

# Hotel Management Graduates' Perception Towards Career in Hotel Industry Post-Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine and understand the perception of hotel management graduates toward a career in the hotel industry post-covid-19 pandemic. The study was conducted by surveying a total of 112 hotel management graduates from various colleges and universities located in the state of Karnataka, India. After a careful analysis of the gathered data statistically, the study has found that hotel management graduates carry a positive perception towards a career in the hotel industry post-pandemic. Even though their studies were affected by the covid-19 pandemic, most of their initial decisions regarding a career in the hotel industry have not changed. Most hotel management graduates prefer to work abroad and have career growth in the hotel industry since the salary packages offered to freshers by many local hotels considerably do not meet the expectation of hotel management graduates. The study has also discovered that many job opportunities around the world, personal choice of profession, and enthusiasm for hospitality are the three most motivating factors that keep hotel management graduates in the hotel industry post-pandemic.

**Keywords:** Hotel management, perception, covid-19, career, hotel industry, post-pandemic, graduates

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India is one of the largest tourist destinations in the world, there are thousands of accommodation facilities available all-around India. Not only accommodations but many other facilities such as restaurants, casinos, pubs, and clubs etc., which requires trained and professional human capital to carry out day-to-day functions. These facilities have created a vast demand for hotel management graduates in the industry. With the growing demand for the hotel management graduates in India, many colleges, institutions, and universities started offering professional degree programs in hotel management with specializations like food and beverage, front office, housekeeping etc., and many students who are passionate about building a career in hospitality industry join those degree programs each year.

With a scenario like this, the entire hotel industry in India has suddenly faced the global pandemic covid-19 for over two years starting from the end of 2019 (starting of the covid-19 pandemic) till February 2022 (as India revised the guidelines for international travelers no longer needing the covid negative test and mandatory quarantine as of 14th February 2022). During that time hotel industry along with other tourism and hospitality industries has dealt with several difficulties to sustain in the industry. The hotels were almost empty as no international tourists were allowed to visit India and domestic tourists could not travel due to curfews and lockdowns all over the country. There were major employee cut-offs and long unpaid leaves given to the hotel employees due to which many hotel staff have become unemployed. Many hotel management students were not even able to get into an internship in a hotel which is a part of their course curriculum. Though some hotels have turned their accommodation facilities into paid quarantine facilities in collaboration with the government health authorities that did not help most employees to get back their jobs. Some hotel employees have even tested positive for covid-19 while working in hotels which leaves a question of the well-being of the hotel employees and whether it is safe for them to work in the hotel industry anymore or not.

As with any other sector, the education sector also suffered due to covid-19 pandemic in India. Hotel management students who graduated in the years 2020 to 2022 faced difficulties while studying as well as getting jobs in the industry as new graduates. The hotel industry is still recovering from the damages caused by covid-19 pandemic and it may take

a few more months or years to return to normal as pre-pandemic and have some developments. Since there were so many changes and challenges in hotel industry over the past few years, this study is an attempt to examine and understand the hotel management graduate's perception towards a career in the hotel industry post-pandemic. This study focuses on the objectives of the study and this may help hoteliers, students and those who are willing to build a career in hostel industry to get an idea of the hotel management graduate's perception towards a career in the hotel industry after a global pandemic.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the perception of hotel management graduates towards career in hotel industry post pandemic.
- To study the career preferences of hotel management graduates post pandemic.
- To study the factors motivating hotel management graduates to remain in the hotel industry post pandemic.

## 3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As the Indian hotel industry is recovering from the damages caused by covid-19 pandemic and there is a massive professional human capital available, it is important to study and understand the perception of hotel management graduates convey towards a career in the hotel industry as it can affect the future of both graduates and the hotel industry. Considering this situation this study mainly focuses on studying the perceptions and preferences of hotel management graduates toward a career in the hotel industry. The study was conducted for a period of two months.

