# Modeling the Determinants of Hotel Service Booking **During COVID-19**

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#### **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a massive fall in demand and revenues and changed consumers' perceptions and expectations. Recovery from such a scenario demands attention from researchers, industry practitioners, and hotel management. This paper explored how online reviews, hotel trust, brand image, and perceived health risks affected consumers' hotel booking intentions during COVID-19. The cross-sectional study included 319 participants. Using PLS-SEM, the results showed that all factors affected hotel booking intention, except perceived health risk. The results can be helpful for managerial implications as they identified the critical factors for enhancing the hotel booking intention among prospective customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: hotel trust, positive online reviews, hotel booking intentions

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ourism's contribution to worldwide GDP dropped from 10.4% in 2019 to 5.5% in 2020 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021). Hotel demand fell dramatically, revenue dropped, and several hotels closed due to COVID-19 (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). There has been a growing body of literature on COVID-19's impact on tourism, including its adverse economic effects, employee uncertainty, and future consequences (Carr, 2020; Dube et al., 2021). However, there is scanty literature regarding consumers' opinions and buying patterns of hotel bookings that have changed after the COVID-19 outbreak. It is essential to systematically understand the elements that will determine their intention to opt for hotel service bookings during such a time which will, in turn, give hotel owners and managers an idea of how to retain customers and add new ones. The pandemic has pushed hotels to re-evaluate their operations and marketing strategies and how they engage with their clients. This study will help managers focus on the factors that will help them respond to the new scenarios and revive their businesses.

Previous studies have examined the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on the hotel service booking situation. Suciati et al. (2021) studied how discounts and e-WOM affected purchasing decisions in an online reservation platform. Both factors significantly impacted purchase decisions. One of the recent studies examined the effect of price sensitivity, hotel policies, and e-servicescape on purchase intention (Loh et al., 2021). COVID-19-related stressors and trust also affected booking intentions (MacSween & Canziani, 2021).

The pandemic has reduced consumers' purchasing inclinations because they perceive scarcity cues as less safe. It contradicts scarcity-popularity and scarcity-quality notions that grew consumers' purchase intention prior to the pandemic (Li et al., 2021). Thus, analyzing factors defying scarcity cues during pandemics is essential. There

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needs to be more research into how positive online reviews, brand image, hotel trust, and perceived health risks affect people's plans to book a hotel during the pandemic. We used three independent variables to close this gap: positive hotel reviews, trust in the hotel, and perceived health risks. A key objective of the research is to understand and highlight how these factors impact hotel booking intention during a pandemic. Based on the study's findings, the relevant stakeholders should be able to better control consumers' buying intentions and capture more customers.

#### **Literature Review**

Due to the pandemic outbreak, consumers became uncertain and fearful, thus decreasing demand for hotel services. Past studies have stressed the necessity of analyzing consumer decision-making during hotel booking (Loh et al., 2021; Suciati et al., 2021). This study identified and reviewed three critical variables: positive online reviews, brand image, and perceived health risk, and proposed a theoretical framework. This section will deal with the variables (independent and dependent) taken in the given study.

#### Positive Online Reviews

In today's digital environment, customers use internet reviews posted by fellow consumers (Wang et al., 2018). Various platforms are available on the internet now for easy access to travel services (Kaur & Sharma, 2015). Consumers can voice their opinions and share their experiences related to a brand or product like Google, Facebook, industry-specific platforms like TripAdvisor, Trivago, Booking.com, etc., and hotel reviews (Singh & Yadav, 2018). Such reviews could be positive, negative, or neutral and are referred to and relied upon by other potential consumers while making their purchase decisions. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, online reviews play a crucial role in helping consumers make safe decisions about their purchases. Restaurant hygiene practices and online ordering are elements frequently included in online reviews (Luo & Xu, 2021). Additionally, consumers can become more aware of the safety and hygiene standards prevalent at a hotel they're considering when they read positive online reviews. According to the literature, the following hypothesis is framed:

\$\to\$ **H1:** Positive online reviews will positively influence hotel booking intention.

