

## Ramifications of Downsizing for Organization After Covid-19: A Critical Evaluation for Hospitality Industry

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### ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the restructurings that took place within the hospitality sector during the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. The pandemic has also led to a reduction in hotel occupancy rates, resulting in the closure of several establishments. Customers' reliance on various forms of electronic communication and data sharing is crucial in the modern era of the global market. This paper examines the downsizing processes of hospitality managements in India post-COVID-19. 345 employees have been considered to observe the impact of downsizing on employees and on hotel industry which are included to the research because the main purpose of the research was to evaluate the downsizing practices of hospitality managements which is affected by the COVID-19 in India and to provide a whole-process-models.

Keywords: Hotel industry, downsizing, Covid-19, hospitality industry, tourism

### Introduction

The COVID-19 epidemic has brought about hitherto unheard-of effects on working life and fundamentally changed employment and the workplace. The hotel industry has faced significant challenges due to significant job losses and shortened working hours, both domestically and internationally. These changes have had diverse effects on both companies and staff members (Visita 2021). One of the sectors most disrupted by the coronavirus epidemic has been Indian hospitality. The travel restrictions, lockdowns, and social separation policies enforced to stop the virus's spread have severely affected the sector, which makes major contributions to India's economy and gives millions of people jobs. Research from the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India [FHRAI] shows that the hotel sector in India had a 65–70% drop in business during the first quarter of the financial year 2020–21, when compared to the same period in the previous year [FHRAI, 2020]. The research also revealed that the epidemic could potentially cause a loss of approximately INR 1.30 lakh crore and jeopardize an estimated 3.5 crore jobs in the hotel sector. Recent years have seen much research on how Corona affects the Indian hotel sector. Employees' perspectives have shifted due to Corona's impact on the sector's demand, making it crucial to understand how Corona could impact the Indian hospitality sector. Given the extent of Corona's influence on the Indian hotel sector, it is crucial to investigate how it affects several facets of the sector, including workforce reduction, employee morale, and customer behavior. This study is to evaluate, in the Indian hospitality sector during COVID, the effects of workforce shrinkage on the psychological health and interpersonal interactions of the surviving employees.

### *Overview of Industry before and after Covid-19*

The hospitality sector, a major part of the travel business in India, significantly boosts the national economy. A World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] analysis indicates that in 2018, the travel and tourism industry accounted for 9.2% of India's GDP overall (WTTC, 2019). Still, the coronavirus epidemic has seriously changed the course of industry development. The disturbance of both local and international travel has been one of the main difficulties the Indian hospitality sector has experienced during the epidemic. The lockdowns and travel restrictions implemented by the Indian government to curb the virus's spread have led to a significant decrease in tourist arrivals, thereby causing a significant loss of industry revenue. Furthermore, the epidemic has altered customer behavior, with travelers increasingly opting for contactless solutions and online booking options. The sector has reacted to this by using digital technologies and following safety procedures to give consumers a flawless and safe experience. The Indian government has also acted in numerous ways to assist the sector in these trying circumstances. The government unveiled the Atmanirbhar Bharat

Abhiyaan in May 2020, a set of policies meant to assist many facets of the economy, including the hotel sector. Measures like credit guarantees, liquidity support, and tax reduction for the sector (Ministry of Finance, 2020) comprised the package. Thus, this paper seeks to present a thorough picture of Corona's influence on the Indian hotel sector and investigate industry reaction to the epidemic. The paper will also examine the government's role in supporting the sector and the need for additional actions to aid in its recovery and growth. The epidemic of the coronavirus has seriously affected the Indian hospitality sector, leading to a notable drop in income and business.

Reduced hotel occupancy rates brought on by the epidemic have also caused many establishments to close. Apart from that, the lockdowns and travel restrictions enforced by the Indian government to stop the virus's spread have reduced consumer footfall in the sector. Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Indian hospitality sector has demonstrated amazing fortitude against the epidemic. To guarantee the security of their patrons and staff, many companies have changed their business models and brought fresh ideas, such as digital payment alternatives and contactless check-in. With businesses investing in technology, including contactless check-ins, digital payments, and robotic automation, to give their consumers a safe and seamless experience, the epidemic has also hastened the acceptance of digital technologies in the sector. Furthermore, as visitors choose nearby locations for their vacations, the epidemic has led to an increase in domestic travel. Many companies have shifted their business strategies to fit evolving consumer tastes, including providing work-from-home packages to capitalize on the expanding trend of remote working (Economic Time, 2021).

