

The mediating role of psychological capital between the impact of lockdown on Indian restaurant owners and their coping strategy: A qualitative analysis

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Abstract

The functioning of the world has come to an abrupt halt due to the outburst of the Covid-19. Business failures, irrespective of the reasons, have a devastating financial and psychological impact on the owners, employees, their families, and the community as a whole. There is very little research conducted on the psychological impact of the pandemic on business owners especially in terms of hospitality. The current research aims to examine the psychological impact of Covid-19 on the restaurant owners and elucidate their coping strategies about psychological capital (Hope, Efficacy, resilience and optimism). The study is qualitative, and an in-depth interview method was used to collect the data from restaurant owners located in Delhi. An interpretive approach using the NVivo 12 software was used to analyse the data. In times of turbulence, the psychological capital of individuals proves efficient in aiding organisational resilience. Through the research, the authors highlighted the mediating role of psychological capital in consolidating organisational resilience. Further, the paper provides an insight into the future trends of the restaurant functioning that the owners envision for a comeback of the sector.

Keywords: Psychological capital, hospitality, COVID-19, restaurant business, organisational resilience, India

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 breakout has significantly affected several destinations (Zheng et al., 2020), and the ramification is evident in the lives of people. As every economic and social sector of the world is hampered (Ozili & Arun, 2020), the brunt of the pandemic is worse on the hospitality and tourism industry. Gössling et al., (2020) pointed that the calamity may leave a sustainable strain on the sector in the coming years. Once sold-out hotels have closed down their operations and a hefty number of refunds have taken over their logbooks. Several venues are

rendered empty, and the direct burden of sustenance especially monetarily like fixed costs, employees' salary, and business losses are on the owners. The national authorities adopted measures advised by the World Health Organisation to combat the spread of disease (Niewiadomski, 2020; W. Strielkowski, 2020) such as regular screening of people at airports, social distancing, and even lockdown (Haryanto, 2020; Wong et al. 2020). Also, the Indian government urged business owners to pay salaries to their staff if possible, and restrain from laying off employees in their organisations (Rautray, 2020). This announcement which was more of a recommendation than a mandate was rather welcomed by the employees as their employers' moral obligation without considering the due operationality and practicality of the government advisory. The advisory implies that the owners are expected to absorb not just the losses from the investments and cost, they should take care of the families of their employees. Where the moral conception behind the idea seems just, this is bound to have a long-lasting impact on the businesses, especially on the newly opened restaurants, resulting in economical, psychological, and moral implications on business owners.

Business failures, irrespective of the reasons, have a devastating financial and psychological impact on the owners, employees, their families, and the community at large. It generates a negative emotional response from the owners who are directly affected by the dissolution (Jenkins et al., 2014). Joblessness due to business failure associated with subsequent unemployment can adversely affect the employee's psychological and physical well-being, social withdrawal, family disruption, and lower levels of children's attainment and well-being (Brand, 2015).

Tse et al. (2006) highlighted that a quick reaction aimed to minimise the damage and cost reductions are suitable strategies during crises. In times of turbulence, the psychological capital of individuals proves efficient in aiding organisational resilience (Fang et al., 2020). The efficiency of organizational resilience and psychological capital for the better functioning of a business are critical concepts that can provide organisations with a competitive edge (Luthans et al., 2004). Psychological capital is defined as a positive psychological state that focuses on individuals strengths (Avey et al., 2011) enabling a constructive outlook towards disasters and tragedies allowing effective organisation resilience.

The ongoing webinars and articles are stating out probable strategies for a comeback of the tourism sector after the pandemic. However, they fail to recognise the setback imposed by COVID-19 on the lives of the business owners and the blurry fate of the hospitality industry. Accordingly, the study aims to achieve three objectives:

- 1) To deconstruct the psychological impact of the lockdown on the owners and their reaction towards government measures
- 2) To explicate the role of four components of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism and psychological resilience) in affecting the individual coping strategies of the owners during a pandemic
- 3) To understand the influence of their psychological capital on organisational resilience.

2. Literature Review

2.1 COVID-19 and Hospitality Sector

The novel coronavirus has brought the world to a distressing low due to its highly contagious characteristic which possesses a grave risk to lives (Lippi et al., 2020). The pandemic not only restricted the people's movement but impacted global trade activities and hit the financial markets (Ozili & Arun, 2020). The repercussions of the disease were manifested in measures such as travel advisories, temporary closing down airline operations, physical distancing, shutting down tourist destinations, cancellation of events, and complete lockdown in many cities which has especially affected the tourism and hospitality sector (Nicola et al., 2020). These actions have resulted in widespread cancellation of trips by tourists leading to huge losses being incurred by the industry. For instance, the Florida Tourism Board reported that hotel occupancy in the state was 92 per cent in March 2019 which is reduced to 23 per cent in March 2020 due to COVID-19 (Florida Daily, 2020).