#### **Brand Image**

A strong brand image improves consumers' perception of a brand's personality (Singh, 2018). It influences their purchase attitude and, in turn, their behavioral intention (Lin & Chuang, 2018). Past studies on different industries have examined the link between brand image and purchase intentions. Wang and Tsai (2014) showed that brand image significantly impacted purchase intention in the case of mutual fund investors. While booking hotels online, the way travellers perceive the quality of a brand is greatly affected by the brand image (Topcuoglu et al., 2022). The pandemic has impacted customers' buying patterns and brand views. Image affects hotel choice (Athar et al., 2021). So, here's our recommendation:

\$\to\$ **H2:** The brand image will positively influence hotel booking intention.

#### **Hotel Trust**

Consumer trust impacts their purchase decisions, which is even more critical in the case of online transactions (Harrigan et al., 2021; Santo & Marques, 2022). Consumers' trust in a vendor helps them feel more secure,

influences their purchase intentions, and helps maintain long-term buyer-seller relationships (Dang et al., 2021; Gupta, 2014; Mehta & Chahal, 2018). According to Lien et al. (2015), the trust factor increases consumers' perceived value, increasing their hotel booking intent. Hotels are intangible, inseparable from production and consumption, and influenced by experiences. Trust is vital when booking accommodations in unexpected locations or situations (Baki, 2020). COVID-19 also presented an unprecedented case for all businesses and customers alike. Hotel owners must ensure that consumers build confidence in their offerings, considering the high-intensity consciousness for hygiene and safety. This leads us to propose the hypothesis that:

\$\Bar{\tau}\$ H3: Hotel trust will positively influence hotel booking intentions.

#### Perceived Health Risk

Roselius (1971) mentioned that perceived risk could have six types: financial, performance, physical, psychological, social, and time loss. The risk of a health hazard resulting from service performance forms a part of physical risk (Garaus & Hudáková, 2022). Consumers prefer to go for the brand to which they attach the most minor perceived risk, dramatically influencing consumer thinking and consumption patterns (Basu & Swaminathan, 2021). The perceived risk may act as a resistance to people's intention to purchase. Even in C2C online commerce, perceived risk affects buying intent (Wei et al., 2019). The uncertainty of the results influences the perceived risk in purchase decisions (Li & Huang, 2009). It is also uncertain to experience hotel service because it is subjective (Yan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 outbreak has raised customers' health worries about hospitality and tourism (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021). Thus, it is essential to assess how the intention to book hotels is affected due to perceived health risks. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

\$\text{H4:} Perceived health risks will negatively influence hotel booking intention.

#### **Booking Intention**

Purchase intention related to any product/service can be a consumer's readiness and likelihood to take purchaserelated action. Kotler and Keller (2015) suggested that purchase intention can be impacted by others' attitudes and unanticipated situational factors.

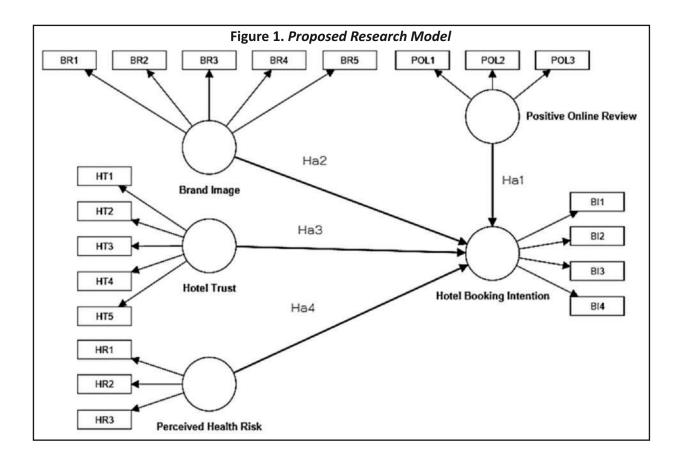
A purchase intention can also be interpreted as an intention to make a hotel reservation. As such, several studies have examined the impact of different factors on booking intentions, such as hotel policies, e-servicescape, and price sensitivity (Loh et al., 2021); health, personal, and financial stressors (Menon, 2018; MacSween & Canziani, 2021; Shahid, 2019); online reviews (Chan et al., 2017); and hotel and website trust, perceived value (Kim et al., 2017).