## 4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The sample size is limited to 112 respondents due to the time constraints.
- The sample respondents are limited to Karnataka state which makes it difficult to generalize it to the entire country.
- Answers given by respondents may be subjected to personal bias.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To study the hotel management graduate's perception towards careers in the hotel industry, descriptive type research was undertaken by conducting a survey among hotel management graduates in Karnataka state, India. The survey consisted of a self-constructed close-ended questionnaire. Both primary and secondary data have been collected and used in this study. Primary data were gathered through the survey by sending the questionnaire through google forms and secondary data were gathered through already available sources like journals, newspapers, and books. The convenience non-probability sampling method is adopted and the sample size is 112 respondents. Data were gathered for a period of one month starting from October 2022 and data were analyzed with statistical tools such as percentage analysis, tables, and graphs using Microsoft excel.

## 6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Rajeshree S. Pol and Hemraj Patil (2015):** in this study titled "Perception of Final Year Hotel Management Students towards Working in Hotel Industry", the authors focused on the final year students and their perception by considering their insights through a survey across Pune, where they found that most of the students have changed their mindset after being in the industry during their training. Many of the students showed interest to work in the industry and they have already decided on their area according to their interests. Few of them were not interested to continue because of the long working hours, less salary packages offered by the hotel along with the factors which are related aspects of hotel jobs. The research was conducted with a sample size of 74 and both primary and secondary data have been collected. From the data, they found that majority of the students are interested to work in the food and beverage service department

followed by food and beverage production and accommodation management. They also found that the dissatisfaction level with a margin of 8% and satisfactory data they found mixed opinions on the selection of departments.

**Zubaidah Mohd Ali Tan et al. (2016):** the purpose of this study titled “Graduates’ Perception on the Factors Affecting Commitment to Pursue Career in the Hospitality Industry” is to determine the barriers influencing hospitality undergraduates pursuing a career in the hospitality industry. The study was done by collecting data from 70 final-year diploma students (both male and female) majoring in hotel and tourism management, at UiTM (Pulau Pinang), Malaysia. The authors measured the student’s mindset by taking four variables into consideration which are, the nature of work, social status, pay benefits, and commitment to work in the hospitality industry. In this study, they found that two variables were statistically significant to the commitment hospitality industry which were social status and pay benefits.

**T.S Natarajan and Prof. G.P Raman (2018):** in this study “a study on hotel management graduates’ perception and preferences of jobs in hotel industry in Chennai city” the authors have surveyed 259 respondents studying hotel management in various institutions in Chennai city and found out that both internal and external factors significantly influencing among final year hotel management graduates towards the job in the hotel industry in Chennai city. The authors have also found that the most preferred job roles in hotels are in finance, housekeeping, front office and food and beverage. The study also shows that most of the final-year students prefer to get jobs in the hotel industry post-graduation and students’ responses are mostly favorable towards hotel jobs with specific choices.

**Muhammad Iqbal Rosyidi (2021):** in this study titled “Undergraduate students’ perception and attitudes towards a career in tourism industry: The case of Indonesia”. The author relatively collected the data from the final year graduates of diploma and bachelor’s degree students. The research was conducted using the quantitative method, author conducted a poll in a form of a questionnaire and collected the data from a sample size of 422 from several universities and institutions across Indonesia. The study found that career advancement and salaries were considered important factors but got a bad perception. During the research, the author considered three factors which were a fun work environment, enjoyable work, and friendly co-workers. As per the statistical data, one can observe that 90.5% of 422 respondents desired to pursue careers in the tourism industry before COVID-19. However, the number decreased to 81.5% when the situation shifted during COVID-19. And in general, students’ perceptions indicated that jobs in the tourism industry could not be able to satisfy their expectations.

**Miss Aditi Joshi and Dr. Suvarna Sathe (2021):** in this study titled “Impact of covid 19 on employment opportunities for fresh graduates in hospitality & tourism industry” they surveyed hotel management students who have finished their industrial training through a questionnaire in a multiple-choice format using the google forms as a tool. Based on the response they have disclosed the Perception of final-year students toward the hotel industry and the importance of industrial training. Industrial training helps the student to work in the industry and learn new skills that help them in their future sustainability and growth. As per the statistical data mentioned in the research, even though the pandemic affected their industrial training 95% of students are willing to continue in the hotel industry even after a global pandemic.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS

The primary data collected by surveying 112 hotel management graduates in the state of Karnataka, India have been statistically analysed using Microsoft Excel and interpreted using tables and graphs. Percentage analysis is the major statistical tool adopted in this study.

