# Post Covid-19 Strategies for Tourism and Restaurant Business in India with Special Reference to Delhi & National Capital Region

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#### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – This research study sought to examine the impacts of post COVID-19 on tourism and small medium entrepreneurs (SME), restaurant Business from the stakeholder perspective and Restaurant Goer in the case Delhi NCR, India. Another purpose of this research paper is to study, understand and find new opportunities as well as innovative approaches to be adopted by various small medium entrepreneurs, (SME) food service outlet staffs to improve business of restaurant in journey of post COVID-19 pandemic.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This study is based on Descriptive data analysis which is carried out to report the results. The survey method has been applied to accomplish the objectives of this research and data was collected through structured questionnaire. The primary data has been used and analyzed. The total 146 respondents as samples were taken into consideration which comprises of restaurant goers as guests and restaurant Businessmen including Hospitality professionals those are the part of restaurant business.

**Findings** – Research results have shown that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the tourism industry as well as SME of restaurant business. The business will bounce back. The restaurant goers still want taste as well as hygiene and more concerned in digitalization for the payment.

**Originality/value** – The research paper and its value given the ever-changing nature of the literature and the lack of literature, current research seeks to summarize the lessons learned from the covid-19 tragedy and support it with state-of-the-art research including top hospitality experts and industry stakeholders who participated.

Keywords: Restaurant Business, Post Covid-19, Tourism Business, Tourism Strategies, SME restaurant operators.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

By the end of December 2021, people from hospitality industry felt working enthusiastically and tourism started opening its arms to welcome tourists in India from around the world. The impact of 1<sup>st</sup> wave COVID-19 started declining, but by the beginning of March 2021 the impact of 2<sup>nd</sup> wave forced everyone to retreat (Dey, A., 2021). The rising cases of corona virus infected patients and its impact had exceeded all the previous outbreaks (Kaushal, V (2021). According to the Business Today report it is found that the 1<sup>st</sup> wave of COVID-19 that hit India in the beginning of 2020 was less contagious than 2<sup>nd</sup> wave by mid-April (Sharma, M., 2021), as a result, lockdown has been initiated in many Indian states; If we look from health safety viewpoint, imposing a lockdown system is beneficial as it helps to reduce peoples' movement, but on the other hand it affects seriously on the economy. The Indian restaurant industry has an estimated workforce of about 7300000; out of which, about 3700000 people work in the organized sector and remaining in the unorganized sector (Saraswathy, M., 2021.), and people from these sectors are most badly hit. In most cases, this category of restaurants is operated independently or on ownership basis and do not have any affiliation nor associated with any other property. During the time of emergency, there is no-one to help them out with sufficient financial support (Vig, S., 2021). In context to unorganized sector, there are some eating joints, which do not have any permanent stall and survive mostly on daily earnings. Due to lockdown, when people relied on online food delivery apps, business for these people get affected, as because neither these people are much educated to understand the technology functions nor is ready to share any commission (Saraswathy, M., 2021). Restaurants earn only 20-28% profit margin if the orders are received through food delivery system apps. In context to partnership business between restaurants and food delivery app companies, unfair decision taken by food delivery apps leaves many restaurant entrepreneurs in a double bind situation, whether to continue with the food delivery apps for their business (Chandrasekaran, K., 2021). In this tough, challenging temporary period when every hospitality professional e.g., chefs in star hotels, SME restaurant owners etc. are struggling to survive with low business flow, they are facing with following common questions related to strategies and preparedness to increase business post COVID-19 pandemic in the 3rd year of entering since Covid -19 existed these are:

- 1. How to increase the target customer in this tough situation?
- 2. What should be the strategies?
- 3. How to implement the strategies?
- 4. How to increase cash flow?
- 5. How to innovate restaurant layout plan to accommodate maximum number of customers keeping in mind the safe social distancing norms?

Due to an extended lockdown period, lack of business, high maintenance cost many entrepreneurs had to shut down their outlets; to continue to exist in the highly competitive market it is very much important to keep communicating with customers on a regular basis for them to remember about the existence of the establishment (Manish. 2021). COVID-19 is a contagious microscopic organism that has caused millions of deaths in the past months. Furthermore, majority of the customers are reluctant to dine-out as they are concerned with hygiene and safety maintained in the restaurant. So, in this situation, it is the primary duty for all restaurant industry professionals and entrepreneurs to build the trust and confidence in the customers' mind about hygiene and safety practices are followed by them.