#### *Impact of Covid-19 in Industry*

With many companies using new business models and creative ideas like contactless check-in and digital payment choices to guarantee the protection of their patrons and staff, the Indian hospitality sector has shown fortitude in the face of the epidemic. The introduction of new Corona varieties and the sluggish rate of vaccination in the nation still present problems for the sector. Investing in technology and innovation can help the sector also concentrate on long-term sustainability by satisfying evolving consumer demands.

The paper also looked at how the government supports the sector and the necessity of taking more actions to help the industry recover and flourish (Economics Times, 2021). Technological developments over the past few decades have driven hitherto unheard-of degrees of progress in all spheres, including human social interaction. Developments in information and communication technology have made globalization feasible. Particularly in terms of trade between rich and poor countries, this has permanently changed the international scene. Most people now have easy access to the global market, which has improved their economy and standard of living.

In the current global economy, consumers' reliance on various forms of technological communication and data sharing is crucial. The coronavirus epidemic has affected every industry in the global economy. Given the general downturn, we draw attention to the study gaps in the literature on economies and economic surroundings and advocate additional studies to look at the connection between stress and health. Rising protectionism and chauvinism have exacerbated problems during this epidemic, thereby undermining the overall economy. The economy, along with entire systems of standards and values, are affected, leading to the emergence of new values. Efficiency and speed lose their significance when security and emotional isolation from others become paramount. Businesses and supply lines are facing pressure to relocate or close, and national governments have shifted their focus from the economy to storing up resources. This situation has resulted in a significant social and economic divide, putting the global economy at risk. Technology is our only hope to save the economy in the face of such a disastrous occurrence. Technical instruments are essential tools for effective monitoring and management of disease outbreaks since humans are incapable of functioning and balancing the size and speed of AI gadgets. Every country is thus seeking its own set of technological professionals to step in and contribute in the race to create a coronavirus vaccination so that their economy may keep developing. Although several sectors have suffered from this epidemic, health care has taken the stage. The massive influx of patients into hospitals has been devastating, resulting in the collapse of several nations' healthcare systems during the epidemic. The global lockdown has resulted in a decrease in the supply of basic products and a reduction of mobility by more than 25%. In addition to the healthcare system, industries such as manufacturing, retail, public services, entertainment, media, transportation, and tourism have also suffered significantly under the lockdown. Without information technology, one cannot have cumulative, accurate, and dependable communication. Through access to knowledge, IT looks to be the only

way out amid lockdown and social distance, offsetting economic and business losses and offering medicinal benefits. Faster communication and innovative compensation strategies are just two of the numerous financial advantages IT presents in such a situation. AI-assisted virtual assistants, chatbots, and information centers support the health industry in its diagnosis and COVID-19 testing, as well as help sustain social distance to stop its spread. The vector error correction model's econometric validation demonstrates the significant impact of cryptocurrency trading on environmental sustainability (Mohsin, M., et al., 2020a). The banking sector suffers symmetric as well as asymmetric consequences from market volatility. Simultaneously, interest or currency rates seldom influence the variance of banks' returns (Mohsin, M., et al., 2020b). The epidemic threw daily life off balance, and the change in investor attitude hurt the stock market (Naseem, S., et al., 2021).

Technology, which also aids in mitigating the consequences of COVID-19, serves as the fundamental basis for the creation of societies. The fight against the epidemic in the modern digital environment depends much on information and communication technologies. Data science, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence appear to be the only technical disciplines maintaining regular operations during this crisis. Almost every sector has suffered under the worldwide coronavirus epidemic. Therefore, various economies utilize these technologies for resource allocation, patient treatment, virus prevention, carrier tracking, and daily situation monitoring during a pandemic. They also assist businesses in addressing their issues and social activities during the lockdown. Digital technology appears to support businesses with appropriate IT systems both online and offline.

Businesses that have been slow to implement IT solutions will find the opposite to be true. Offline companies have suffered most from people's growing inclination for solitude and home-based living. Despite this, many companies that were not previously online have transitioned to survive the financial crisis caused by the epidemic. Schools and other offline companies implemented lockdowns to prevent the virus from spreading, while many continued to operate online. The demand for online learning systems and remote office tools will consequently increase. The epidemic has particularly badly damaged the travel and healthcare sectors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has permanently or temporarily impacted the healthcare systems of many nations. The rising number of COVID-19 patients and the scarcity of healthcare workers are deterring people with basic medical problems from attending hospitals. This sector has focused especially on implementing telemedicine and telehealth solutions. Regular patients staying at home seemed to help effectively reroute hospital resources to COVID-19-designated wards. The sudden and strict lockdown in both urban and rural areas, which has halted traffic, has led to a global decrease in the number of road-related emergency cases. Thanks to patient-engaged video surveillance and robotic intervention that delivers medication directly to patients' beds, healthcare professionals have remained safe from infection. However, the travel industry has suffered greatly. The worldwide ban on public events and the grounding of all aircraft have proven disastrous for this company. The expansion of the travel and allied service sectors has received the same level of focus. The flood of tourists has caused several businesses in well-known travel destinations to close. These sectors, which rely heavily on IT and internet infrastructure, exhibit varying levels of support.