COVID-19 has frozen the hospitality business at an unimaginable large-scale (Tsionas, 2020), and caused a disruptive economic impact in India. The country has seen the lowest fiscal growth in three decades following the countrywide imposition of lockdown. Considering the months from February to June as the peak season for domestic and inbound travel in India, approximately US\$ 28 billion is at stake (LiveMint, 2020). The Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) cautioned that approximately 70 per cent of the total workforce employed directly or indirectly in the hospitality sector may get unemployed which would further cripple down the economy (Business Today, 2020). Some reports also highlight that COVID-19 is likely to impact the independent and small-scale budgeted hotels as inviting the venture capital would be challenging in the post-COVID-19 phase (BW Hotelier, 2020). In the context of the food and beverage sector, Lee and Ha (2014) and Basham (2007) emphasized that the pandemic may have an indirect impact on sales owing to the decline in the disposable income of consumers in the country. This situation has made it crucial to understand and predict major economic indicators and develop strategies for resilience in the hospitality sector. Nevertheless, the chaos created by the life-threatening virus is certainly unprecedented, and a sigh of relief is believed to come only after the development of a vaccine (Lippi et al., 2020).

2.2 Pandemic and Coping Techniques

Crisis in the forms of pandemics, terror attacks and flu breakouts have a history of damaging the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry globally (Cooper, 2008; Elachola et al., 2014; Seabra et al., 2013; Tomes, 2010). Ritchie et al (2011) defined crisis as an unforeseen situation emerging either from the internal or external environment which can hinder organisational operations, put the current and future viability at stake, and endanger customers and employees physically and psychologically. The service industry has inherently been dynamic and prone to the slightest of crisis, yet it has discerned ways to eloquently deal with the changing circumstances (Wadim Strielkowski, 2020; Wong et al., 2020). In milieu of the tourism and hospitality sector, crisis management strategies are suggested to minimise the impact on communities or destinations which are highly dependent on tourism (Beddoe, 2004). For instance, during the outbreak of SARS in Hong Kong in 2003, crisis management came into the limelight with the objective of helping the tourism and hospitality industry to survive in the market (Hsieh & Liang, 2004). Similarly, a few instances from the published literature have highlighted government initiatives undertaken to support the tourism sector. During the economic crisis of 2008 (Akova, 2011), the Turkish government compensated the employees and businesses by permitting late payment of excise taxes and offered labour tax compensation. It also invested in new tourism markets, especially European travellers who

wanted cost-effective and extended stay trips. In the current situation, various countries took lessons from the past and adopted coping mechanisms primarily by providing financial incentives to different industries for quick resilience (IMF, 2020).

In 2014, the outbreak of Ebola in Sierra Leone presented a scenario similar to COVID-19. Similar control measures were taken to control the spread such as closing down borders, restricting international airlines, shutting down schools, restaurants, nightclubs, and curfews were imposed in affected cities (Casey et al., 2017). This led to four major economic implications in the country i.e., direct impact on the employment, formal and informal economy were hampered due to restrictions, and the economic impact seeding fear and uncertainty amongst citizens. Consequently, the response was triggered to increase precautionary savings, which further depressed the economic activities. Likewise, a study conducted in the United States to analyze the impact of the recession on restaurants reported that the full-service restaurant sector was more vulnerable as compared to the limited-service restaurant sector due to which they need to develop proactive strategies to compete in the long-run (Lee and Ha, 2014). Suggestions related to the inclusion of inexpensive menu items with an emphasis on take-out service were offered. In another work, Tse et al (2006) reviewed the crisis management and recovery of restaurants in Hong Kong in response to SARS. The study proposed a four-step crisis management procedure to deal with the health crisis. It includes crisis categorization, the extent and type of the damage caused, formulation and implementation of strategies, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the recovery strategies. As the tourism and hospitality sector is an amalgamation of several other industries, different coping strategies are required to deal with different issues.

Previous studies which a conducted risk analysis of restaurants indicated that fast-food restaurants performed the best, followed by full-service restaurants and economy/buffet restaurants (H. Kim & Gu, 2003). To improve their risk-adjusted performance, it was suggested that restaurant firms should continue to consolidate and enhance revenue, lower operating costs, thus raising their stock returns without increasing the systematic risk. They should also work on lowering their unsystematic risks. Simialrly, Le and Needham (2019) conducted a study on small ethnic restaurant business owners which revealed that hard work, business interest, family support, prime location, and quality food are important for successful survival of small businesses. Nevertheless, businesses sometimes capitalize on the catastrophe and quickly adapt to the changing necessities of the people. For instance, in Hong Kong, the post-SARS capitalization on peoples' increasing concern on health and building their immunity offered some restaurants chances of profit where they offered specialized "anti-SARS" menu that claim to boost the immunity (Tse et al., 2006).

Several restaurants took steps to improve their social image to attract customers by setting up a community fund whereby a proportion of any patronage was donated to SARS-related causes. It is equally true that the outbreak of a health crisis gives rise to panic and fear of unhygienic and unhealthy physical environment. This necessitates deployment of an effective demonstrative policy to rebuild confidence in restaurants such as providing a clean uniform to the restaurant's staff, sanitization and routines of disinfecting. For instance, the American restaurant chain Ruby Tuesday reported that it regained 30 per cent of its lost customers through sanitation measure. Karaoke restaurants also advertised that all microphones were cleaned by ultraviolet rays and disinfectant spray to prevent the spread of the virus (Tse et al., 2006). As a business owner, it's essential to understand the shifting industry and look for opportunities for the restaurants. The effective change in management is necessary to cope with the crisis. It might include aligning suppliers and revising the menu, introducing a special offer with takeout/delivery

order to encourage future business, step-by-step and/or time-lapse cooking videos to increase consumer engagement, and encouraging participants to share tag/follow your page. Some restaurants have leveraged their access and relationship with suppliers by adding grocery store items to their “menu.” So, customer can order grocery basics to restaurant quality steaks and seafood directly from the restaurants. For example, Corner Butcher Shop, in La Verne, California, is selling fresh meat directly to consumers. Some restaurants have created specialized meal kits with cooking instructions which would enable customers to cook. This also brings more sales and improved brand image for the restaurant (Blog, 2020).

