment when it comes to community resilience. As a result, any resilient mechanism identified at the individual or family level must be viewed concerning the cultural context in which the individual or family resides and vice versa (Distelberg et al., 2015).

Academic studies within the hospitality realm have focused on investigating hotel workers’ resilience, especially during market turbulence and difficult situations. For example, Senbeto and Hon (2020) investigated 357 employees in the hospitality industry in a developing country, Ethiopia, finding that employee resilience mediates the relationship between market turbulence and service innovation, making this mediation stronger for hotels with higher readiness for change than for those with lower readiness for change. Abukhaiti et al. (2020) found empirical evidence on 313 Dubai frontline five-star hotels indicating that their employees with a high level of curiosity, focus on opportunity, and resilience tends to significantly increase the likelihood of their career adaptability.

Resilience has also been studied as a dynamic phenomenon involving internal factors such as individual disposition and attitude (i.e., hope and optimism) and external factors such as group and community environment. Furthermore, the resilience principle has been tested in human settings to see how people cope with pain and adversity by being adaptable and resilient. The principle has also been used to clarify people’s ability to recover from traumatic and adverse events (Van Breda, 2001). Employing the resilience principle, previous scholars have tested the causal effect of hope on resilience. Kirmani et al. (2015) found significant positive relationships between hope and resilience investigating Social Science, Arts, and Management college students. Besides, Strauss et al. (2015) also found strong evidence of the mediating role of resilience on the relationship between hope and task adaptability within a service-related industry worker.

In the hospitality industry, resilience has gained a higher significance since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The combination of shutdowns, exposure to the virus, deteriorated working conditions, and intense media coverage altered and weakened the perceptions of the hospitality industry as a stable work environment. In addition to facing health and safety challenges, numerous hospitality students experienced uncertainties regarding their future career (Davahl et al., 2020). Previous work have found that the effects of resilience on self-esteem and academic performance among hospitality and tourism undergraduate students plays positive role by amending students’ self-esteem and academic performance (Kwek et al., 2013). Therefore, highlighting the importance of students resilience for academic success.

Following Rutter (1979), this study conceptualizes resilience in two different levels: community and individual resilience. Community resilience is the ability of communities to thrive in the face of changing and challenging situations (Lindberg & Searingen, 2020). In this study, the community means the hospitality industry, and the challenging situation is the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovering, perseverance and coping themes generate extensive coverage within the community resilience literature. Furthermore, the literature on community resilience has focused on resilience in the face of negative changes, which are also presented as stressors or disruptions (Lyons et al., 2016), and the COVID-19 outbreak is a perfect fit in this context. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H5. Students’ hope has a positive relationship with community resilience**

Individual resilience is the ability of individuals to thrive in the face of extreme adversities and challenging situations (Lindberg & Searingen, 2020). In this study, the hospitality college students and the challenging situation are the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, concepts of resilience at the group and individual levels share several parallels (e.g., thriving in the face of stressors). In both institutions, there are initiatives to better understand and help foster factors that enhance resilience and significant variations in how stress factors manifest at different levels (Zimmerman, 2013). To test these differences among community and individual resilience, this study also proposes the following hypothesis:

**H6. Students’ hope has a positive relationship with individual resilience**

### 2.4. Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is associated with the subjective feeling of contentment, pleasure, wellbeing, a sense of accomplishment, utility, and belonging, as well as a lack of anxiety, disappointment, or concern (Kirmani et al., 2015). Some of the earlier psychological and sociological concepts based on life satisfaction suggest our lives’ ultimate goal (Bradburn, 1969). Life satisfaction can be further specified in terms of general emotional functioning, which is conceptualized in the construct of overall subjective wellbeing that is formed by two characteristics: (a) having a high level of positive effects and low level of negative effects, and (b) experiencing these emotions regularly over time (Diener et al., 1985). Life satisfaction is strongly related to personality traits, and engaging in physical or mental activities tends to lead individuals’ life satisfaction to be more stable and lasting for more extended periods of time (Lyubomirsky, 2001).

The theoretical components of life satisfaction have often been assessed in terms of a person’s wellbeing, incorporating individuals’ objective standards of living and functional abilities. According to Bailey et al. (2007), two theoretical constructs that have attracted abundant attention in theoretical frameworks in assessing and predicting life satisfaction are hope and optimism. Hope and optimism both require cognitive processes based on valued, perceived outcomes. Thus, hope has copious, historical, emotional, and intuitive research literature, which has also been developed on spiritual, existential, and moral levels (Snyder et al., 2001).