#### **Proposed Model**

The proposed model comprises positive online reviews, brand image, hotel trust, and perceived health risk. The four independent variables directly impact hotel booking intention (Figure 1).

# **Research Methodology**

The given study adopted a quantitative research methodology. The data were collected using a cross-sectional research design. The data analysis has been done using partial least squares structural equation modeling



(PLS-SEM). As the collected data had a multivariate normality issue, PLS-SEM has been used, which is being increasingly applied across many disciplines, including hospitality management. It requires a smaller sample size and makes no distributional assumptions.

Online questionnaires were used to collect the primary data for this study. The information were collected during the period from May–August 2021. The sampling technique employed for the analysis is non-probability snowball sampling, and responses from 319 respondents were obtained in total, out of which 274 were finally fit for use. The questionnaire consisted of six sub-sections, the first for demographic information and the subsequent five for each of the five variables (positive online reviews, brand image, hotel trust, perceived health risk, and hotel booking intention). For the sections related to the variables, there were 20 questions in total. The respondents were requested to rate their agreeability with the statements on a 7-point Likert scale (1 being "strongly disagree" and 7 being "strongly agree"). The measurement items were adapted from existing literature; for example, Zhao et al. (2015) adapted a positive online review scale. The perceived health risk was borrowed from Shin and Kang (2020). Hotel trust was computed using five items borrowed from Kim et al. (2017), and brand image through five items borrowed from Lien et al. (2015). The hotel booking intention scale was borrowed from Chiang and Jang (2007). This aided in ensuring the research's reliability and validity.

#### **Demographic Profile**

Among the respondents, 64.23% were male, and 35.77% were female. Most respondents were from the 36-60 age bracket (combined % of 51.82) and were well-educated (72.26% being post-graduates); 57.3% of the respondents' annual household income was above INR 7.5 lakhs.

### **Analysis and Results**

Testing the hypothesized model using PLS-SEM consists of two steps: assessing the measurement model and the structural model (Hair et al., 2019).

#### Assessing the Measurement Model for Reliability and Validity

Table 1 shows each construct's Cronbach's alpha, rho A, CR, and AVE. All the constructs in our measurement model have coefficients higher than the threshold for these three measures, thus pointing towards acceptable internal consistency and reliability (above 0.7). Each construct's AVE is above 0.50, meaning it explains more than 50% of indicator variability. Thus, convergent validity is also checked for.

Table 2 shows the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion analysis for discriminant validity, wherein each construct's square root of the AVE value is more significant than its correlation value with other constructs.

Table 3 shows the HTMT of correlation, wherein it can be seen that all the values fall below the conservative

Table 1. Composite Reliability and Convergent Validity Results

| Variables               | Cronbach's Alpha | rho_A | Composite<br>Reliability (CR) | Average Variance<br>Extracted (AVE) |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Brand Image             | 0.884            | 0.897 | 0.915                         | 0.683                               |
| Hotel Booking Intention | 0.905            | 0.907 | 0.934                         | 0.779                               |
| Hotel Trust             | 0.927            | 0.930 | 0.945                         | 0.773                               |
| Perceived Health Risk   |                  |       |                               |                                     |
|                         | 0.785            | 0.797 | 0.873                         | 0.697                               |
| Positive Online Reviews | 0.885            | 0.886 | 0.929                         | 0.813                               |

