

# Academic Weekly Digest

## School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



### *B&B entrepreneurs amid COVID-19: We survived and we are innovative*

COVID-19 has posed complex challenges to entrepreneurs and firms seeking to find their footing in a turbulent climate. Our PhD researcher [Weizheng Zhang](#), supervised by [Prof Gang Li](#), [Prof Allan Williams](#) and Dr Anyu Liu identified B&B entrepreneurs' non-linear innovative recovery process amid the pandemic due to the shifting natures of uncertainties as well as entrepreneurs' capitals.

# Entrepreneurial responses to uncertainties during the COVID-19 recovery: A longitudinal study of B&Bs in Zhangjiajie, China

Weizheng Zhang, Prof Allan Williams & Prof Gang Li

COVID-19 changed tourism dramatically in 2020 and dealt major economic blows, especially to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Entrepreneurial decisions are consistently made under conditions of risk and uncertainty, which have become increasingly volatile during the ongoing global crisis. Uncertainty progressively affected B&B businesses, and the unknown trajectory of the pandemic dominated entrepreneurs' reactions. The three-stage research period between April and November 2020 indicated substantial shifts in entrepreneurs' responses over time. This study is among the first to adopt a longitudinal qualitative design to examine SME entrepreneurs' responses to crises. It presents a theoretical framework linking uncertainty, capital, and innovation to analyse how B&B entrepreneurs have innovatively responded to unprecedented obstacles during the COVID-19 recovery.



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Research findings suggest that entrepreneurs should conduct crisis response innovation by taking account of their financial, human and social capitals; alterations in these B&B SMEs may also reflect changes in other vulnerable businesses during crises. It also suggests that policymakers should acknowledge the need for greater clarity around the dynamic framework of uncertainty, capital, and innovation. The theoretical framework proposed in this study can potentially be generalised to other crises, subject to further empirical validation.

## Further Reading:

Zhang, W., Williams, A. M., Li, G., & Liu, A. (2022). Entrepreneurial responses to uncertainties during the COVID-19 recovery: A longitudinal study of B&Bs in Zhangjiajie, China. *Tourism Management*.

Link: [bit.ly/3DmQ6AZ](https://bit.ly/3DmQ6AZ)