The hospitality has been given the broader impact of the epidemic on all industries, this issue to be of interest to workers, higher education leaders, policy makers and other stakeholders as it draws on industry-based research to address potential challenges and solutions to current and pending challenges. This issue also provides details of further collaborative research (Tiwari & Sanjeev, 2021). Most of the news articles surveyed in the study highlighted key points regarding the government's approach to the tourism and hospitality sector in India during the violence of pandemic(Allaberganov et al., 2021). The restaurant business in India was spreading in the small town, but during the pandemic, several restaurants closed due to the cost of operations, like rent. Since shutting down restaurants, the main burden was the monthly rent of the building, which was the greatest part of the overhead cost of business. Now the time has been changed in the post pandemic since the robotic restaurant experience in the current era has entered and given the future prospects of restaurant business. In the pre- restaurant table dining experience, there is guest to guest contact between restaurant staffs and guests. On the other hand, side, in the robotic restaurants service of food, the frontline staffs are not mankind further more. In this respect, the context of the robotic restaurant dining

experience purely differs from the dining experience. Thus, the restaurant business operators serving robotic delivery to the guests of food and beverage services which may enhance different aspects of feelings of hygiene to their guests. This makes it requirement to learn about visitor perception in robotic service in the restaurant which will be great help to guide restaurant businesses operators to quality service increase the of and experiences(Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020). The hospitality and tourism sector is an essential foundation of revenue generation for any nation of the world which provides millions of people bread and butter as an employments(K. Jafari et al., 2021). The food industry has been hit hard by the COVID-19 epidemic and its aftermath

steps to close the door taken to contain its spread. All interviewees agree on this tragedy the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SME restaurants Business. As highlighted by one of the interviewed: "To researcher, the whole situation facing COVID-19 sounds like a world war situation, when you are forced to close and there is nothing you can do. "(FSP4)(Raassens et al., 2021).

### Tourism and Hospitality at present:

India's food industry will reach Rs 5,52,000 by 2022 means economic times, November 14, 2017. India's food service sector is projected to grow by 15% to reach Rs 2,04,180 crore by 2021 according to economic times. Data from the National restaurant Association (NRAI) and India Food service report (IFSR) 2019 states that Indian food service is related to the hospitality market by restaurant size at INR 4,23,865 crore in 2018-2019 which is likely to expect growth. at the CAGR of 9% to reach INR 5,99,782 crore by 2022-23. But unfortunately, it did not happen until the end of 2021 again, and wave 3 showed its impact at the beginning of 2022. But the destructive waves of the 2nd shattered the expectations and targets that had been set for an food Indian restaurant. and recreation organization as well.

# **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

(**Hjalager, 2010**) The current economic crisis in tourism shows more than anything else the value of a strong tourism business strategy and the potential imperfections of any such strategies, no matter how well-researched, funded, or well-established. The Tourism Strategy emphasizes the benefits of action, not in the volatile and unpredictable times of the future.

(La Lopa & Day, 2011) Research reveals that many support the commitment to change in tourism behavior, the actual observed behavior may be better understood by the many categories described in the Travel Transformation model in the tourism industry.

(Lan et al., 2012) This study contributes to the development of an exploratory framework to help the restaurant business choose the most affordable iconic dish in order to increase the creative sense of design to advertise its food tourism in the country. The findings can serve as a style of cooking and guidelines to help chefs create excellent cuisine to attract overseas visitors to boost sales.

(Causevic & Lynch, 2013) This paper highlighted the implications of the Dayton Agreement indirectly on the idea of 'improperly created customer balance, as well as on the complex context of complex tourism planning to better guests and to grow the restaurant business, internal cooperation and cooperation with neighboring businesses. In a particular case of tourism.

(J. Jafari & Scott, 2014) This study highlights considerations of issues such as the impact of Islam on tourism development that also encourage reflection on existing patterns and activities that are taken lightly in many traditional areas of tourism. One of the most important issues in the commercial world is how religious and cultural values are achieved in the development of tourism.

(Kiráľová & Pavlíčeka, 2015) as we all know that tourism is an important source of revenue for many areas, but budget cuts and changes in the use of media and technology require changes in destination communication strategies and marketing in the global market. The implementation of new policies and media and technology is essential for life in today's world.