Studies on disaster management bespeaks of the important role that psychological capital play in influencing the coping mechanism of individuals under tough circumstances (Fang et al., 2020). Several works highlight the critical role of psychological capital in shaping the coping strategies of individuals post disaster (Ibañez et al., 2004; Sumer et al., 2005). The literature shows that coping is innately present in psychological capital and positive coping allows individuals accept the changing situation, implying resilience (Avey et al., 2008). However, there is a dearth of work on psychological capital in tourism and hospitality (e.g. Karatepe & Talebzadeh, 2016; Min et al., 2015; Schuckert et al., 2018) that investigates the role of coping strategies of the business owners during disasters in impacting the business resilience. Almost no focus is given on coping strategies and organisational resilience during a global crisis. Therefore, the current research is a pioneer in understanding the role of psychological capital between coping mechanism and organisational resilience in the COVID-19 scenario.

2.2.1 Measures taken to combat COVID-19

The government of different countries have taken several remedial measures to combat COVID-19 (Wilder-Smith et al., 2020). The US government introduced the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or the CARES Act (Dube et al., 2020). The law addresses the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, and is directly applicable to restaurants (US Treasury, 2020). A highlight of this program is that the portion of loan proceeds used for allowable expenses during the crisis is 100-per cent forgivable, as long as the organization has the same or larger number of FTEs (i.e., full-time equivalent which refers to the number of hours worked by a single employee in a week). Besides, 75 per cent of organization’s PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan must be used to pay its staff, including tips, even if a restaurant is currently accepting takeout/delivery orders, and the rest 25 per cent can be used for mortgage interest, rent, and utilities (Rewards Network | Blog, 2020). In Vienna, the government launched a scheme offering 50-euro (\$54) transferrable vouchers to every family in the city to spend in local restaurants and cafes. Moreover, owing to the collapse of tourism traffic, the federal government has extended help to restaurants by cutting taxes like VAT on non-alcoholic drinks and a special levy on sparkling wine (Groendahl, 2020). Similarly, the German government has announced help for the food industry by cutting VAT from 19 per cent to 7 per cent (Asquith, 2020). The government of some countries are also preparing strategies for the post Covid-19 phase as in Austria, restaurants have been allowed to reopen from 15 May 2020 provided they adhere to a set of rules, including a maximum number of four adults per table and a minimum 1 m distance between groups. Further, waiters must wear masks while taking orders and serving dishes, and diners are advised to book table in advance (Guardian, 2020).

2.3 Psychological Capital and Disasters

Psychological capital is expounded as a positive state of an individual comprised of efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience (Luthans et al., 2004). Confidence (Efficacy) allows individuals to employ enough measures to succeed in challenging tasks, hope facilitates the journey towards goal with the necessary measures, optimism brings a vigour towards achieving success, and resilience is the striving through adverse conditions to attain the desired objective (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). The characteristics of adoption to change and consistency to develop are important distinguishing properties of a person's psychological capital. Most studies on psychological capital are concentrated on employees with scanty attention given to the perspective of employers/owners (Peterson et al., 2011). In a study on psychological capital, the scholars demonstrate the positive influence of psychological capital on the leadership styles (Schuckert et al., 2018) and constructive impact on the hotel employees' perceived quality of work life (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015). Further, the components of psychological capital aid in increasing commitment towards organisations, desirable employee behaviour, dedication for work, job satisfaction (Avey et al., 2011; Paek et al., 2015) and also helps in reducing stress and anxiety (Min et al., 2015). These studies, however, do not cover the post-disaster or restaurant owners in their ambit thus making the current research important to address the gap.

2.4 Organisational Resilience

Organisational resilience is a multifaceted phenomenon that defines an organisation's ability to deal with uncertainty (A. V. Lee et al., 2013) and to react before the change is ultimately forced upon the organisation (Burnard & Bhamra, 2011). The inherent notion in the definition is the struggle for survival, adaptive strategies, restoration and redesigning business in adverse times to achieve maximum productivity (Vargo & Seville, 2011). The research in organisation resilience highlights factors such as resources, capital, governance, leadership style, awareness, social networks, collaboration and pre-planned strategies in eloquently developing the phenomenon (Barasa et al., 2018; Biggs et al., 2012). Scholars like Benight & Bandura (2004), Crabtree (2013), and Kuijer et al. (2014) advocate the influencing role of positive psychological capital on the ability of an individual to overcome disasters (Benight & Bandura, 2004; Crabtree, 2013; Kuijer et al., 2014). Yet no concrete research has been carried out to understand the owners' psychological impact during the pandemic and the influence of their psychological capital on the organisation's resilience. Scholarly literature divides organisational resilience into two dimensions, namely, planned and adaptive (A. V. Lee et al., 2013; McManus et al., 2008). The planned resilience is the predetermined strategies that comprise a business's disaster management plan and is most likely to be pre-disaster. The adoptive organisational resilience incorporates spontaneous creation of measures and developing fresh capabilities to respond effectively to the changing situations. Central to the idea of adaptive resilience is buoyancy and risk intelligence (Seville et al., 2015). Due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic of Covid-19, organisational resilience is a mix of adaptive and planned resilience with a larger inclination towards adaptive measures. Sutcliffe & Vogus (2003) advocate that individual and business resilience together formulate the overall organisational resilience. However, such a strong imposition that the psychological capital of owners has an impact on the organisation's resilience post-disaster has not been discussed explicitly in scholarly literature.

