The potential of business catering environments to promote restoration in employees

B. Degenhardt, L. Burri, L. Gisin, H. Schulze

Restorative environments are often associated with natural environments.

Kopec (2006): «Restaurants and casual eateries [kiosk, cafés, vending carts, etc.
→ Retail and Service Environments → Servicescapes]

…serve as places for people to conduct business or recreational meetings and are playing an increasingly important role in the economy.

They are *public territories,* open to the community at large and are therefore subject to the specific perceptions of individuals based on their personalities, ages, gender, status, and experiences. They are affected by periodic *crowding* that is contingent on the time of day and season, the weather, and events such as sales, specials, and holidays. And they are at constant risk for *criminal* activity.»

(S. 285)

TRUE FOR BCF OF A COMPANY?

Ich bin mehr als nur ein Tellertaxi !

Foto by E. v. Lindern

Thesis:

There are various organizational benefits from business catering, which go beyond supplying employees with calories.

Research goals are...

_carving out the various **psychosocial needs** (e.g. knowledge exchange, restoration) of **employees** towards their business catering areas, as well as pinpointing the **needs oriented usages** of these same areas.

_exploring the **relationships** between **lace/environmental qualities** and **organizational key success factors**, such as employee health, satisfaction, appreciation, and productive wellbeing.

_Formulating **design recommendations** in order to foster the varying uses.

INSELSPITAL

UNIVERSITÄTSSPITAL BERN
HOPITAL UNIVERSITAIRE DE BERNE
BERN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

PROJECT PARTNER

University Hospital Bern (CH)

_ ~ **7'700 members of staff**

_37'826 inpatients, and 295'362 outpatients each year

_operates **7 restaurants** within the hospital compound,
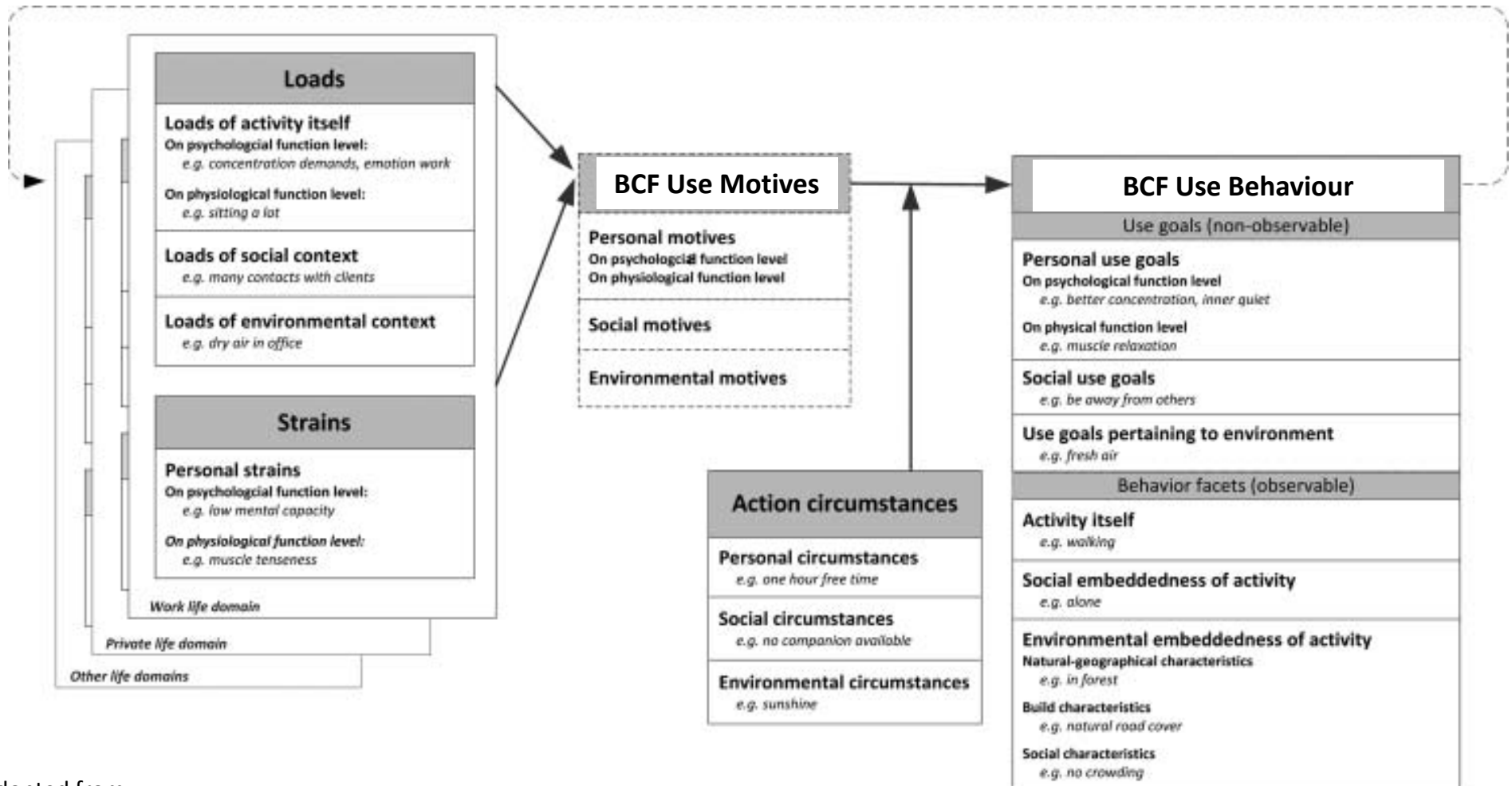which are *open to the staff, patients and public* 365 days a year.