Unsurprisingly, there is a large body of literature associating hope as an antecedent of life satisfaction (Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015; Bailey et al., 2007; Hirschi, 2014; Karaman et al., 2020; Kirmani et al., 2015; Santilli et al., 2014; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). In
particular, using college students as background, all Hirschi (2014), Kirmani et al. (2015), Bailey et al. (2007), and Karaman et al. (2020) found strong evidence that hope directly and indirectly affects students’ life satisfaction. Similar findings were revealed in studies using hospitality workers as the main sample frame. For example, Karatepe and Karadas (2015) investigated hotel frontline employees in Romania to find that optimism, resilience, self-efficacy and hope are strong predictors of hotel employees’ job, career, and life satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed to test the extent that hope is positively associated with hospitality students’ life satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic:

H7. Students’ hope has a positive relationship with life satisfaction

Several studies have also correlated the concepts of resilience with individuals’ wellbeing and satisfaction with life (Akbar et al., 2014; Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015; Beutel et al., 2010; Cohn et al., 2009; Ginevra et al., 2018; Karaman et al., 2020; Kirmani et al., 2015; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). A good example using university students is a study conducted by Cohn et al. (2009), daily journaling college students for a month-long experiment and finding robust evidence that resilience mediates the effect between positive emotions and life satisfaction. In the hospitality field, some studies have associated resilience and hope mediating the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and life satisfaction (Kaplan & Biçkes, 2013); and resilience as a predictor of job/life satisfaction (Alola & Alola, 2018). During the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitality-related studies associating resilience to life satisfaction have focused on organization resilience (Pathak & Joshi, 2020) or job insecurity/performance (Aguiar-Quintana et al., 2021), with no evidence of robust findings measuring the direct relationship between students’ individual and community resilience and their life satisfaction. In response to the lack of significant findings in the hospitality field, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H8. Community resilience has a positive relationship with students’ life satisfaction

H9. Individual resilience has a positive relationship with students’ life satisfaction

3. Methodology

3.1. Measures

A 12-item career adaptability scale was adapted from Ginevra et al. (2018) and Savickas and Porfeli (2012), using the four dimensions (i.e., concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) of scale-short form construction and validation from Maggiori et al. (2017). Each dimension used a 3-item scale. Resilience was measured with a 10-items scale, divided into community resilience (5-items scale) and individual resilience (5-items scale), all adapted from Lindberg and Searingen (2020), Ginevra et al. (2018) and Connor and Davidson (2003). The measurements for hope were adapted from Snyder et al. (1991), Santilli et al. (2014), and Kirmani et al. (2015) using a 12-items scales for adult dispositional hope. Satisfaction with life was measured with a 3-item scale adapted from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD. Publishing & Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013, p. 253). The first two items, “How satisfied you have been with your life overall, considering all aspects” and “How satisfied you have been with the well-being of the hospitality industry and its culture” captured the student’s evaluative judgement of how their life is going. This was measured with a 5 point Likert scale ranging from “not at all satisfied” to “completely satisfied”. The third item, “To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?”, captured the eudemonic concept of weather the things the students do in their life are worthwhile. This was also a 5 point Likert scale ranging from “not at all worthwhile” to “completely worthwhile”. All three measures must be presented as a composite index (OECD. Publishing & Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013, p.253).

In addition to the measures related to the theoretical model, the survey also incorporated questions to explore a deeper understanding of the most critical challenges faced by hospitality and tourism-related college students. The items measured the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the student population in a variety of ways and were adapted from a recent college students’ research and assessment report (PNSA, 2020). The measures included the effects of COVID-19 on student’s wellbeing and personal life. For the effects on students’ wellbeing, participants rated statements about the current effects of COVID-19 on wellbeing with six items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “much better” to “much worst.” For the effects of COVID-19 on personal life, participants rated statements about their level of concerns of the effects of COVID-19 on their personal life with 11 items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “not at all concerned” to “extremely concerned.”

3.2. Sample and data analysis

The sample included hospitality undergraduate students from a large public university located in the Southeast USA. An online survey was sent to a convenience sample of 459 students by e-mail, and they were asked to respond to the questionnaire during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period (May/2020 to August 2020).