(**Durusoy & Beyhan, 2015**) This study believes that trade growth is the only way out of the recession, countries prefer to interfere with Exchange rates, and the tragic end has also been found in less developed and developed countries. Although developing countries have invested heavily in the marketplace, they have used this policy to keep their economies afloat in order to make their country more resilient and more resilient.

(Kapuściński & Richards, 2016) has an experimental set up and the results vary from recipients and depend on the characteristics of the audience, especially the type of tourists and their perception of future disaster whether it is right or wrong.

(**Light, 2017**) This paper highlights the study of black tourism education which is one of the categories and then tourism from 1996 to 2016. The study of this article reviews the emergence of black tourism ideas and then tourism, which highlights the similarities and differences between you. it also monitors progress in 6 key themes and debates. These are issues of meaning and breadth of meaning.

(Chien et al., 2018) The current study found a positive correlation between summer reproduction and reliability and random purchases. In addition, consumers were found to have developed confidence in the food tourism industry, echoing the results of previous studies.

(Gkoumas, 2019) This study investigated the effectiveness of the Mediterranean Standard for Sustainable Tourism development on the Greek island of Rhodes. Provides research or evaluation that has taken place after the application of the standard based on the recognition and observation of local Hotel business. The descriptive analysis of this study reveals the failure of the EU tourism certification system to provide economic benefits to the local tourism industry and the potential impact on overseas destinations in the Mediterranean world.

**Phi, Giang (2020)** Saving strategies such as, delaying luxury reconstruction, reducing employee work hours, reduction in employee salary, avoiding outsourcing staffs and introducing short term and long-term rent contract to minimize the expenditure will be suitable option to survive post COVID-19.

Kim, J et al. (2020). It. was found the fear of infection is the main criterion which affects restaurants' sales. Restaurateurs should communicate with the customers; take every possible way to minimize fear of infection and risks of uncertainties of safety and product quality during COVID 19. People from restaurant industry should gather information about what makes them to worry much and how they will react. Restaurant business should provide information about strategies and preparedness adapted to boost restaurant business during pandemic such as developing friendly menu, improvising the sanitized packaging technique, ready to reheat technologies etc.

Karali, A., (2020). The author highlighted the various strategies and preparedness to be adapted by the stakeholders e.g. checking the background information of the tourist, thermal checking of the tourist while entering into the premises, sanitization of every room after departure, maintaining social distance always, number of restrict the tourist arrival, encouraging tourist for e-booking and contactless payment etc.

Vig, S., et al (2021). It is important to convey the massage with various restaurant businessmen and, understand their perception, operation strategies shall be applied by them to increase sales post COVID-19 pandemic, and on the other hand it is important to understand the perception of local consumers who shall contribute in improving the restaurant business. Kaushal, V (2021) the study about two main important points: challenges faced bv hospitality industry at present, and strategies as well as planning to face the challenges in coming years due to uncertainty of pandemic like Covid-19. Based on the study that due to pandemic situation, people became multitasking, awareness have been increased about personal hygiene, importance of keeping the surrounding clean and also preparedness to face pandemic crisis.

**Sufi, T (2021)** highlighted the importance of information technology in hospitality industry e.g., EPOS, ECR, MIS etc, and the role played by different food aggregators e.g. Zomato, Swiggy, cloud kitchens etc in saving the restaurant industry from the damage caused by COVID–19 impact. The research also mentions that the restaurateurs in India should be flexible to adjust the changing circumstances, must anticipate customers' needs and also find out new business models that are beneficial to the customers.

**Demir, M., et al (2021)** the post COVID–19 the demand for eco tourism with free individual traveler will increase. The authors also stated that there will be huge changes and big investments made by hotels to introduce digital platform in all areas.

Awasthi et al (2021) the restaurants should focus more on solid waste management; this is one of the initiatives hotels should take to bring the guest back. The authors also mentioned about the new initiative taken by Indian government 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' to boost Indian economy.