_the main building houses an unattended "**vending machines**"
restaurant *for staff only*.

Integration of:
- Action theory, social-ecologcial p., function-level p.
- COR
- Strain-recovery cycle

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Loads

Loads of activity itself
On psychologcial function level:
e.g. concentration demands, emotion work

On physiological function level:
e.g. sitting a lot

Loads of social context
e.g. many contacts with clients

Loads of environmental context
e.g. dry air in office

Strains

Personal strains
On psychologcial function level:
e.g. low mental capacity

On physiological function level:
e.g. muscle tenseness

Work life domain
Private life domain
Other life domains

BCF Use Motives

Personal motives
On psychologcial function level
On physiological function level

Social motives

Environmental motives

Action circumstances

Personal circumstances
e.g. one hour free time

Social circumstances
e.g. no companion available

Environmental circumstances
e.g. sunshine

BCF Use Behaviour

Use goals (non-observable)

Personal use goals
On psychological function level
e.g. better concentration, inner quiet

On physical function level
e.g. muscle relaxation

Social use goals
e.g. be away from others

Use goals pertaining to environment
e.g. fresh air

Behavior facets (observable)

Activity itself
e.g. walking

Social embeddedness of activity
e.g. alone

Environmental embeddedness of activity
Natural-geographical characteristics
e.g. in forest

Build characteristics
e.g. natural road cover

Social characteristics
e.g. no crowding

(adopted from
Degenhardt & Buchecker, 2012)

RESEARCH DESIGN

Pilot study: *Workshop* with employees from the 8 catering facilities

➢ With 12 participants from all 7 restaurants, 22. October 2012
➢ Drawing up consumer profiles, including perceived user needs
➢ Drawing up restaurant profiles (what unites them, what distinguishes them)
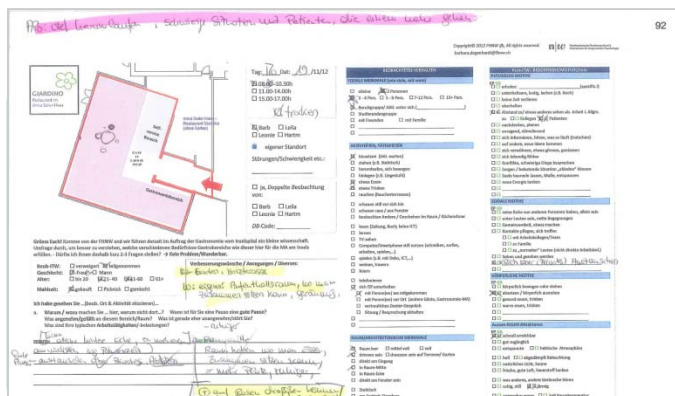
Study 1: *Behaviour observation* and *short interview* within all 8 catering facilities