**a. Demographic data analysis.**

TABLE 1  
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	87	77.68
Female	25	22.32
Total	112	100
<b>Age</b>		
20 – 24	79	70.54
25 – 29	31	27.67
Above 30	02	1.79
Total	112	100
<b>Graduation Year</b>		
2020	15	13.39
2021	52	46.43
2022	45	40.18
Total	112	100
<b>Specialization</b>		
Front Office Management	30	26.79
Housekeeping Management	09	8.04
Food & Beverage Service Management	40	35.71
Food & Beverage Production Management	33	29.46
Total	112	100
<b>Current Occupation</b>		
Working	64	57.14
Higher Studies	28	25.0
Unemployed	20	17.86
Total	112	100
<b>Reason to pursue hotel management</b>		
Personal Interest	71	63.39
Suggested by family/friend	11	9.82
Availability of jobs around the world	30	26.79
Total	112	100

**Interpretation:** The above table represents the demographic profile of the sample respondents. The majority of the respondents (77.68%) were male graduates while the remaining (22.32%) were female. Most of the respondents (70.54%) are in the age category of 20 – 24 years followed by 25 – 29 years (27.67%) and above 30 (1.79%). The majority of the respondents (46.43%) graduated in the year 2021 followed by 2022 (40.18%) and 2020 (13.39%). The majority of the respondents (35.71%) have opted for food & beverage service management as their specialization followed by food & beverage production management (29.46%), front office management (26.79%) and housekeeping management (8.04%). Most of the respondents (57.14%) are currently working while 25% of respondents have opted for higher studies and 17.86% of respondents are currently unemployed or searching for jobs. The majority (63.39%) of respondents have chosen hotel management courses due to personal interest. 26.79% of respondents have chosen hotel management due to the availability of jobs around the world and 9.82% of respondents have chosen hotel management courses as their family/friends suggested it to them.

**b. Effect of covid-19 on perception of hotel management graduates.**

TABLE 2  
EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON HOTEL MANAGEMENT GRADUATES PERCEPTION

Questions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Were your studies affected by covid-19?</b>		
Yes	91	81.25
No	21	18.75
Total	112	100
<b>Do you think it is safe to work in hotel industry post pandemic?</b>		
Yes	86	76.79
No	26	23.21
Total	112	100
<b>Were the initial decisions regarding your career in hotel industry changed due to covid-19 pandemic?</b>		
Yes	49	43.75
No	63	56.25
Total	112	100

**Interpretation:** Table 2 demonstrate the statistical analysis of the effect of covid-19 pandemic on hotel management graduates’ perception. The majority (81.25%) of respondents believe that their studies were affected by covid-19 pandemic while 18.75% of respondents believe that their studies were not affected by the covid-19 pandemic. The majority of 76.79% of respondents feel safe working in the hotel industry post-pandemic and 23.21% of respondents do not feel safe working in the hotel industry post-pandemic. Most of the respondents (56.25%) state that their initial decisions regarding their career in the hotel industry have not changed due to the pandemic while 43.75% of respondents state that their initial decisions regarding their career in the hotel industry have changed due to the pandemic.

**c. Job preferences of hotel management graduates**

TABLE 3  
JOB PREFERENCES OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT GRADUATES

Question	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Where do you prefer to work in hotel industry?</b>		
India	30	26.79
Abroad	82	73.21
Total	112	100
<b>Are you currently working in hotel industry or are you interested in getting jobs in hotel industry?</b>		
Working in hotel industry	47	41.96
Interested in working in hotel industry	31	27.68
Not interested in working in hotel industry	34	30.36
Total	112	100

**Interpretation:** Table 3 represents the statistical analysis of job preferences of hotel management graduate’s post-pandemic. According to the data, the majority (73.21%) of respondents prefer to work abroad (in foreign hotels) and only 26.79% of respondents prefer to work in Indian hotels. Most of the respondents (41.96%) are currently working in the hotel industry and 27.68% of respondents are interested in working in the hotel industry, and at the same time, 30.36% of respondents are not interested in working in the hotel industry post-pandemic.