The data sample obtained was relatively clean, and after minor data cleaning procedures following steps as indicated by Hair et al. (2017) total sample was 340 observations. Path analysis with maximum likelihood estimation was used to evaluate associations among variables of career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction. In a hypothesized model, all four dimensions of career adaptability are predictors of hope, and hope was a predictor of resilience and life satisfaction. Evaluation of model-data fit was based on the following indices: $\chi^2$/df comprehensive fit index CFI, Incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI) with cutoff points = .9 to1 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) ≤0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1995).
4. Results

4.1. Demographics and student’s wellbeing evaluation

On average, students’ income before COVID-19 was $372.71 and after the start of the pandemic, $140.51. Females represented 73% percent of the sample, which is acceptable since females are dominant in the hospitality industry higher education (Basurto–Barcia & Ricaurte-Quijano, 2017; Neil, 2020). The largest major was hospitality management (56.2%), followed by entertainment management (23.8%), event management (21.2%), and food and beverage was only (3.5%). The general perceptions about COVID-19 on students’ wellbeing revealed that more than sixty percent of participants indicated that their psychological wellbeing is worse or much worse than before the pandemic. Also, more than seventy percent of participants also reported a decrease in income because of the pandemic. The other two most critical concerns in which students revealed a worse or much worse situation were family’s psychological wellbeing (48.2%) and ability to pursue academic studies (43.5%). On the other hand, less than thirty percent of students reported worsening concerns regarding their overall personal health or their family’s health. The complete results are presented in Table 1.

The items to measure the impacts of COVID-19 on students’ personal life revealed that more than seventy-five percent of students were moderate to extremely concerned about the availability of opportunities related to their career aspirations. In addition, more than fifty percent of the sample indicated a high level of concerns about the availability of job opportunities outside the classroom (i.e., internships, events). Furthermore, about thirty percent of students indicated an increasing concern to pay their housing bills (37.6%), access mental and physical care (34.5%), availability of opportunities for on-campus employment (33.5%), ability to pay their tuition (30.0%), and having access to resources to complete their coursework (27.6%). Notwithstanding, less than fifteen percent of students demonstrated a high level of concern to secure their access to food (13.2%) and to have access to transportation (11.2%). Refer to Table 2 for the complete list.

4.2. Path analysis

Assumptions of linearity, multivariate normality, outliers and low multicollinarity in path analysis were verified (Garson, 2013; Lleras, 2005). Table 3 and Table 4 show the preliminary correlation and descriptive results for the four dimensions of career adaptability, revealing a strong relationship between hope and individual resilience. However, the results demonstrate that outside of a confidence dimension, there was no correlation with community resilience. Hope has a strong relationship with both types of resilience and life satisfaction. Evaluation of model-data fit was based on the following indices: $\chi^2 = 73.42$ df = 13 $p = .000$ comprehensive fit index CFI = 0.961, Incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.962, Tucker Lewis index, NFI = 0.95 Root mean square error of approximations (RMSEA) = 0.089. All reliability indices (Cronbach’s Alpha $\alpha$) were over 0.7, indicating good reliability (Hair et al., 2017; Hu & Bentler, 1995). A correlation matrix shows that all correlations are under 0.85 thus validating a discriminant validity (Baggozzi & Phillips, 1982; Stankov et al., 1994) and common method bias (Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991) with correlations below cut of point of .9.

4.3. Hypothesis

On the proposed model, it means, with the presence of all four dimensions of career adaptability, the hypotheses 1 and 3 were confirmed ($\beta = .25$, and $\beta = .30$ respectively, with $p < .01$), meaning that only the career adaptability concern dimension and curiosity dimension have a significant positive effect on hope. Hypotheses 2 and 4 were not confirmed ($\beta = .09$ and $\beta = .03$ respectively), meaning that career adaptability dimensions of control and confidence did not significantly affect hope in the proposed model. Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 were confirmed ($\beta = .14$, $p < .05$, $\beta = .44$, $p < .01$, $\beta = .40$, $p < .01$), where hope has a significant positive effect on resilience and life satisfaction, respectively. Lastly, Hypothesis 8 and 9 confirmed that resilience had a significant and positive effect on life satisfaction ($\beta = .30$, $p < .01$, $\beta = .13$, $p < .05$). Fig. 2 shows the path model results and Table 5 illustrates the standardized path coefficients.