➢ 1 Monday-Saturday, 3 fixed periods, ca. 8:00 to 17:00 (Luna: 21:00), 4 rotating observers, 14.-22. November 2012, cold and rainy-sunny weather
➢ Observation form and interview guideline based on workshop
➢ Gathered data: **238 observations** and **209 short interviews** (lasting 5-15 min.)
➢ Data control: 6 double observations, 0.09% data entry errors
➢ Qualitative content analysis

Study 2: *Survey*, Questionnaire addressed to all Inselspital employees & associated students

➢ Questionnaire: 8 pages, 15-20 min. duration, 3 weeks runtime from 12. April - 06. May 2013), ice cream voucher
➢ Gathered data: **1307** filled out **questionnaires** (**36.3%** response rate, **20%** empl.)
➢ Data control: 5% (65) questionnaires, 0.30 % data entry errors
➢ Statistical Analysis

STUDIES PARTICIPANTS

Observation & Interviews Participants		%	N (238)
Age	Up to 20 years	4	11
	21-40 years	**56**	126
	41+	40	90
Gender	**Female**	***54**	129
Occupational group	**Medical faculty**	**28**	44
	Nursing	25	39
	Domestic services	16	25
	Administration	15	24
	Medical-technical	9	14
	Other groups	6	10

Survey Participants		%	N (1282)
Age	Up to 20 yrs.	3	35
	21-40 yrs.	**58**	749
	41+ yrs.	39	496
Gender	**Female**	***67**	863
Occupational group	**Medical faculty**	**24**	304
	Nursing	**20**	254
	Admin / Management	**20**	250
	Medical-technical	12	151
	Research	7	83
	Technical Services	3	43
	Gastronomy	3	39
	Domestic / Transport Services	2	23
	Social Services	1	8
	Other groups	8	100
Routine	**Typical** behaviour	**95**	1177
Night work	**Not at all**	**68**	875
Years of service	Up to 1	20	252
	1-5	**40**	506
	6-10	14	184
	11-20	18	226
	21+	8	101

*«Insel» employees 7'343
female 5'506 (75%)
male   1'837 (25%)

HIGH RELEVANCE OF «INSEL-RESTAURANTS» AS PLACES FOR WORK BREAKS

Most frequently used places for breaks
(N = 859-1208)