**Vig S, Agarwal R.N. (2021)** due to COVID–19 though restaurant business especially small and medium enterprises are badly hit, but the pandemic taught lessons that will make people to adopt new trends and innovations. The author also suggested that self-funding or taking loan is the only financial source for these categories of restaurants entrepreneurs, and post COVID– 19 outbreak for survival purpose they have to reduce cost in all possible ways, even it could be laying off employee or termination, reduction in salaries or/and shutting down some outlets etc. **Tourism and pandemics:** The hospitality sector is an essential foundation of revenue (Arasliet al., 2021) and has grown steadily over the past decade, recording approximately 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals in 2019 (UNWTO, 2020). The organization further estimates that by 2030, international tourist arrivals will reach at least 1.8 billion, with the WTO projecting growth of approximately 1.8 billion international tourist arrivals (UNWTO, 2020). As evidenced by the literature, it goes without saying that tourism is the reason for most human mobility worldwide (Renaud, 2020). However, due to COVID-19 pandemic, loss of international tourist arrivals was 1 billion as noted by WTO (WTO, 2020). As mentioned in the literature, there are no other ways to explore new places and or meet new people except through travel. However, these options have been considered in the event that there are no disease-free and/or crimefree routes and destinations. In the past, pandemics and epidemics have been described as the most alarming news for vacationers, planners and tourists (Ugur and Akbiyik, 2020).

### NEED OF THE RESEARCH

Since the covid 19 in existence, there is big downfall in the food service industry and hospitality sector not only in Delhi NCR but also all over India and the world as well, the study is taking into Delhi NCR to increase the sale of restaurant business, and the question how to increase sales and finding the marketing post covid-19 pandemic. strategies in particularly there are several research have been done on the restaurant business but Delhi NCR is untouched till date. This research aims to find the Marketing Strategies of Restaurants business to increase sales in India, and its challenges in the future due to pandemic so that, the reality those are unseen could be highlighted to the restaurant business operators' who can apply the policy in restaurant business to increase sales in post covid pandemic.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- 1. To investigate the customers perception to dine out in post pandemic.
- 2. To assess the impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business.
- 3. To study rising in the demand of take away order from the restaurant outlet.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study covers mixer of descriptive, analytical and exploratory design but mainly this research paper is based on exploratory research approach in order to gain more familiarity. The design was applied in order to collect data to get the result as per objectives. The authors have used information supported by the primary and secondary data. The study is framed mainly on primary data collected from the questionnaire and result was carried out on the bases of tool applied for analyzing data.

#### **Research Design**

The 146 respondents under this study have been selected from both the segments randomly by the researcher as the population of the study. The respondents were divided into 2 categories; 1<sup>st</sup> category was Restaurant operators. this group mostly includes people who either own restaurant (s) or manages an outlet on managerial position or performs as restaurant consultant, and 2<sup>nd</sup> category was common people in the city who usually keep visiting restaurants for dine. this group includes students, businessperson, homemakers, teachers etc.

#### **Sample Design**

The total 146 respondents as samples were taken into consideration which comprises of restaurant goers as guests and restaurant Businessmen including Hospitality professionals those are the part of restaurant business.

#### **Tools and Techniques Used**

There are seven factors which have been incorporated in questionnaire and two of these questions were converted in hypothesis to justify the result through mathematical analysis applying Chi-Squire Test by Microsoft excel 2019.

The following hypothesis have been formulated to prove or not to be proved.  $H_0$ -1: There is no change in perception of the people for dine in the restaurant premises and rely more on online food delivery systems.

**H**<sub>0</sub>-2: There is no considerable impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business.

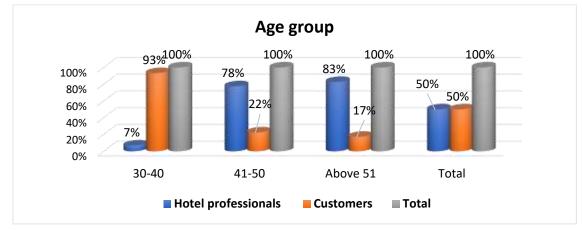
### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

To analyze the result from the primary source of data, there are total respondents including both, the customers and restaurant professionals are 146.