Table 2. Fornell - Larcker Criterion Analysis

| Variables               | Brand Image | Hotel Booking | Hotel Trust | Perceived   | Positive Online |
|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                         |             | Intention     |             | Health Risk | Reviews         |
| Brand Image             | 0.827       |               |             |             |                 |
| Hotel Booking Intention | 0.503       | 0.883         |             |             |                 |
| Hotel Trust             | 0.407       | 0.609         | 0.879       |             |                 |
| Perceived Health Risk   | 0.379       | 0.310         | 0.159       | 0.835       |                 |
| Positive Online Reviews | 0.420       | 0.511         | 0.521       | 0.363       | 0.902           |

Table 3. Heterotrait – Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

| Variables               | <b>Brand Image</b> | <b>Hotel Booking</b> | <b>Hotel Trust</b> | Perceived          | Positive Online |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|                         |                    | Intention            |                    | <b>Health Risk</b> | Reviews         |
| Brand Image             |                    |                      |                    |                    |                 |
| Hotel Booking Intention | 0.544              |                      |                    |                    |                 |
| Hotel Trust             | 0.436              | 0.661                |                    |                    |                 |
| Perceived Health Risk   | 0.446              | 0.360                | 0.176              |                    |                 |
| Positive Online Reviews | 0.460              | 0.569                | 0.570              | 0.427              |                 |

cut-off of 0.85. Thus, with the help of Tables 2 and 3, we have established the discriminant validity of the study. This shows that the constructs included in the survey are unique or conceptually distinct.

#### Assessing the Structural Model

The structural model is, by standard, evaluated based on the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), cross-validated redundancy measure ( $Q^2$ ), and significance of the paths (Hair et al., 2019). In addition,  $f^2$ , collinearity statistics, and model fit - SRMR value have been analyzed.

Table 4 shows the inner model's variance inflation factor (VIF) values. VIF values > 5 suggest collinearity problems among the constructs. As shown in the table, all the VIF values are below 5; thus, collinearity is not an issue here.

Table 5 shows the R - square value of our dependent variable. Hotel booking intention has an  $R^2$  value of 0.482, which means that a 48.2% variance in hotel booking intention is explained by the four independent variables — positive online reviews, brand image, hotel trust, and perceived health risk. This points to a moderate explanatory power of the model.

Table 6 shows the  $Q^2$  value of our dependent variable. The value of  $Q^2$  should be greater than 0. Here, hotel booking intention has a  $Q^2$  value of 0.367, pointing towards the model having medium predictive relevance.

Table 7 shows effect size ( $f^2$ ) depicting the magnitude of the exogenous latent constructs' contribution to the endogenous latent construct taken in the study. Cohen (2013) provided that  $f^2$  values of more than 0.02 points to a small effect size, more than 0.15 points to a medium effect size, and more than 0.35 points to a large effect size. Accordingly, of our four exogenous latent constructs, hotel trust has a moderate effect on the coefficient of

**Table 4. Collinearity Statistics** 

| Variables               | Hotel Booking Intention |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Brand Image             | 1.405                   |
| Hotel Booking Intention | -                       |
| Hotel Trust             | 1.476                   |
| Perceived Health Risk   | 1.256                   |
| Positive Online Reviews | 1.589                   |

Table 5. R - Square Results

| Variables | Original Sample (O) | Standard<br>Deviation (STDEV) | t - Statistics<br>(IO/STDEVI) | p - values |
|-----------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
|           | 0.482               | 0.042                         | 11.379                        | 0.000      |

Table 6. Q - Square Results

| Variables               | Q² ( = 1-SSE/SSO) |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Brand Image             |                   |
| Hotel Booking Intention | 0.367             |
| Hotel Trust             |                   |
| Perceived Health Risk   |                   |
| Positive Online Reviews |                   |

Table 7. Effect Size (f<sup>2</sup>) Results

| Variables               | Hotel Booking Intention |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Brand Image             | 0.072                   |
| Hotel Booking Intention |                         |
| Hotel Trust             | 0.225                   |
| Perceived Health Risk   | 0.015                   |
| Positive Online Reviews | 0.032                   |