**d. Analysis of ratings given by hotel management graduates.**

**Q.1** How do you rate the hotel industry for surviving the covid-19 pandemic despite lockdowns and a lot of ups and downs?

**Q.2** How do you rate the hotel industry for providing job opportunities to hotel management graduates post-pandemic?

TABLE 4  
RATING ANALYSIS

Q NO	Very bad		Bad		Neutral		Good		Very good	
	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%
Q.1	10	8.93	06	5.36	26	23.21	50	44.64	20	17.86
Q.2	07	6.25	12	10.72	24	21.43	50	44.64	19	16.96

n = 112

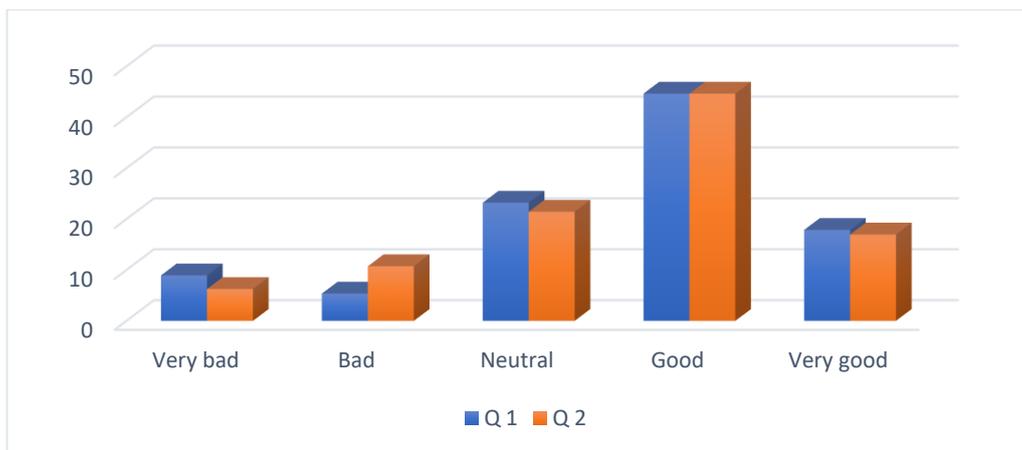


FIGURE 1  
GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF TABLE 4

**Interpretation:** Table 4 and figure 1 demonstrate the statistical analysis of the ratings given by hotel management graduates for Q1 - How do you rate the hotel industry for surviving covid-19 pandemic despite lockdowns and a lot of ups and downs? 8.93% of respondents rated very bad and 5.63% rated bad and about 23.21% of respondents remained neutral. The majority of 44.64% of respondents rated good and 17.86% rated very good. Q2 - How do you rate the hotel industry for providing job opportunities to hotel management graduates post-pandemic? 6.25% of respondents rated very bad while 10.71% rated bad and about 21.43% remained neutral. The majority of 44.64% of respondents rated good while 16.96% rated very good. According to the data it is observable that the majority of respondents rated good and very good for both questions.