- mehrmals täglich
- daily
- 4-5x pro Woche
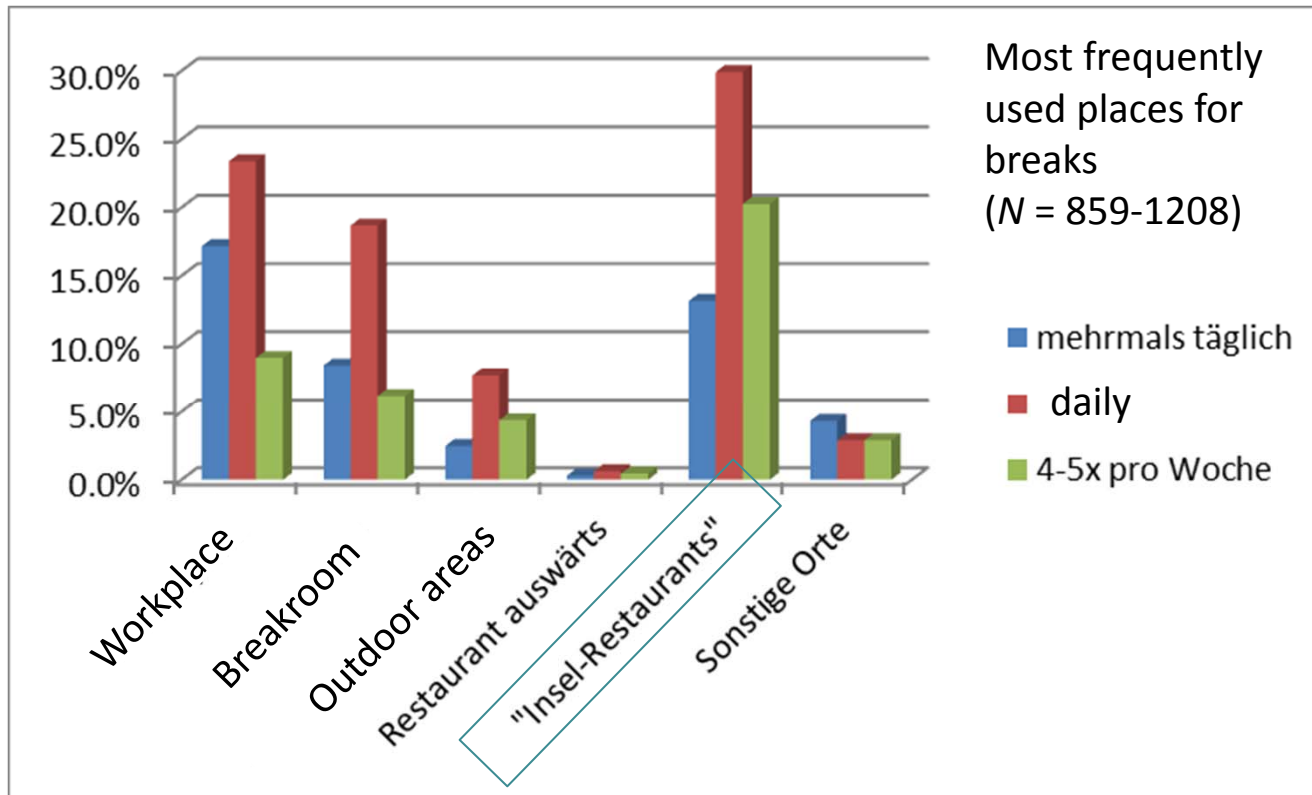
→ Personalrestaurants are very regularly used for breaks

- 80 % visit at minimum 2-3 times per week one of the Insel-Restaurants

- 57 % have a break at minimum 2-3 times per week at their workplace

In the last 4 weeks, how often did you use all following places for a break or short-break?
(e.g. shortly in between times, Znüni [9 am break], Zvieri [4 pm Break], Lunch)

How do routine users spend their time in BCFs?