Table 8. Model Fit Summary

|            | Estimated Model |
|------------|-----------------|
| SRMR       | 0.063           |
| d_ULS      | 0.843           |
| D_G        | 0.477           |
| Chi-Square | 747.925         |
| NFI        | 0.817           |

**Table 9. Path Coefficients** 

|   | Original   | Standard          | t - Statistics | p -values |
|---|------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------|
|   | Sample (O) | Deviation (STDEV) | (IO/STDEVI)    |           |
| Positive Online Reviews → Hotel Booking Intention | 0.162      | 0.065             | 2.479          | 0.013     |
| Brand Image $\rightarrow$ Hotel Booking Intention | 0.229      | 0.071             | 3.237          | 0.001     |
| Hotel Trust $\rightarrow$ Hotel Booking Intention | 0.417      | 0.063             | 6.649          | 0.000     |
| Perceived Health Risk → Hotel Booking Intention   | 0.097      | 0.069             | 1.401          | 0.161     |

determination  $(R^2)$  value; whereas brand image, positive online reviews, and perceived health risk are found to have a small effect.

Table 8 shows the SRMR index of our model. The standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) estimates the model's goodness of fit. The acceptable SRMR value for a model to have a good fit is 0.08 or lower. The model's SRMR value is determined to be 0.063, which is less than the threshold value, that is, 0.08. This indicates a good model fit.

Table 9 shows the significance of path coefficients after bootstrapping to 5,000 samples. These values have been used to test the hypothesized relationships. With p - values of less than 0.05, the paths — from positive online reviews, brand image, and hotel trust to hotel booking intention — are all significant. With a p-value > 0.05, the path between perceived health risk and hotel booking intention is insignificant.

Therefore, the following are the hypotheses results:

- $\Rightarrow$  **H1**: Positive online reviews will positively influence hotel booking intention ( $\beta = 0.162$ , t = 2.479, p < 0.05). This hypothesis is supported.
- $\clubsuit$  **H2:** Brand image positively influences hotel booking intention ( $\beta = 0.229, t = 3.237, p < 0.05$ ). This hypothesis is supported.
- $\clubsuit$  **H3**: Hotel trust positively influences booking intentions ( $\beta = 0.417$ , t = 6.649, p < 0.05). This hypothesis is supported.

 $^{\top}$  **H4**: Perceived health risk negatively influences hotel booking intention (β = 0.097, t = 1.401, p > 0.05). This hypothesis is supported.

#### **Discussion**

The  $\beta$  - value shows the strength of impact that the exogenous latent constructs have on the endogenous one. Among the supported hypotheses, hotel trust ( $\beta = 0.417$ ) influences booking intention the most during the COVID-19 pandemic, while positive online reviews ( $\beta = 0.162$ ) have the lowest impact. These results are also compatible with the *f*-square results, as similar rankings of the exogenous latent constructs are seen regarding their effect. Perceived health risk does not affect hotel booking intention as per the *f*-square results.

This study focuses on specific factors influencing hotel booking intentions during the pandemic. As per the study, positive online reviews significantly impact booking intention. The result is compatible with earlier studies like Park et al. (2007) and Rao and Rao (2019). The impact is likely because, given the risky environment during the pandemic, the availability of positive online reviews related to hotel facilities, services, or safety standards could help consumers make up their minds about a hotel and make a safe choice. The study also shows that brand image notably impacts booking intention. The outcome is consistent with previous studies from different sectors (Arslan & Zaman, 2015; Wang & Tsai, 2014). The COVID -19 pandemic outbreak changed consumers' consumption patterns into a more conscious one. In such a scenario, the better consumers associate with a hotel brand, the more attractive the brand choice will seem. Thus, their purchase intention will be positively influenced. As per the study, hotel trust is the essential determinant of hotel booking intention. Despite the unsafe environment, consumers' faith in a hotel brand stemming from past experiences or information from other sources would make them see value and security in their booking decisions. The outcome that trust significantly influences booking intention is compatible with earlier studies in an online context (Bulsara & Vaghela, 2022; Siddiqui & Siddiqui, 2021). Among the study subjects, perceived health risk does not significantly impact hotel booking intention. This contrasts with prior research, which revealed that various perceived risks negatively impacted people's buying intentions (Chang & Luo, 2010). Traditionally, uncertain situations add to perceived risk, and consumers will likely go for a brand where they perceive the risk to be high. The findings of our study, surprisingly, differ.