**e. How do you agree that there are job opportunities for freshers in hotel industry post pandemic?**

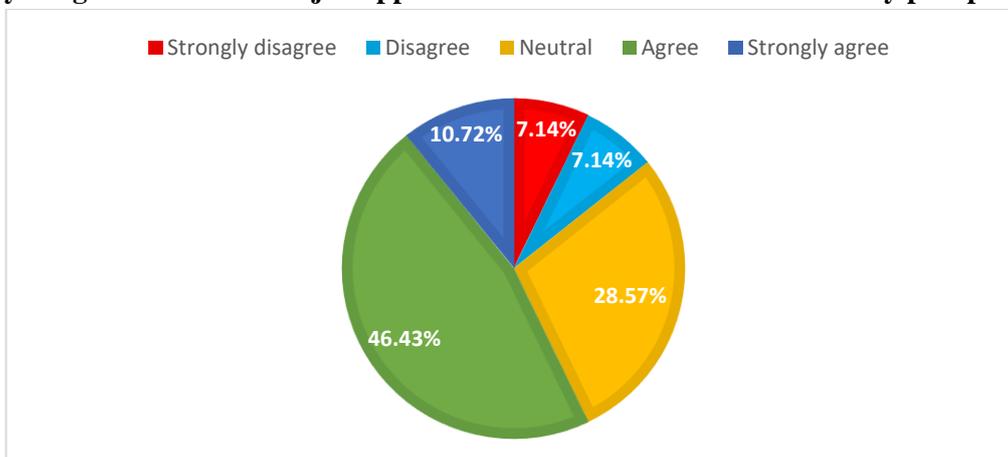


FIGURE 2  
AGREEMENT ANALYSIS 1

**Interpretation:** The pie chart in figure 2 represents the statistical analysis of respondents' agreement on the availability of job opportunities for freshers in hotels post-pandemic. 7.14% of respondents equally strongly disagree and disagree at the same time. The majority of 46.43% of respondents agree and 10.72% of respondents strongly agree with the fact that there are job opportunities for freshers in the hotel industry post-pandemic. About 28.57% of respondents remained neutral without giving their opinion.

**f. How do you agree that there is a career growth for you in the hotel industry post pandemic?**

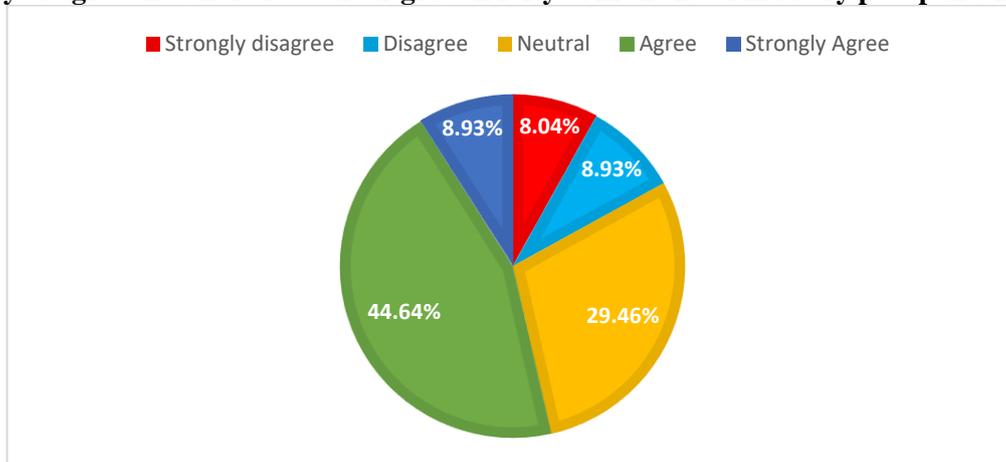


FIGURE 3  
AGREEMENT ANALYSIS 2

**Interpretation:** The pie chart in figure 3 demonstrates the statistical analysis of respondents' agreement on career growth in the hotel industry post-pandemic. According to the data, 8.04% of respondents strongly disagree and 8.93% of respondents disagree with the statement. However, the majority of 44.64% of respondents strongly agree with the statement and 8.93% of respondents agree. A considerable percentage of 29.46% of respondents remained neutral without giving their opinion.