3. Methodology

Since the nature of the study is ambiguous and elastic, qualitative method was employed for comprehensive analysis (Saunders et al., 2013). The participants were selected through purposeful and snowball sampling

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This approach is best suited for investigating new research areas with a smaller sample size (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2013; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). The research is centred on the restaurants in the National Capital Region Delhi, India which has the third-highest cases of Corona in India till March 2021. A total of 22 restaurant owners were thoroughly interviewed. 36.4 per cent of the respondents own Quick Service Restaurants while 31.8 per cent of the data represent owners of Café and Fine Dining each. The restaurants were consciously chosen to represent diversity in the data. The participants were identified online and were approached via phone calls and further, and were interviewed through snowball sampling. The authors conducted thematic in-depth interviews following the fixed sequence of the questions which were thoroughly analysed using the NVivo 12 software. Thematic analysis for the interpretation of written documents such as interview transcripts is the most efficient application of the method (Fang et al., 2020; Walters, 2016). Although Nvivo is labour intensive, it enhances the quality of the investigation which is paramount in qualitative research (Sotiriadou et al., 2014).

The questions on the mental wellbeing of the owners, their response to the government measures related to the hospitality industry and the strategies that their restaurant has adopted to operate during and post lockdown were raised. It incorporated questions like ‘If you have to define your mental state in five words during lockdown what would they be?’, ‘What all future strategies will you employ for the comeback?’, ‘What are your views on the measures adopted by the government so far for the businesses?’ The interviews were conducted and recorded on the phone for 81.8 per cent of the respondents and over the Zoom Call for 18.2 per cent of the interviewees with their due consent. The average interview call lasted for 35 minutes. Further, the interviews were structured in a discussion like natural settings to allow meaningful responses (Chima, 2020; Griffiee, 2005).

The recordings in the English language were converted verbatim into transcripts. The translation was corroborated by the participants once the data was prepared. The transcripts were read frequently, coded in the NVivo and a complete thematic analysis was undertaken in the semantics of the transcription (Nowell et al., 2017; Walters, 2016) with adherence to the themes and objective of the paper. The initial coding was steered by the particular notions expounded by the respondents. The analysis incorporated identifying commonalities in the words used, coding of the words and phrases, exploring their relationship, addressing the difference in the thought, investigating a pattern and consolidating the organizing theme (Parsons et al., 2019; Vaismoradi et al., 2016).

4. Results

The queries like word frequency, word tree, text search, cloud tags along with a project and mind map was generated and thoroughly analysed.

4.1 Psychological Impact

The first objective of the research was to analyse the mental state of the owners and their psychological reaction towards the lockdown, and understand their response on the government strategies. The thematic analysis revealed that the sudden announcement of the initial lockdown for twenty-one days came as a shock to the restaurant owners in India and they unanimously wished the government had given them a heads up of at least 24 hours. Nonetheless, in the extensive talk and interview, all the restaurant owners agreed and supported the lockdown.

According to them, it was an appropriate action for the pandemic to break the chain of infection. The lockdown action of India was appreciated the world over, including the WHO. However, 22.7 per cent of restaurateurs felt that the government could have let the food delivery option remain hassle-free.

The current infrastructure and expertise of restaurateurs could have been used to prepare and distribute food in this time of crisis at no profit and loss which would have ensured the restaurant kitchens running and work for at least a few. The experts could have aided the government in formulating a precarious plan for the industry.

(11 Course Restaurant)

The unprecedented nature of the lockdown left the fate of the restaurants unknown. Also, lockdowns generated fear of loss of employment, and social distancing prompted a chaotic and painful process of mass return for internal migrants in India. The events led to drastic ramification on the physical and mental health of the people (Bo et al., 2020; Shuja et al., 2020). The restaurant owners presented a homogenous viewpoint when enquired about their mental health during the lockdown and their perspective about the government measures to tackle Covid-19 about the hospitality industry. Figure 1 portrays the map generated through Nvivo. It enlists the reasons behind the mental condition of the owners in a hierarchical order. When the respondents were asked to describe their mental health in 5 words hitherto, the unanimous emotion of stress, anxiety, tensed and helplessness echoed in the interview followed by the feeling of fear of the unknown and unruly burden. The participants mentioned the uncertain issues of rent, prices of the regular taxes and licenses levied by the government, customer perception about eating out and ordering food along the continuous spread of coronavirus were the major concerns.

The economic and moral pressure on us owners is tremendous. On one hand we are unable to earn even the rent of the establishment and on the other hand we are liable for our employees. It takes a lot of effort to find a capable staff and talented chef that no owner would like to lose. However, in times when the owners have to choose between the survival of the business and retention of the staff, the former often wins.