→
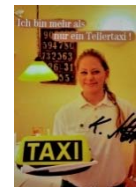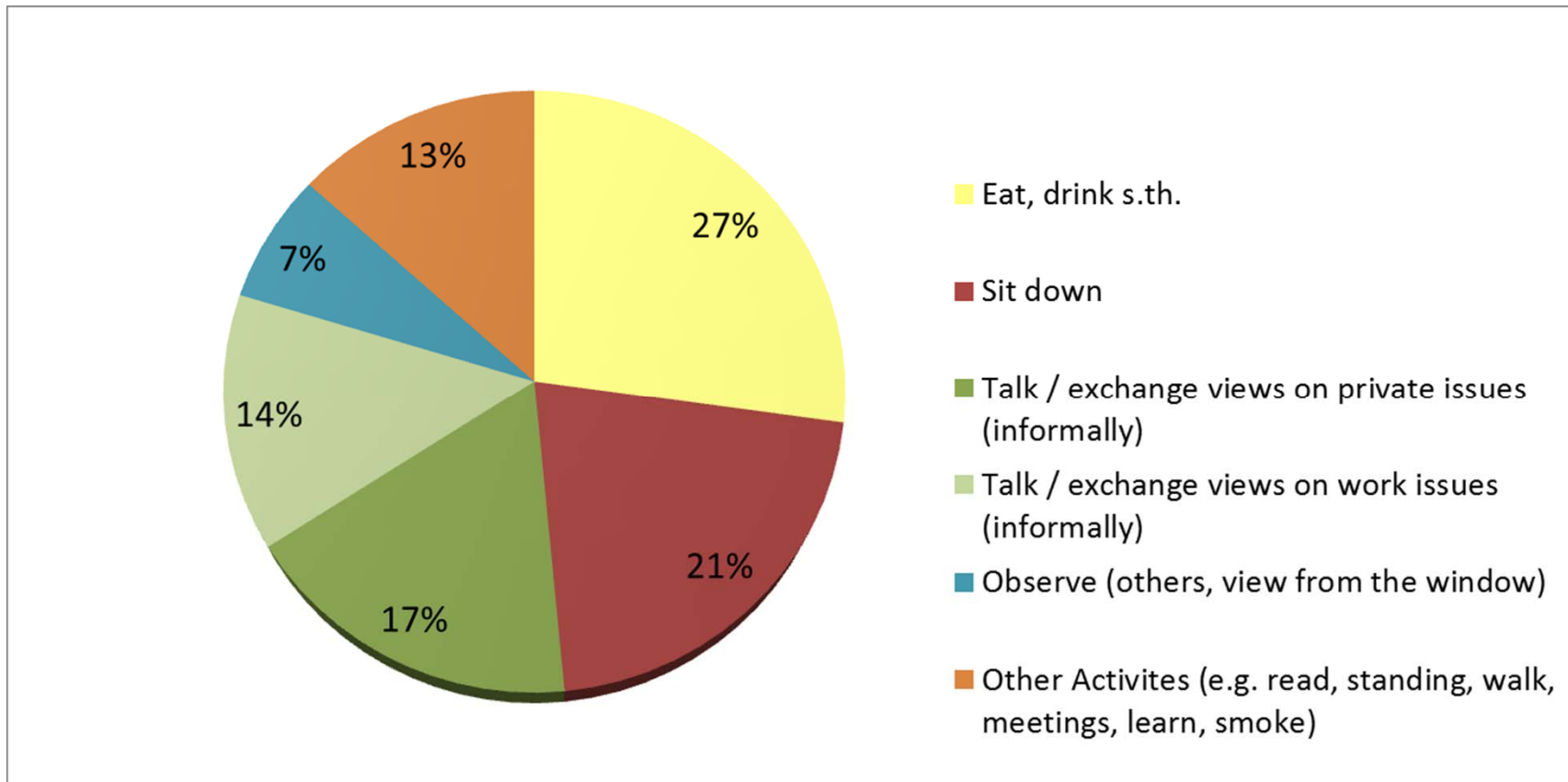
→ formally work-related activities play minor role

What activities did you practice in this «Insel-Restaurant» in the last 4 weeks?
Mostly my activities were … (14 activities)

Main Needs with respect to BCFs Uses

($N_{responses}$ = 3194)

This «Insel-Restaurant» (incl. terrace), with which needs have you been visiting it within the last 4 weeks mostly (apart from eating and drinking)?
(3 responses possible)