**g. How do you agree that the salary packages offered to freshers by hotels post pandemic are reasonable?**

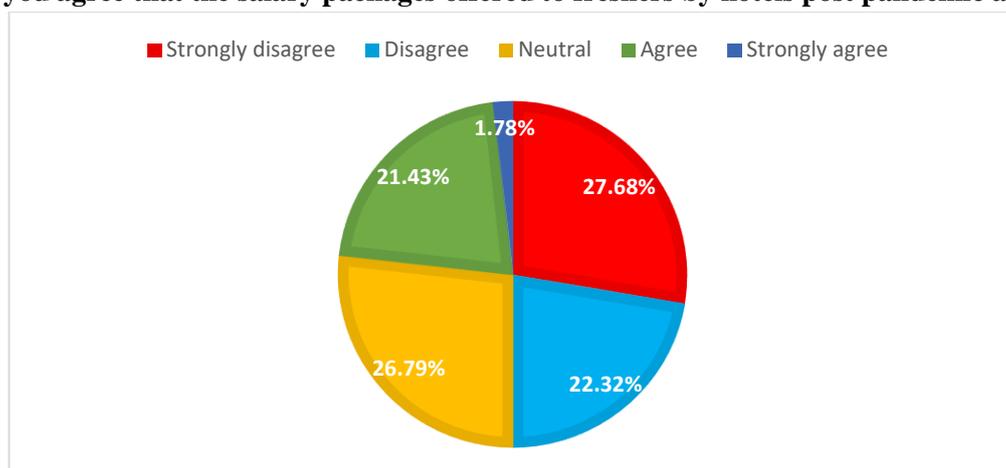


FIGURE 4  
AGREEMENT ANALYSIS 3

**Interpretation:** The pie chart in figure 4 demonstrates the statistical analysis of respondents' agreement with salary packages offered to freshers by hotels post-pandemic. The majority of 27.68% of respondents strongly disagree to the fact that the salary packages are reasonable post-pandemic and nearly the same percentage of 22.32% of respondents disagree with the statement. Very fewer percent of 1.78% strongly agree and 21.43% agree that the salary packages provided by hotels to freshers are reasonable post-pandemic. 26.79% of respondents remained neutral without providing an opinion to the statement.

**h. Analysis of factors motivating hotel management graduates to remain in the hotel industry post pandemic.**

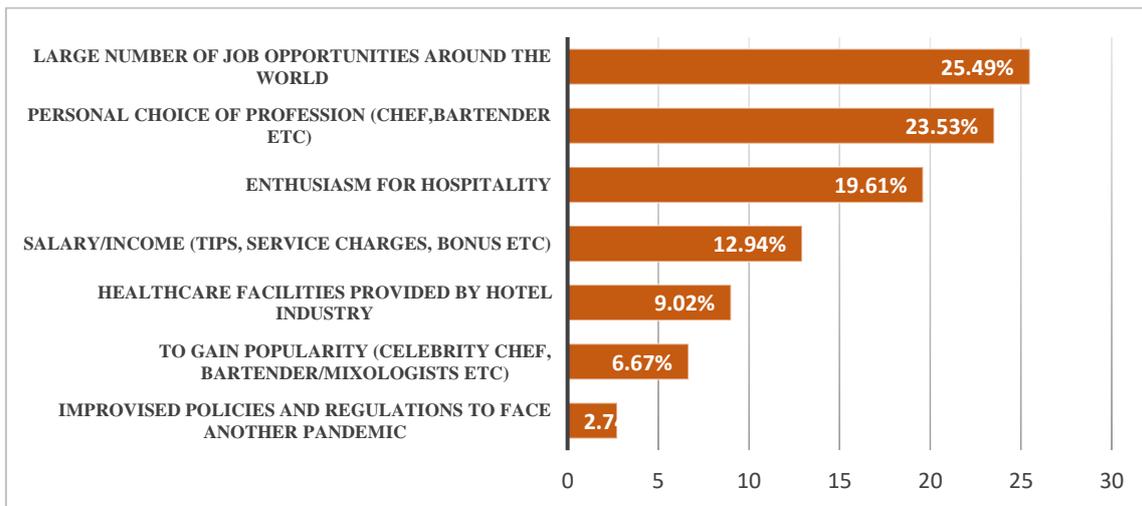


FIGURE 5  
FACTORS MOTIVATING HM GRADUATES

**Interpretation:** The bar graph in figure 5 demonstrates the statistical analysis of the factors motivating respondents to remain in the hotel industry post-pandemic. The majority of 25.49% of respondents have chosen the factor large number of job opportunities around the world followed by personal choice of profession (23.53%), enthusiasm for hospitality (19.61%), salary/incomes (12.94%), healthcare facilities provided by the hotel industry (9.02%), to gain popularity (6.67%) by means of becoming a celebrity chef/bartender etc., and the least motivating factor is improvised policies and regulations to face another pandemic (2.74%) in the future.