The epidemic has forced the travel and hospitality sectors to quickly adapt to changing conditions and utilize new technologies in order to continue serving consumers. Companies have applied diverse approaches to mitigate the epidemic's effects. To create a more robust and sustainable future, the sector has to give sustainability, innovation, and cooperation top priority going ahead. Though the epidemic first created shock and disturbance, the hotel sector has demonstrated amazing tenacity and agility in handling the issue. Many companies have rapidly turned their attention to other revenue sources, including delivery or takeaway services, virtual events, and even temporary lodging for medical professionals or people wanting to self-isolate. Since the adoption of contactless payment systems, digital menus, and even robots for housekeeping and room service, technology has emerged as a significant area of innovation. Along with lowering the risk of transmission, this offers consumers a more simplified and quick service (EY, 2020). In response, the importance of safety and hygienic practices has increased significantly. The sector has put strict cleaning procedures in place, including more frequent sanitizing and the use of hospital-grade disinfections. Along with other steps to lower the danger of transmission, several hotels and restaurants have also made investments in air filtration systems and plexiglass barriers (JLL, 2021).

## **Literature Review**

Gupta and Nadkarni (2020) analysed the effects of downsizing in previous crises and offered suggestions for how Indian businesses can apply these lessons to mitigate the unfavourable effects of downsizing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors survey recent crises—from the dot-com bubble to the 2008 financial meltdown and the 2003 SARS pandemic—and examine the methods of downsizing employed by businesses in response. The effects of downsizing on morale, culture, and long-term performance are also investigated. The authors offer many recommendations based on their findings for Indian businesses that may be forced to downsize due to the COVID-19 epidemic. Downsizing can have a detrimental effect on an organisation's culture and long-term performance, so it's important to be proactive in communicating with employees, supporting those who are affected, and providing tools. The research emphasises the need for a systematic approach to downsizing to lessen the blow to workers and the business as a whole.

Anwar, M., and Naz, F. (2021) looked into the effects of layoffs on workers' happiness and mental health in the banking industry. The researchers conducted by surveying 250 former workers from six major banks in Pakistan. Using regression analysis, the authors looked at how layoffs affected workers' happiness on the job and their mental well-being. The study found that downsizing had a detrimental effect on workers' job satisfaction and mental health. In particular, those who had been downsized reported less happiness at work and more mental health issues like despair and anxiety. The authors argue that businesses should mitigate the toll downsizing takes on workers' happiness and mental health. Possible actions include supplying affected workers with assistance, being transparent about the rationale for the layoffs, and preventing the remaining workforce from being overwhelmed. Overall, the study emphasises the necessity of evaluating the human impact of downsizing decisions and the detrimental effects that downsizing can have on workers' well-being.

Kwon, H., & Kim, S. (2020) investigated the effects of downsizing on the mental health of remaining workers and the processes by which this occurs in their 2020 article "The impact of downsizing on the mental health of surviving employees: A moderated mediation model" and looked into how a sense of organisational support influences the correlation between the two variables. A total of 193 workers from a Korean manufacturing firm that had just faced layoffs participated in the study. Participants filled out surveys designed to gauge feelings of job insecurity, organisational support, burnout, and depression. According to the study's findings, workers who have experienced downsizing report feeling more emotionally exhausted and depressed than their counterparts who have not.

Perceived organisational support, however, can help soften the blow to mental health that layoffs might cause. In particular, even in the face of job instability, employees who felt they had more support from their firm reported less emotional tiredness and sadness. Based on the results, it appears that job uncertainty plays a mediating role in the harmful effects of downsizing on mental health. The perception of organisational support, however, helps to lessen the negative effects of job uncertainty on mental health. As the authors put it, "by providing assistance and resources, by communicating clearly with employees about the reasons for downsizing, and by highlighting the importance of employee well-being, businesses can offset the detrimental impact of downsizing on employees' psychological health." They also advise that firms can boost employees' perceptions of their support from the organisation by giving training to help managers and leaders better communicate with one another and by cultivating a cooperative work environment. The study concludes that businesses can lessen the detrimental effects of downsizing on their employees' mental health if they take measures to increase their employees' perceptions of organisational support during the transition.