5. Discussion

This study examined the antecedents and effects of coping mechanisms of hope and resilience within hospitality and tourism students. More specifically, it explored the relationship between career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction in hospitality students in order to unveil the students’ adaptability during times of crisis. The authors hypothesized that in the context of hospitality

### Table 1
Current concerns of the effects of COVID-19 on students.

| Items                          | Much Better | Somewhat better | Same     | Somewhat worst | Much Worse |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|----------------|------------|
| Your income generating ability| 1.5%        | 6.5%            | 17.7%    | 29.8%          | 44.5%      |
| Your overall psychological well-being| 5.3%        | 8.2%            | 23.2%    | 45.6%          | 17.6%      |
| Your family’s psychological well-being| 5.3%        | 5.3%            | 41.2%    | 38.2%          | 10.0%      |
| Your ability to pursue your academic studies| 4.4%        | 12.6%           | 39.4%    | 33.5%          | 10.0%      |
| Your overall personal health| 6.2%        | 13.9%           | 52.4%    | 25.1%          | 2.4%       |
| Your family’s health         | 4.2%        | 7.4%            | 67.7%    | 17.2%          | 3.6%       |
students, career adaptability has a positive relationship with hope, hope has a positive relationship with resilience, and resilience has a positive relationship with life satisfaction. The results (partially) support the relationship between career adaptability and hope. Essentially, career adaptability is more relevant nowadays as it encompasses competencies that allow students to cope with any current

Table 2
Future concerns of the effect of COVID-19 on personal life.

| Items                                                                 | Not at all concerned | Slightly concerned | Somewhat concerned | Moderately concerned | Extremely concerned |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Availability of opportunities related to my career aspirations        | 4.7%                 | 8.6%               | 10.6%              | 27.1%                | 49.0%               |
| Having opportunities outside the classroom - internships              | 8.8%                 | 9.7%               | 10.9%              | 24.4%                | 46.2%               |
| Opportunities outside the classroom - events                          | 17.1%                | 13.6%              | 22.4%              | 19.2%                | 27.7%               |
| Housing (e.g., paying rent, bills)                                    | 28.8%                | 16.2%              | 17.4%              | 16.2%                | 21.5%               |
| Opportunities outside the classroom - student organizations           | 24.2%                | 17.4%              | 22.7%              | 13.0%                | 22.7%               |
| Access to health care (physical and mental)                           | 27.7%                | 19.5%              | 18.3%              | 17.7%                | 16.8%               |
| Availability of opportunities for on campus employment                | 38.2%                | 13.8%              | 14.4%              | 13.5%                | 20.0%               |
| Ability to pay tuition/fees                                           | 28.2%                | 22.9%              | 18.8%              | 16.5%                | 13.5%               |
| Having access to resources to complete coursework                      | 25.9%                | 27.6%              | 18.8%              | 19.1%                | 8.5%                |
| Securing access to food                                               | 55.3%                | 20.6%              | 10.9%              | 7.1%                 | 6.2%                |
| Having access to transportation                                       | 66.2%                | 14.7%              | 7.9%               | 4.7%                 | 6.5%                |

Table 3
Items and descriptive statistics.