BCF support the need to be-away from…

- workplace
- patients
- colleagues
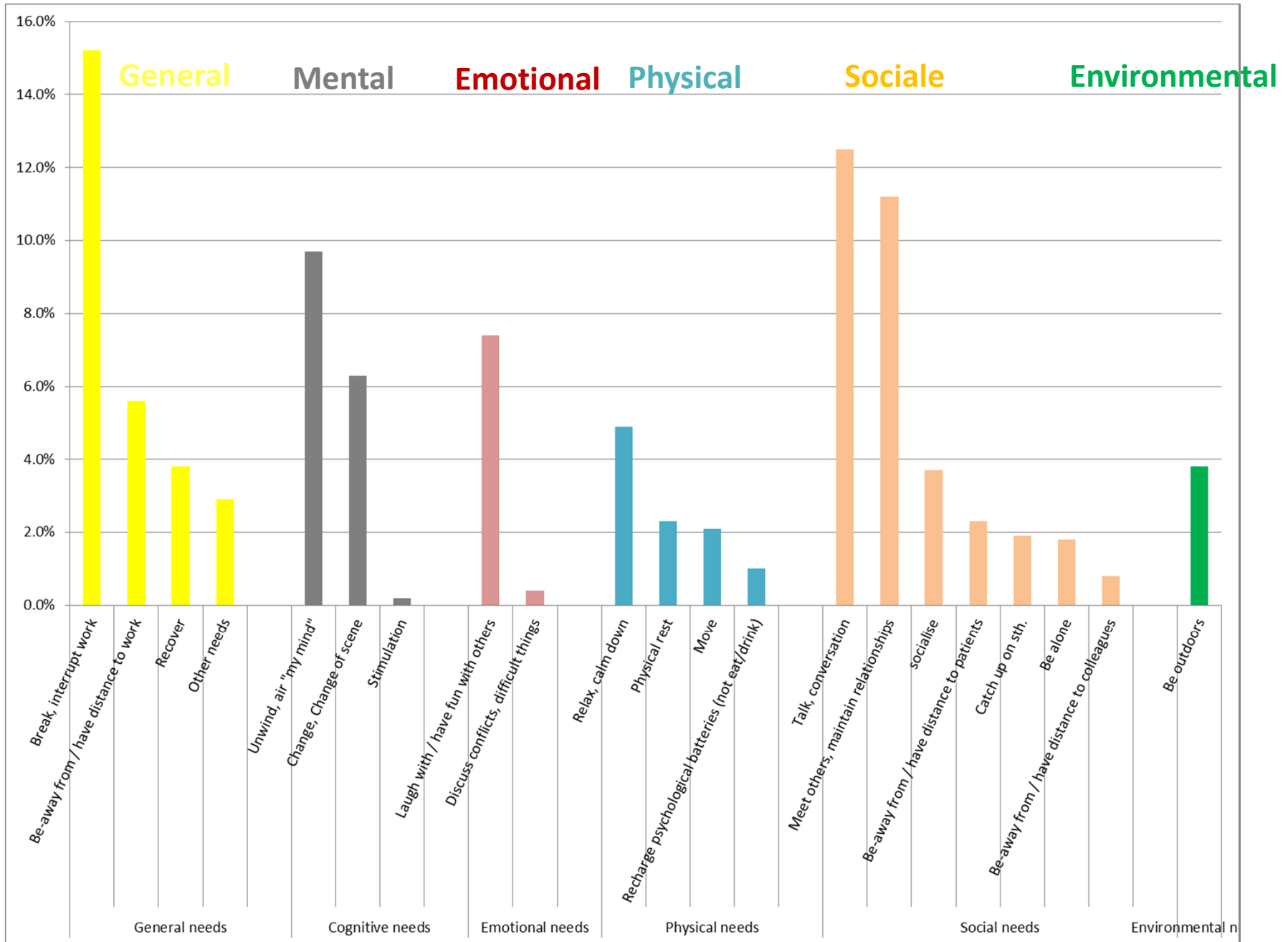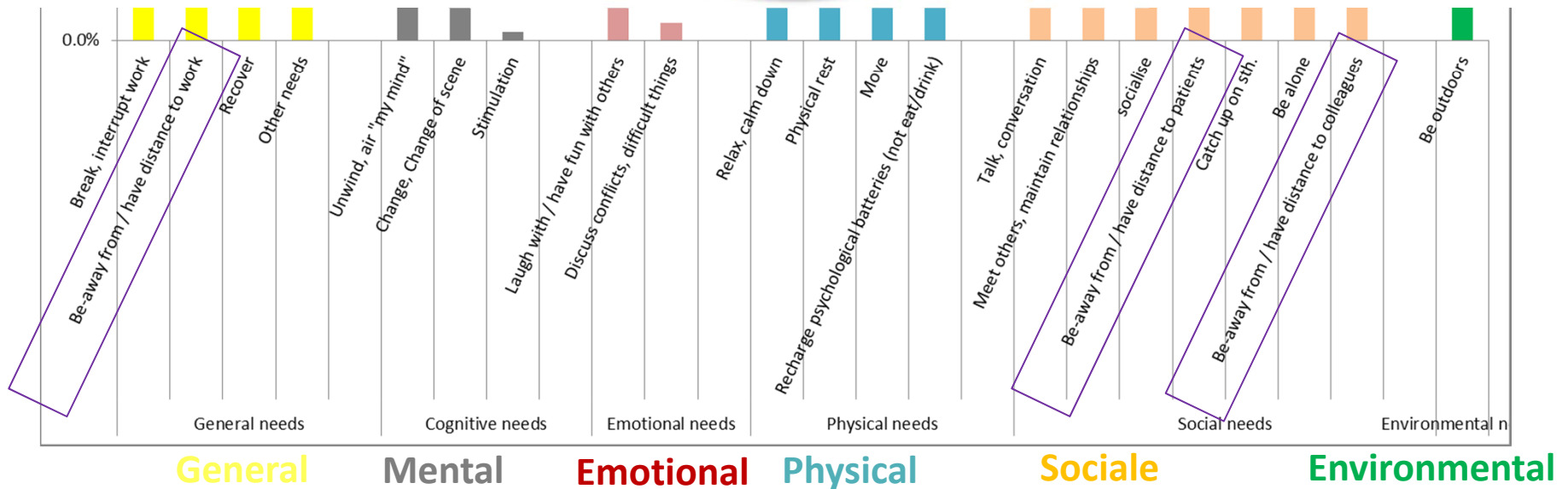- *obligations, roles*
- *superiors*