Zhang, C., and Chen, Z. (2021) looked into the influence of downsizing on worker happiness and the moderating role of organisational support. A total of 401 workers in Chinese companies that had layoffs in the previous year were surveyed for this study. Employees' feelings about downsizing, company support, work satisfaction, and overall happiness are all gauged by the study. Employees who have been downsized report higher degrees of job insecurity, emotional tiredness, and work-family conflict, according to the study's findings. High levels of perceived organisational support, however, helped counteract the detrimental impacts of the reduction on morale. The study indicated that workers reported higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of emotional weariness and work-family conflict when they were highly supported by their employer during the downsizing process. This indicates that businesses can mitigate the hardships of downsizing their staff by providing them with assistance and resources. Organisations can mitigate the negative effects of downsizing on employee well-being, according to the authors, if they provide adequate resources and assistance to

affected workers in the form of counselling services and training programmes. They also imply that businesses might lessen workers' fear and uncertainty during downsizing by providing them with information and transparent communication about the process. The overall findings of the study stress the value of organisational support in offsetting the potentially devastating impacts of downsizing on morale and productivity. The authors argue that companies should make it a top priority to aid their workers through downsizing by giving them the resources and support they need.

Yoon and Choi's (2022) investigated the connection between downsizing and innovation and the role that culture plays in mediating that connection. The authors start by reviewing the literature on strategic downsizing and organisational innovation, drawing attention to the contradictory results that have been found. While some research has linked downsizing to less innovation, other studies have found quite the opposite. The authors suggest that a company's culture can moderate the effect of layoffs on creativity. They argue that the negative impacts of downsizing on innovation may be lessened in a culture that encourages innovation, while they may be exacerbated in a society that discourages it. The authors surveyed workers at several South Korean companies to test their hypotheses. Strategic downsizing was evaluated along with company culture and innovativeness in this poll. The authors used regression analysis to probe the connections between the aforementioned factors. The findings of the study corroborate the predictions made by the authors. They discovered, for example, that strategic downsizing has a detrimental impact on innovation inside an organisation but that this effect is mitigated by the culture of the company. In particular, the negative effects of downsizing on innovation can be lessened by fostering an encouraging culture, while they might be exacerbated by an unsupportive one. The findings of this study have significant ramifications for business leaders contemplating downsizing. Downsizing can have a negative impact on innovation, but the authors argue that managers can counteract this by fostering a more positive work environment. The study also stresses the significance of including organisational culture in long-term planning.

Samreen F., Nagi S., Naseem R., and Gul H. (2022) discussed about the effects of COVID-19 (COV-DS) downsizing on former workers. Despite this, little is known about the mechanisms that account for the consequences of COVID-19 downsizing (COV-DS) on the remaining workers. This publication uses the principle of conserving scarce resources to investigate the mechanisms by which chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) lessens the emotional investment of those who survive the disease. This study posits that COV-DS mediates the relationship between survivors' affective commitment, job insecurity, stress, and organisational identity. Research in this area also suggests that transformative leadership plays a moderating role in the relationship between chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and either mediator. To examine the hypothesised connections, the current research used the partial least squares WARPED PLS 7 algorithm using the Hayes Process Macro. Stress caused by employment instability was found to significantly moderate the association between chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and survivors' affective commitment using a sample of 274 workers from Pakistan's private sector. While there was no evidence that mediation had any effect on survivors' sense of belonging to a particular group, Both mediators were found to be important, however, when transformational leadership was used as a moderator.

## **Research Methods**

In this research, we have surveyed with the self-made questionnaire and collected the data. We have distributed the questionnaire using Google form link to hotel industries and the respondents were management level employees of the hotel. A total of 345 respondents have been selected for the data collection. We have analysed the collected data using 26<sup>th</sup> Version of SPSS.

## **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### *Demographic data*

A total of 345 responses were collected across five response categories for each statement: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Below is a detailed interpretation of the survey results, focusing on the patterns observed in agreement, neutrality, and disagreement.

The marital status distribution suggests a predominantly married population among the respondents, which may influence their perspectives and experiences related to the themes of the survey. This demographic factor should be considered when analyzing the data and drawing conclusions about the overall findings.