(Sam and Scrooge Restaurant, Noida)

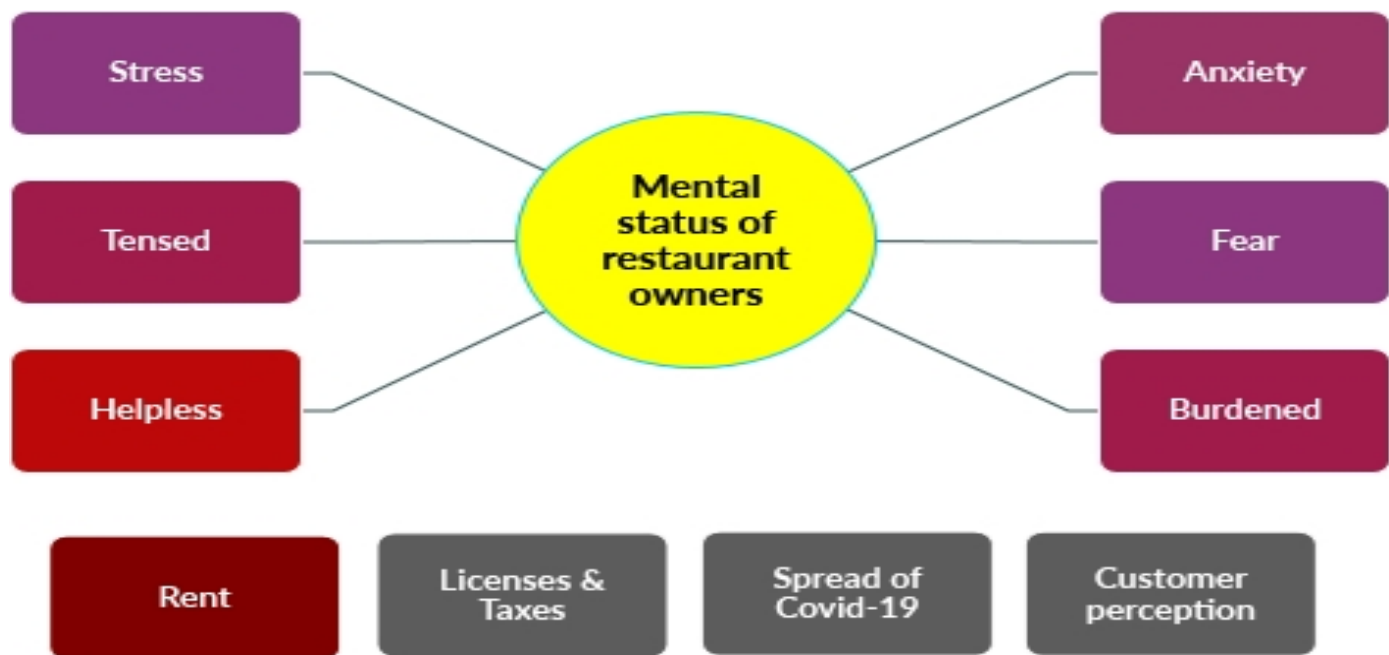


Figure 1: Psychological status of Restaurant owners

While acknowledging the necessity of the lockdown, the owners expressed their disappointment with the government for not bringing out any plan in favour of the hospitality sector despite its significant role in contributing to the GDP and employment (Tsionas, 2020). The owners felt directionless to find sustenance for their business and their family. Besides, the liability of their employees has burdened and pressurised them. The interview analysis revealed that the owners are finding it difficult to pay the rent of their establishment and are already worried about the cost of the upcoming licenses which is topped by the feeling of the moral obligation of the owners to fulfil the necessities of their employees which is further endangering their mental health. The quandary is severe in small scale Quick Service Restaurants and newly opened restaurants where the owners are in a predicament of shutting their restaurants as they are unable to maintain the overall operations. However, the well-established restaurants are in better condition and are calmly maintaining their mental health during the catastrophe. The owner of a famous restaurant in Delhi said:

We are stressed and apprehensive about the current condition, however we understand that it is imperative to maintain calm and patiently wait for the worse to get over. You need to let nature takes its course. We are already planning to work on our comeback model. Also, we are the middle people between the government and the employees. If the government does not burden us too much then we can absorb the maximum pressure that we can and moderate the effect on our employees.

(Pindi Restaurant, Delhi)

As revealed by the study, the restaurant business, especially the new restaurants have thin margins. The small restaurants are adversely affected by the pandemic as they are mostly on rent. Since the initial struggle of any establishment is to create an identity of its own, the new small-scale restaurant aims to emerge as a brand first and then simultaneously work towards earning decent profits. They establish their business with a small workforce, often near college institutes or offices and are seen as indulging in multiple works like waiting, managing and often delivering orders themselves rather than only supervising. The college students and the workforce of Delhi largely come from nearby states. With the lockdown and mandate to work from home, most of the people opted to leave for their home which further reduced their target audience.

We are unable to pay the rent of our QSR and unfortunately are considering to shut down our business. We opened on January 2020 and since then we aimed to establish our name first then focus on the profit margins. However, since the first lockdown we have been unable to give even half the rent and paying the salary of the employees seems out of the question. Rather than spending all our savings in just paying rent we are deliberating on temporarily going out of business.