**8. MAJOR FINDINGS SUMMARY**

- The majority of 77.68% of respondents are male hotel management graduates.
- Most of the respondents (70.54%) are in the age category of 20 – 24 years.
- The majority of 46.43% of respondents have graduated in the year 2021.
- The majority of the respondents (35.71%) have opted for food & beverage service management as their specialization in their final year.
- Most of the respondents (57.14%) are currently working/employed.
- The majority of 63.39% of respondents have chosen hotel management courses due to personal interest.
- The majority of 81.25% of respondents believe that their studies were affected by the covid-19 pandemic.
- The majority of 76.79% of respondents feel safe working in the hotel industry post-pandemic.
- Most of the respondents (56.25%) state that their initial decisions regarding their career in the hotel industry have not changed due to the pandemic.
- The majority of 73.21% of respondents prefer to work abroad rather than in India.
- Most of the respondents (41.96%) are currently working in the hotel industry despite the pandemic.
- The majority of 44.64% of respondents rated good and 17.86% rated the hotel industry very good for surviving covid-19 pandemic despite lockdowns and a lot of ups and downs.
- The majority of 44.64% of respondents rated good while 16.96% rated very good the hotel industry for providing job opportunities to hotel management graduates post-pandemic.
- The majority of 46.43% of respondents agree and 10.72% of respondents strongly agree with the fact that there are job opportunities for freshers in the hotel industry post-pandemic.
- The majority of 44.64% of respondents strongly agree to the and 8.93% of respondents agree to the fact that there is career growth in the hotel industry post-pandemic.

- The majority of 27.68% of respondents strongly disagree with the fact that the salary packages offered to freshers are reasonable post-pandemic and nearly the same percentage of 22.32% of respondents disagree.
- The three most motivating factors for hotel management graduates to remain in the hotel industry post-pandemic are a large number of job opportunities around the world (25.49%), personal choice of profession (23.53%), and enthusiasm for hospitality (19.61%).

## 9. SUGGESTIONS

- Since the majority of hotel management graduates have a positive perception toward a career in the hotel industry post-pandemic, it is recommended to hotel management institutions that continue providing quality education and placement opportunities to the students despite the difficulties raised due to the pandemic.
- As the majority prefer to work abroad, it is suggested to graduates that try to get prior experience by working in India so that they will be able to get a higher position and annual package abroad.
- It is recommended to graduates that prepare themselves to be worthy of a higher salary package by upgrading their soft skills and knowledge of the latest trends in hospitality. At the same time, it is suggested to the hotel industry consider the graduates' skills, education, and other factors and provide a reasonable package to freshers post-pandemic.
- It is also suggested that graduates to pursue higher studies further for some time till the hotel industry recover fully from the impact of the pandemic. So that by the time they are ready to work, they will get proper remunerations from the hotel industry.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion to the study titled 'hotel management graduates' perception towards career in hotel industry post-pandemic', it is clearly noticeable that hotel management graduates have a positive perception towards the hotel industry jobs post covid-19 pandemic despite the majority of respondents disagreeing with salary packages offered to freshers. This is established as the majority (76.79%) of respondents feel safe working in the hotel industry post-pandemic and the majority of them (41.96%) are already working in the hotel industry as well as most of the respondents (56.25%) stated that their initial decisions regarding their career in the hotel industry have not changed due to the pandemic. Most of the graduates believe they have career growth in the hotel industry and the majority of them also believe that there are job opportunities for freshers in the hotel industry. Most of the graduates believe the hotel industry has survived the pandemic better and still provides placements to freshers.

Most of the hotel management graduates prefer to work abroad (73.21%), and have career growth there rather than doing the same in India. Even though some graduates prefer not to work in the hotel industry post-pandemic, the majority of them are currently working in the hotel industry (41.96%), and a considerable number of graduates (27.68) are still interested in working in the hotel industry. The majority of graduates are not happy with the salary packages offered to freshers from the hotel industry which leads them to migrate to foreign countries for higher packages. Considering the various factors that motivate hotel management graduates to remain in the hotel industry post-pandemic, it is found that a large number of job opportunities around the world (25.49%), personal choice of profession (23.53%), and enthusiasm for hospitality (19.61%) are the three most motivating factors that keep hotel management graduates in the hotel industry post-pandemic.

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