| Items                                      | Mean   | SD     | Cronbach α |
|--------------------------------------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Career Adaptability                        | 0.77   |        |            |
| **Concern**                                |        |        |            |
| Thinking about what my future will be like. | 3.29   | 1.10   |            |
| Preparing for the future.                  | 3.18   | 1.00   |            |
| Becoming aware of the educational choices that I must make. | 3.42   | 0.96   |            |
| **Control**                                | 0.77   |        |            |
| Making decisions by myself.                | 3.63   | 1.00   |            |
| Taking responsibility for my actions       | 4.10   | 0.82   |            |
| Counting on myself.                        | 3.83   | 0.98   |            |
| **Curiosity**                              | 0.72   |        |            |
| Looking for opportunities to grow as a person. | 3.84   | 0.95   |            |
| Investigating options before making a choice. | 3.88   | 0.94   |            |
| Observing different ways of doing things.  | 3.74   | 0.94   |            |
| **Confidence**                             | 0.77   |        |            |
| Taking care to do things well.             | 4.00   | 0.92   |            |
| Learning new skills.                       | 3.70   | 0.99   |            |
| Working up to my ability.                  | 3.81   | 0.91   |            |
| **Hope**                                   | 0.80   |        |            |
| I energetically pursue my goals.           | 4.05   | 0.83   |            |
| I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me | 3.88   | 0.80   |            |
| Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem | 3.90   | 0.75   |            |
| My past experiences have prepared me well for my future               | 4.06   | 0.87   |            |
| I’ve been pretty successful in life        | 3.73   | 0.87   |            |
| I meet the goals that I set for myself     | 3.73   | 0.81   |            |
| **Resilience Scale**                       | 0.74   |        |            |
| **Community resilience**                   |        |        |            |
| During the pandemic, the hospitality industry will be able to provide key services to employees | 2.69   | 1.06   |            |
| If the pandemic changes over time, with more cases, the hospitality industry will be able to adapt | 3.25   | 1.01   |            |
| The hospitality industry will be able to recover if there’s more cases due to COVID-19 | 2.93   | 1.01   |            |
| When a problem occurs like the pandemic, the hospitality community members are able to deal with it | 3.19   | 0.95   |            |
| The hospitality industry is able to “bounce back” from downturns in the local economy | 3.53   | 0.94   |            |
| **Individual resilience**                  | 0.78   |        |            |
| I could cope with the pandemic in my community                           | 3.46   | 0.95   |            |
| I can deal with any emergencies that might occur                        | 3.62   | 0.90   |            |
| I can get through difficult times because I’ve experienced them before | 3.79   | 0.91   |            |
| My belief in myself gets me through hard times                          | 3.73   | 0.92   |            |
| **Life Satisfaction**                       | 0.78   |        |            |
| How satisfied you have been with your life overall, considering all aspects | 3.68   | 0.95   |            |
| How satisfied you have been with the wellbeing of the hospitality industry and its culture | 3.44   | 0.95   |            |
| To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile? | 3.59   | 1.03   |            |
or anticipated future changes occurring for their career (Xu et al., 2020) and, ultimately, for their life satisfaction.

Our findings are in line with previous studies and uphold that two specific career adaptability dimensions (concern for the future and a fervent curiosity to explore and acquire knowledge) serve as individual resources to engage, participate, and adapt to an unforeseen crisis (i.e., the Covid-19 pandemic) with the potential to negatively impact working conditions, job prospects, academic life, and personal life. From an academic point of view, this is important because successful or unsuccessful career adaptability can influence students in the belief that they can reach their desired life goals (Snyder, 2002) and that their educational experience can effectively contribute to that adaptability.

This study also hypothesized and confirmed that students’ hope is an important driver of resilience and life satisfaction. More importantly, it confirms that hope has significance for individual and community resilience. This means that the students’ cognitive capacity regarding agency thinking and pathway thinking serves as a mechanism to pursue a path forward to success via greater resilience. This, then, reflects a student’s capacity to recover from uncertainty and prevail over changes that might otherwise thwart his adaptability. As for life satisfaction, it was determined that hope was positively related with life satisfaction above and beyond the effects of resilience. Consistent with prior findings using college students, the current study also supports the view that hope is a construct with the ability to significantly and positively impact university students’ life satisfaction (Bailey et al., 2007; Hirschi, 2014; Karaman et al., 2020; Kirmani et al., 2015). Moreover, community and individual resilience serve as pillars to safeguard students’ life

Table 4
Correlation and descriptive analysis results.

| Items          | 1  | 2  | 3  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | Mean | SD | α  |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|----|
| Concern        | .371** | .392** | .326** | .409** | .159** | .200** | .273** | 3.29 | 0.85 | 0.77 |
| Control        | .562** | .546** | .362** | 0.68  | .301** | .172** | 3.85  | 0.78 | 0.77 |
| Curiosity      | .680** | .462** | 0.011  | .298** | .272** | 3.81  | 0.76  | 0.72 |
| Concern        | .359** | .359** | .103   | .253** | .253** | 3.83  | 0.78  | 0.77 |
| Hope           | .138*  | .138*  | .448** | .494** | 3.89  | 0.57  | 0.80  |
| Com. Resilience| 1    | .317** | .398** | 3.11  | 0.74  | 0.74  |
| Ind. Resilience| 1    | .398** | 3.75  | 0.65  | 0.78  |
| Life Satisfaction| 1   | .398** | 3.56  | 0.78  | 0.78  |

***p < .01; **p < .05.

Table 5
Standardized path coefficients.