-They Make Tacos

Also, not all restaurants have opted to work during the lockdown. The government had allowed only home deliveries and many fine dining restaurant and café found it feasible to remain shut (Dube et al., 2020). The cost of opening the restaurant will surpass the profit or even the bare minimum earning.

We are famous for our ambience, service and dining experience. We have spent hefty amount on our liquor license and work thrive on being a fine dining restaurant. It is not feasible to only resort to home delivery and take away during the lockdown since the mere cost of opening the café will be more than the sale we will make.

- Jade Garden

4.2. Psychological Capital in Coping Mechanism

The second objective of the paper is to explicate the role of four components of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism and psychological resilience) in affecting the individual coping strategies of the owners during a pandemic. Figure 2 illustrates the use of elements of psychological capital embedded in the coping mechanism of the owners. Possessing the emotion of hope can aid in mitigating the detrimental impact of the pandemic on the mental health of the owners and facilitate increased motivation to bounce back swiftly and robustly (Snyder, 2002). Self-efficacy is a crucial enabler in maintaining the course of action to encounter different situation (Bandura (1982), can help in reduction of post-traumatic stress (Benight & Bandura, 2004), and better equip people to handle challenging situations (M. Kim et al., 2012). Similarly, optimism allows to ward

off distress, anxiety and simultaneously view the situation in a more positive framework rendering greater resilience (Kuijer et al., 2014; Scheier et al., 1994). Lastly, the quality of psychological resilience enables individuals to develop plans and capacity to come out triumphant from difficult circumstances (Luthans et al., 2004). The coping techniques of individuals reflects their desire towards attenuating stressors and building resilience (Latack & Havlovic, 1992).

The data analysis revealed that the owners through their psychological capital are building coping strategies to enable higher organisational resilience to counter the detrimental effects of the pandemic. The employing of optimism, self-efficacy, hope and psychological resilience generated a pathway allow them to overcome obstacles, general plans for revival and adapt to the changing circumstances. The examination of data showed that owners are busy managing the finances, talking to suppliers and real estate owners in order to develop a new plan of actions to make the best out of the worst situation. They are also restructuring the salaries and at the same time helping employees in case they are in need. The planning and preparation for reopening post lockdown are also going on including placing orders for masks, gloves, sanitizers etc. Additionally, they are also working on revising the current business models. A high consideration for the employees increased concern about their wellbeing was observed among the restaurant owners. Only 3 per cent of restaurant owner actually confirmed laying off employees. The majority have slashed salaries and are paying somewhere 30 to 50 per cent of their salaries.

Psychological capital often known as “HERO within” (Hope, Efficacy, Resiliency, and Optimism), not only results in superior performance but also gives the required persistence and resilience to sail through the tough times. The combination intangible resources psychological capital and social capital help entrepreneurs to cope with the challenging role of entrepreneurship in challenging times thereby enhancing chances of success. This intangible capital of the owner acts as a cushion in crisis safeguarding and sustaining the organisation. The various measure taken during lockdown can be summarised as per the below figure classified in terms of activities which are owner-oriented, staff-oriented or focused towards effective operationality. An amalgamation of hope, optimism, resilience and efficacy is conspicuous in the measures undertaken by the owners.