- **Majority Married:** The overwhelming majority (74.8%) of respondents are married, suggesting that this demographic may have stable family structures.
- **Low Representation of Single and Divorced Individuals:** Only 18.0% are single, and a small proportion (4.9% divorced, 2.3% widowed) indicates that most participants have stable marital relationships.
- **Implications for Study:** Understanding the marital status of respondents can provide insights into social dynamics, support systems, and psychological well-being within the study's context, especially if related to topics like interpersonal relationships or psychological health.

**Table 1: Marital Status**

Marital Status		
	Frequency	Percent
Never married	62	18
Currently Married	258	74.8
Separated/Divorced	17	4.9
Widowed	8	2.3

The gender distribution reveals a substantial overrepresentation of males compared to females in the sample. This imbalance could influence the outcomes of the study, particularly in areas where gender differences may play a role. It may be important to consider the implications of this skewed distribution when interpreting results or making generalizations based on the data.

**Predominantly Male:** The data indicates a significant majority of male respondents, comprising **86.7%** of the total sample. This suggests that the survey or study is heavily skewed towards a male demographic.

**Minority Female Representation:** Female respondents represent only **13.3%** of the total sample, highlighting a stark gender imbalance.

**Table 2: Gender of Respondents**

Gender		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	299	86.7
Female	46	13.3
Total	345	100

## Results

The downsizing of the hotel industry after covid-19 has affected the employees and organizational system as discussed in the table given below.

Table 3: Workforce Downsizing

S. No.	Workforce Downsizing in hotels	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Organisational downsizing has recently become an increasingly important issue that needs to be addressed to ensure fair employment practices.	129(37.4)	70(20.3)	51(14.8)	51(14.8)	44(12.8)
2	Downsizing has ramifications for everyone in the organisation, regardless of whether employees remain in the organisation or not.	101(29.3)	101(29.3)	52(15.1)	41(11.9)	50(14.5)
3	The employees might be suspicious about the future direction of the organisation and their role in it.	90(26.1)	102(29.6)	59(17.1)	45(13.0)	49(14.2)
4	Employees are often sceptical about change, as new work roles assigned may cause them anxiety and previous interpersonal relationships may be lost; however, companies regard downsizing positively.	86(24.9)	93(27.0)	70(20.3)	51(14.8)	45(13.0)
5	Downsizing essentially involves the reduction in the number of employees within the organisation, which can be achieved through several techniques, including retrenchments, early retirements, or casualization of staff.	106(30.7)	77(22.3)	68(19.7)	8(13.9)	46(13.3)
6	The downsizing may not necessarily result in the loss of jobs where employees are retrained and re-deployed or where other measures, such as non-replacement of staff that leave, occur.	76(22.0)	89(25.8)	70(20.3)	53(15.4)	57(16.5)
7	Downsizing encompasses a broader range of activities than mere layoffs.	89(25.8)	76(22.0)	70(20.3)	50(14.5)	60(17.4)
8	The internal factors include conflict between organisational components and strategic redesign of organisations, while the external factors consist of economic changes, technological advances, and competition.	91(26.4)	96(27.8)	57(16.5)	52(15.1)	49(14.2)
9	Businesses are striving to increase their performance, and managers have to deal with many challenges in order to put their companies ahead of competitors.	95(27.5)	87(25.2)	62(18.0)	53(15.4)	48(13.9)
10	The downsizing impacts the remaining employees, which can affect interpersonal skills.	90(26.1)	78(22.6)	71(20.6)	55(15.9)	51(14.8)

A strong consensus exists, with 58.6% (101 strongly agree and 101 agree) affirming that downsizing affects everyone. 15.1% remain neutral, while 26.4% disagree. A majority of respondents believe that downsizing has widespread ramifications, influencing not just those laid off but also those who stay within the organization. However, there is still a portion of the workforce that either disagrees or feels indifferent.

## Conclusion

The survey results indicate mixed sentiments towards downsizing within hotels. While there is substantial recognition of the wide-ranging effects of downsizing on employees, there is also a significant portion of the workforce that remains neutral or disagrees with specific aspects of the downsizing process. These varied responses suggest that while downsizing may be necessary from a business perspective, its impact on the workforce is not uniformly positive, and there are concerns regarding fairness, job security, and the broader consequences for organizational culture. Here below the table shows the descriptive analysis. The findings indicate that downsizing activities can have a profound effect on the psychological health of survivors, leading to increased anxiety, feelings of betrayal, and a risk of psychological ill health. Organizations must take proactive steps to support survivors through clear communication, fostering positive interpersonal relationships, and providing resources to address mental health concerns during such transitions.

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