| Relationship | Standardized β | Standard Error | Critical Ratio |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Concern → Hope | 0.25*** | 0.03 | 4.9 |
| Control → Hope | 0.09  | 0.04 | 1.4 |
| Curiosity → Hope | 0.30** | 0.05 | 4.3 |
| Confidence → Hope | 0.03  | 0.05 | 0.5 |
| Hope → C. Resilience | 0.14** | 0.07 | 2.5 |
| Hope → I. Resilience | 0.44*** | 0.06 | 8.6 |
| C. Resilience → Satisfaction | 0.30** | 0.07 | 5.9 |
| I. Resilience → Satisfaction | 0.13** | 0.05 | 3.2 |
| Hope → Satisfaction | 0.40*** | 0.06 | 8.2 |

***p < .01; **p < .05.

Fig. 2. Path model results.
satisfaction. In the case of hospitality students, both individual resilience and community resilience can have a positive effect on life satisfaction. This is noteworthy because it demonstrates the importance of a “hospitality community” to help students cope with external stress and disturbances as a result of the current pandemic (Adger, 2000). This unique relationship seems to provide not only engagement opportunities for students but also resources that will help them thrive in a volatile environment that is representative of uncertainty and unpredictability (Magis, 2010).

5.1. Practical implications

The findings from this study have implications for academic institutions and industry. Universities and industry must maintain open communications that provide constructive responses for critical changes occurring in the workforce. This circumstance presents opportunities for creating mentorship programs designed to enhance positive relationships with employers and/or industry leaders, universities, and students. Such relationships could link student adaptability needs and concerns with employer awareness of student reactions to crises such as COVID-19, as well as aiding universities in forcing adjustments that might counteract the consequences that crises compel. Partnerships between universities and employers are crucial for the creation of programs that help students become more adaptable. Certainly, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the nature of work and has caused a distinct uncertainty that makes dependence on adaptability skills crucial. Student services, academic advisors, and career counselors are encouraged to create and implement professional development programs to assist students with interviewing techniques, resume writing, and innovative internship opportunities that foster new skills to support the challenges faced from COVID-19 and improve their overall career adaptability (Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991; Lu, 2020).

The impact of career adaptability suggests that hospitality students must receive support to tap into the vital hope and resilience qualities that could strengthen confidence in their ability to seek and gain goals that could contribute to their overall life satisfaction. For example, hospitality schools should create communication and support systems to clarify pandemic induced experiences, provide assistance in anchoring their beliefs through regular messages and facilitate online meetings that will help students reorganize their personal biases and broaden their perspectives. University communications should encourage students to seek their support systems, and peer-to-peer coaching that will encourage that hope and strengthen their resilience (Thomas & Asselin, 2018).

Lastly, by developing and fostering hope and resilience, organizations can help mitigate unwelcome behaviors such as procrastination, indecision, or indifference from hospitality students. Moreover, the overarching goals should be to guide students to cultivate hope and resilience that help them carve out and achieve their future goals, which then contribute to greater satisfaction with life.

5.2. Theoretical implications

The study has several theoretical contributions. This is the first study that investigates the effects of coping mechanisms of resilience and hope in hospitality students’ satisfaction with life during challenging times of COVID-19 pandemic. Second, the proposed model identified the strengths of key dimensions of career adaptability (i.e., concern and curiosity) that affects hospitality and tourism students’ hope. Third, it was discovered that resilience has double acting effect on the students’ life satisfaction, via individual and community resilience. Despite all the negativity about jobs and careers in hospitality, our findings demonstrate the benefits from community resilience. This finding emphasizes that hospitality workers are well connected and form a cohesive group that supports each other during challenging times. Therefore, filling a gap to better understand how adaptability and coping mechanisms of hope and resilience positively affects students in the higher education sector of tourism and hospitality.

6. Limitations and future research

Despite this study’s contributions to the literature, some limitations should be considered. First, the respondents were selected from only one hospitality program located in a major tourism destination, indicating that the profile might not be generalizable to other hospitality programs. Second, the sample was made up of students whose income-generating opportunities were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and who also demonstrated concern about their future career aspirations. Therefore, additional empirical research becomes necessary to assess the impact of COVID-19 on students’ hope, resilience, and adaptability across different institutions and geographic areas. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are needed to investigate the long-term effect of the pandemic on hospitality students’ life satisfaction. More importantly, as the industry emerges from the pandemic and moves toward normality, the potential impact of career adaptability, hope, resilience, and life satisfaction on future job pursuit and career magnetism toward particular industry organizations should be considered.

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