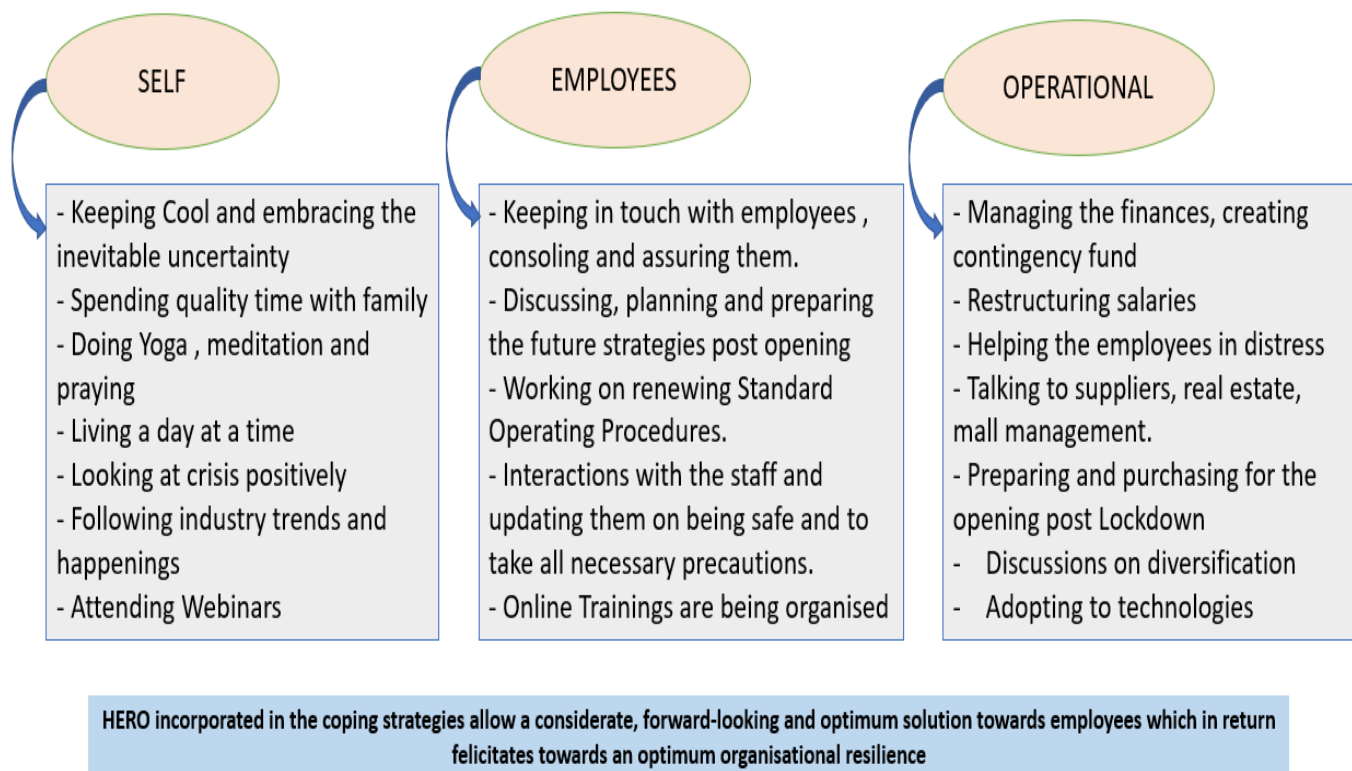


Figure 2: The coping strategies of restaurant owners

The zeal, positive attitude and an opportunistic perspective are crucial attributes that both the employees and the employers need to develop to adopt to crises and use the circumstances as a chance to learn to improve capabilities allowing larger resilience (McManus et al., 2008).

The lockdown scenario is beyond economics where the demand and supply both are hit. The entire economics works on the delicate balance between demand and supply but in lockdown both are hit and it has an all-time low demand and supply with a severe operational and manpower crunch.

-Chef Rajeev Gautam, Demiurgic Hospitality Pvt Limited

5. Discussion

It is difficult to make any concrete predictions about the scenario post Covid-19 considering the volatility of the situation and the dynamics of the society (Romagosa, 2020). The predictions by the scholars for the SARS crisis was that the restaurants will be gravely impacted and the post SARS studies revealed that the restaurants were

actually one of the worse hit in several countries because of the pandemic (Keogh-Brown & Smith, 2008). Therefore, the assessment is essential to make informed decisions in the future where they are supposed to be considered with caution (UNWTO, 2020). The current study, with the help of the collected data through interviews, lists out possible changes that will be implicated in the functioning and managing of the Indian restaurants with the relaxations in the lockdown. Consumers living through epidemics and pandemics have a considerable influence on them and with the change in the demand side, the supply side is bound to witness changes (Hall et al., 2020). The consumer behaviour, in general, will be affected by the household income, fear of transmission and the habit of adhering to social distancing norms. The diner's concerns around health & sanitation, the economic slowdown will exponentially hamper consumer spending. In the time to come, the collective focus would be on word hygiene (Dube et al., 2020) and it would be a critical and inseparable dimension of food service. Further, social distancing even with the relaxation in lockdown will stay for a considerable period of time. It is implied that substantial changes will be undertaken by businesses of all types and sizes to serve what will be a far more health-focused consumer in the light of this pandemic. Two key trends would be the new normal for the restaurants after the pandemic namely, delivery or take away and adhering to social distancing norms. With the social distancing norms, the layout will have to be re-thought, re-configured and re-purposed (Wyld, 2020).

All of the interviewed restaurant owners have a strong belief and faith that that restaurant industry will revive soon but in what form, what number and what structure is unclear. The operating models will have to change. Sustainability will be the primary concern of the stakeholders followed by profit. One common line of thought shared by all restaurant owners are that customers' sentiments towards re-patronising food outlets post lockdown will change the outlook of the industry. The fear developed due to the infectious virus has changed the consumer behaviour, and the change in demand will be visible in the supply (Addo et al., 2020). The framework of new norms and precautions based on the insights shared by the restaurant owners have been listed in Table 1. The table demonstrates the probable changes the restaurants will witness with the relaxation in the social distancing norms. It highlights reforms in almost all major areas including ambience, service style, supply chain, costing and business model.

Table 1: Framework for new norms and precautions in restaurant business

Area	Effect Factors	Operational Impact
Winning Back Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health focused and hygiene conscious customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong image building, reassurance on food quality, safety and demonstrative actions.

Ambience, Sanitization and hygiene protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed seating arrangement • Regular Sanitisation • Temperature checking and hygiene protocols • Demonstrative measures • Disposable dishes and cutlery • Live streaming /display of kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less dining capacity, less turnover, less revenue • Additional costing for additional measures resulting in increased confidence • Masks and gloves worn by waiters, sanitization and cleaning in front of the customer will add to cost • Visual assurance of safe cooking
Supply Chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply Chain alignment • Trimmed menus, shorter and smarter, Lesser variety • Special menus with special ingredients could be planned • Dishes with health benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailability and shortage of material • Less inventory carrying cost • Requirement and procurement of special ingredients • Tapping of new market • Will require additional marketing costs
Manpower Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently manpower is all gone so once restaurants would reopen, they would have limited staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The menus prepared in the kitchen and the seating capacity would have to be planned as per the manpower
Service style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Server would have to be at a safe distance • Limited or zero Contact service • Special service equipment and gears ensuring safe distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New service style ensuring safe distance and yet personalised will have to be worked upon • Digitalisation and application-based service
Costing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the customer and the owner will have to be cost conscious, customer as he has less disposable money and owner because of lockdown impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited menus • Less staff • Economic Pricing • Restricted supply of raw materials
New anchors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring back the customer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeemable discount vouchers, combo offers, special offers, loyalty deals and cards.