Respondents By age	Age grou	Age group				
Group	30-40	41-50	above 51			
Hotel professionals	7%	78%	83%	50%		
Customers	93%	22%	17%	50%		
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%		

Demographic profile of the respondents Table 1: Professionals and Customer by their age group

Source: primary



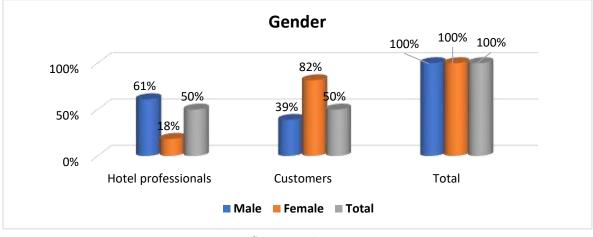
*Source: primary* **Figure 1: Demography of the respondents on the basis of age group** 

93% customers are between the age group of 30-40 and where in 7% are the hotel professional. 78% hotel professionals and 22% customers are in the age group of 41-50. 83% hotel professionals and 17% customers are above the age of 51.

Table 2: Professionals and Customer on the	le
basis of gender	

Respondents by Gender	Male	Female	Total
Hotel professionals	61%	18%	50%
Customers	39%	82%	50%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: primary



Source: primary

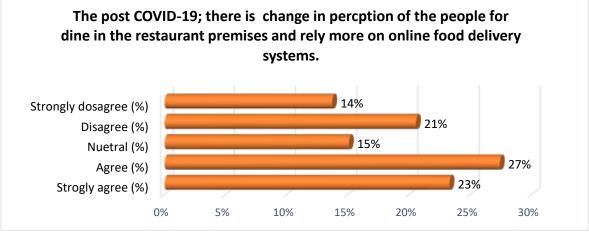
Figure 2: Demography of the respondents on the basis of Gender

The above figure shows the male and female, customers and hotel professionals as respondents. The 61% male and 18% respondents are females' belonging to SME restaurant business profession. Where in 39% male and 82% females are the restaurant goers as customers.

# Objective: To investigate the customers perception to dine out in post pandemic. Table 3: Perception of the Respondents

Inquiry	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	TOTAL (%)
The post COVID-19; there is change in perception of the people for dine in the restaurant premises and rely more on online food delivery systems.	23	27	15	21	14	100

Source: primary

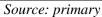


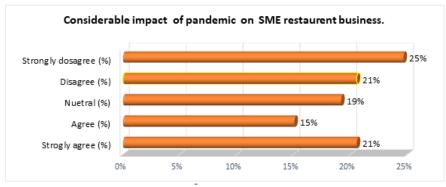
Source: primary

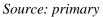
# Figure 3: The above figure shows the perception f the people for dine out.

# Objective: To assess the impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business.

Table 4: Impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business							
Inquiry	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	TOTAL (%)	
There is considerable impact ofpandemic on SMErestaurant business.	21	15	19	21	25	100	







# Figure 4: Impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business

# Objective: To study the rising in the demand of take away order from the restaurant outlet. Table 5: The demand for the take away orders

Inquiry	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	TOTAL (%)
Besides the food delivery at door step, the demand for the take away orders is rising simultaneously.	21	25	15	18	21	100

Source: primary



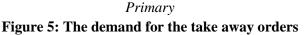


Table 0. Analysis of various other Components								
Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total		
Using an advertisement campaign on social media will bring people to your restaurant again.	22%	21%	14%	23%	21%	100%		
There is need to reduce the price to the customer that will increase SME business of restaurant.	27%	26%	18%	15%	14%	100%		
There is better future prospect in SME restaurant business in India in post pandemic.	20%	24%	18%	21%	18%	100%		
Introducing immunity boosting food will attract customers.	25%	23%	18%	21%	14%	100%		

### Table 6: Analysis of various other Components

Source: primary

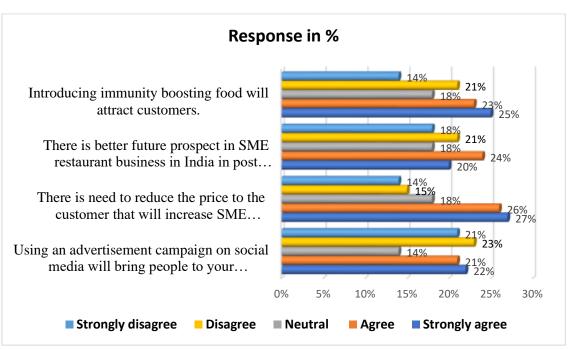


Figure 6: Analysis of various other Components

# Table 7: Descriptive and Chi-squire Statistics for the components Constructs to test the hypothesis.

Sr. No.	Tourist facility components	Chi-Squire value <sup>x2</sup>	Table value	Result
1	Perception of the people for dine in the restaurant premises and rely more on online food delivery systems.	9.47	9.488	H <sub>1</sub> -Accepted
2	Considerable impact of pandemic on SME restaurant business.	3.45	9.488	H <sub>1</sub> -Accepted