2 Superiors [n.K.]

4 Obligations, Roles, Situation [n.K.]

17 Workplace [n.K.]

30 Patients [n.K.]

Be-away, distance to…

18 Colleagues [n.K.]

0.0%

Break, interrupt work | Be-away from / have distance to work | Recover | Other needs | Unwind, air "my mind" | Change, Change of scene | Stimulation | Laugh with / have fun with others | Discuss conflicts, difficult things | Relax, calm down | Physical rest | Move | Recharge psychological batteries (not eat/drink) | Talk, conversation | Meet others, maintain relationships | socialise | Be-away from / have distance to patients | Catch up on sth. | Be alone | Be-away from / have distance to colleagues | Be outdoors

General needs | Cognitive needs | Emotional needs | Physical needs | Social needs | Environmental n

General **Mental** **Emotional** **Physical** **Sociale** **Environmental**

Diskussion & Conclusions

Break Uses of BCF in companies by employees are in many aspects related to fulfil social needs and support psychophysical restoration, and less to conduct formal business.

However, 14% informal job-related conversation.

Diskussion & Conclusions

Canteens, restaurants, kiosks, cafés … as Business Catering Facilities…

...are affected by periodic *crowding* that is contingent on the time of day and season, the weather, and events. And they are ~~at constant~~ risk for criminal activity.

...are public territories (e.g. *Centro*), and they are a mixture of primary (e.g. *Automatenrestaurant*) and secondary (e.g. *Sole*, *Panorama*) territories.

...are therefore subject to the specific perceptions of individuals based on their personalities, ages, gender, status, and experiences – especially to those related to their job tasks and work environments (e.g. patients, natural light).

They are likely to consist of multiple behaviour settings (e.g. Centro). → Design Challenge!

Conclusions

Well-considered design of BCFs to support psychophysical restoration is very imporant!

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Because…

- **multiple behaviour settings** in one place, even changing over the day (e.g. Centro)

- **36%** has **no alternative** restorative environment, i.e. would need a breakroom but hasn't one available, or have one, but are unsatisfied *(N = 855)*

- **64% not enough** work **breaks**, i.e. sometimes-very often (1/day-several times / hour) cannot take a break or do it delayed because of to much work (N = 866)

- **55% too short breaks**, i.e. partly–do not agree, that they have enough time in their breaks to recover (N = 867)

- **22% Accessibility** (quick, within 5 min.) is main reason to choose a «Insel-Restaurant»

THANK YOU!

Leonie Burri, Leila Gisin, Timon Niederer,
Anja Röthlisberger, Hartmut Schulze

barbara.degenhardt@fhnw.ch

University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland

School of Applied Psychology
Institute for Research and Development of Collaborative Processes

Olten, Switzerland