5.1 Theoretical Contributions

The literature on post disaster highlight that mere adoption to the changing circumstances is not sufficient for organisational resilience, it needs to be supported by creativity, constructive development, rapid decision making and innovation (Biggs et al., 2012; Orchiston et al., 2016). During the testing scenario such as disasters, the psychological resilience also encourages individuals to employ a firefighting approach to solve problem (Fang et al., 2020). Firefighting approach focuses on generate immediate action plans to solve the problem in hand, thus working towards a better organisational resilience of businesses during challenging situations (Ates & Bititci, 2011). The data set showcased that none of the business had a management plan in place in case of disasters and they were mostly relying on quick action plans during such times.

5.2 Practical Implications

The challenge is to deal with a paradigm shift from – service-oriented customer to a more nutritionally and hygiene conscious, fearful customer with limited spending ability. The industry is dealing with guests intimidated by the transmission of the virus and have posed self-restrictions for their wellbeing and safety (Hall et al., 2020). The industry of tourism and hospitality is one of the worst hit industries given the timely demand of social distancing (Gössling et al., 2020). In order to encourage the customers to dine out, the fear has to be neutralised by using demonstrative measures targeted towards confidence building and by inculcating trust. To deal effectively with the crisis, an efficient management plan is crucial to be enforced with a strict adherence to viable code and conduct (Tse et al., 2006). Various hotels have already started rolling campaigns showing the protective measures and protocols they have set in place for the guest safety at all points.

The analysis from the interviews revealed a focus of the management on enhancing the hygiene protocols and construct the setting of the restaurant more feasible towards social distancing. The measures towards maintaining social distancing include a less dining capacity reducing the number of customers for dining in, minimum contact between the service staff and the customers, a more suitable uniform for the staff adorned with mask and gloves and following proper protocols before admitting guest to a restaurant such as temperature checks and sanitisation. These things will help to regain the faith of people in safe dining. The struggle to find suitable staff for the restaurant was also echoed by the restaurant owners since they had acquired the most compatible skills for their restaurants through years of hard work and the retention became difficult in the lockdown. Also, the industry hires the maximum number of contractual daily wage labourers, which will be tiresome in the condition where you have to be certain of the employee being completely hygienic and safe to work. Several media and scholarly works highlight the dependence on the use of technology in industries will witness an exponential increase (Gretzel et al., 2020) where the customers will prefer paying via electronic means, make reservations beforehand and avoid any possible touch with the environment. The research bespeaks of the mere use of the menu is highly unhygienic since it is passed into various hands (Christine Mikstas, 2019) and a digitisation of the menu or rise in the use of disposable menus can be one of the options for the restaurants.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

The authors conducted the study when the countrywide lockdown was imposed in India. After September 2020, the lockdown is lifted, and people have started dining out. Future studies can analyse the change in consumers' dining patterns, the effectiveness of the safety guidelines at restaurants, and coping strategies undertaken by the employees working in hotel and restaurants in different countries. A comparative study on employers' and employees' psychological capital and coping mechanism would provide a comprehensive view of the sector. The study is not without limitations. Firstly, it is qualitative, and thus more empirical research is required to study the mediating role of psychological capital in a crisis. Secondly, the social desirability bias was observed as owners were less critical of the measures undertaken by the government.

6. Conclusions

The road to recovery and stability of the restaurants seems far-fetched, and just like any other industry, it is largely centered around the idea of adoptability and change (Chang et al., 2020). As seen in earlier pandemics, the necessity of developing a crisis management plan is imperative for sustenance (Tew et al., 2008) and undoubtedly, the restaurants will see multiple alteration to cope with the changing demand side. The restaurant owners unanimously demonstrated their ideology to survive the year 2021 and focus minimal on the profits. However, the world recovered from epidemics and pandemics such as the SARS and Ebola, the repercussions were long lasting (Siu & Wong, 2004). The industries are developing more resilient, enduring, and sustainable business models for revival. The restaurants are bound to face problems while recovering especially as they generally have limited liquidity and considerably small profit margins. The initial unlocking down process may prove beneficial to the fast food joints over fine-dining restaurants (Gössling et al., 2020). It is obvious that over time, the restaurants will develop innovative strategies to cope with the changing scenario and needs of the people. The restaurant would be required to project a safe environment starting from a clean, sanitised kitchen, hygienic staff, sanitised seating area, sanitised supply chain and better ventilation system along with several other measures. The stress would now be more on cleanliness and hygiene standards (Assaf & Scuderi, 2020). The reviews on social media sites may resonate the Covid safe ratings and reviews. So, it would not be wrong to say that restaurant have to fight a double battle one with Covid and other with a browbeaten demanding guest who has lost trust and no longer seen dining as safe. All these implications are a viewpoint from the restaurant owners and are subject to serious considerations.

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