Primary source

# FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- 1. In post covid 19, there is no change in perception of the people for dine in the restaurant premises and rely more on online food delivery systems.
- There is no considerable impact of pandemic on small medium enterprise (SME) restaurant business.
- 3. There is change in the demand in post pandemic almost half e.g., 46% for the take away orders from the outlet.
- 4. There is no impact of the advertisement campaign on social media helps bring people to your restaurant again as. 43 % are agree and 44% are disagree so there is no impact.
- 5. There is remarkable impact of price that need to reduce the price to the customer that will increase SME business of restaurant more than half of the respondents e.g. 53% agree with the price reduce It also interprets that reducing the price will give positive on business which attract the customers.
- 6. The 46% respondents agree that there will be better future prospect in a short span of SME restaurant business in India in post pandemic.
- 7. Approximately half of the respondents says that on introducing immunity boosting food serving and preparing for attracting customers to increase the restaurant business.

Earning profit is the bottom-line of most food service sector. Earning extra money helps in paying staffs' salary, operating costs, insurance premium etc. Restaurant operators were not prepared to face the challenges caused by pandemic; due to nationwide lockdown and extension of the same, stakeholders especially people directly involved in business, were worried with regards to their future sustainability in business, employees were tensed about losing their job. Post vaccination period people are little relaxed and determined to accept the challenges. After 2<sup>nd</sup> wave hit India, Government of India imposed some restriction in 3<sup>rd</sup> waves of pandemic but, it has had loosened some of the criteria; hence many small-scale restaurant outlets started operating again. In such scenario, paying attention on even smallest expenditure can save in bigger amount in long run.

#### SUGGESTIONS BASED ON RESULTS

As the responses are collected from two category of respondents, hence after analyzing the data it becomes necessary to provide suggestions based on the results obtained that may be useful for restaurant operators and also for the society.

- 1. The majority of customers are reluctant to dine out at the restaurant premises, simultaneously restaurant operators are too happy with online services, hence restaurant sectors in India must keep a good relation with online food delivery apps for continuation of business, and eventually it is suggested to have one's own cloud kitchen that might increase the profit margin.
- 2. Digitalizations of services such as digital menu, online payment are the safest options during this pandemic situation. The majority of the consumers and restaurant operators both happily supported that indicates there should be an increasing number of options in digital technology, which they could use

for their online restaurant business operation.

- 3. Based on the large number of positive responses received from both restaurant operators and consumers it is clear that people are still concerned with the taste of the dishes than level of hygiene standards of the restaurant premises. Yet Restaurant operators must pay detailed attention to improve hygiene These are a few suggestions, which build customers' trust, and to some extent, the prices of dishes to be reduce to increase sales.
- 4. Restaurant operators should stress restructuring the menu introducing healthy dishes that include immunity boosting ingredients, smaller menus, low priced combo meals, etc will be sought after. (Patricia Cobe. 2020)
- 5. Post pandemic, many restaurants those are physically closed at the pandemic situation, and they might operate again under restricted guidelines set by the National Restaurant Association of India. To sustain it is necessary to continue to market the brand image of the outlet at the lowest possible cost available. For the same, restaurant operators should choose free accessible organic channels (Manish. 2021)

#### LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

While conducting the study, a few problems were faced. Due to the pandemic situation, meeting people personally and interviewing was avoided possible. To know opinions from both the respondents, Likert scale questionnaires were shared in the WhatsApp group and requested to fill them up. It is observed that in most cases, people are unenthusiastic.

Secondly, only a few groups of people were targeted as respondents and whose names were in the phone contact list or friends were requested to spread the questionnaires; in the future, visiting more people physically and gathering their opinion deemed necessary.

For the current study, mostly smallmedium scale stand-alone restaurant owners, restaurant operators, or employees in managerial positions were contacted. In the future, a detailed study focusing on high-end restaurants, quick-service restaurants, etc to be visited in person, and interview feedback must be considered for further studies.

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