One possible reason for this could be that the responses were taken when the COVID cases curve fell, and people had spent the past couple of months under social and mobility restrictions. As a result, they may now wish to satiate the urge for leisure and pleasure they had previously restrained. This has been given the name of the "revenge travel" trend, which is a variation of the "revenge spending" trend (Shadel, 2020). Usage experience may have also possibly impacted their attitudes towards hotel bookings. Lee and Deale (2021) also showed a partial difference in consumers' risk perceptions as per their usage experience. Due to such reasons, respondents' intention to book a hotel may not have been deterred by the perceived health risks at this pandemic stage. These are, however, the only probable causes, and further exploration needs to be done to understand the role of perceived health risks in shaping consumers' booking intentions.

#### Conclusion

The study examines the links between perceived health risks, brand image, hotel trust, positive online reviews, and hotel booking intention during the pandemic. As per our results, H1, H2, and H3 are supported. In contrast, H4 is not supported. This suggests that positive online reviews, brand image, and hotel trust are significant determinants of booking intention amidst the ongoing pandemic.

### **Implications**

#### **Theoretical Implications**

The outbreak of COVID-19 has transformed business operations and consumer expectations across all sectors, and the hospitality sector, in particular, faces a significant brunt because of it. The impact has been substantial on both the demand and supply fronts. So, the revival process is also bound to be a challenging one. The study adds to the literature on hospitality management relating to how certain factors will shape consumers' behavioral intentions during a crisis as severe as the COVID-19 pandemic in hotels.

#### **Managerial Implications**

Given the unprecedented pandemic, this study has important managerial implications. It will aid the hotel businesses in directing their efforts to re-gaining consumers' confidence. Elements like positive online reviews, brand image, and hotel trust require the hotel management's attention. They need to reshape their strategies in consideration of these elements for retaining their consumers and sustaining their business. Positive online reviews have been shown to impact consumers' booking intentions significantly. Hotels must ensure excellent visibility on review platforms so that consumers can access comprehensive, up-to-date information on the brand. This will help make them more aware of the brand and likely include it in their considerations. Hotels could encourage consumers to share their reviews by offering incentives to provide or increasing the instances where they request reviews, like displaying links to review platforms during check-out, stay, and post-stay via mail or messages. Testimonials from guests could be published on hotel websites and social media channels which have been found effective in past research (Bhāle & Tongare, 2018; Shimpi, 2018; Thakur et al., 2022). Also, efforts should be made to monitor the reviews received timely, humbly respond to them, and identify the significant areas of improvement pointed out in the reviews so that services could accordingly be modified to retain and win more customers.

Brand image is another factor that significantly influences the consumers' booking intention. Accordingly, hotels can drive efforts towards maintaining a favorable image in the minds of consumers so that they feel confident enough to book a stay there even during the current scenario. In response to the greater hygiene cautiousness, revisiting the safety and cleanliness standards and communicating them to potential consumers will help them feel that the hotel is prepared to offer safe services. Using data to identify trends such as the preference of local staycations and workstations among people and modifying and marketing your offerings will also work towards gaining consumers. Social media marketing efforts could be boosted to maintain consistent touch with the audience and stay on top of their minds. To build a strong brand image and ensure purchasers perceive utility and affordability in the decision, consider showcasing special discounts, easy cancellation policies, community activities, and content on the essential services and experiences supplied. It is found that hotel trust is the most crucial factor in determining hotel booking intention as per the study. Consumers' experience with a hotel and words passed on from others in their circle will impact their reliability and confidence in the hotel. Hotel managers need to capitalize on this aspect. Word must be put out about how the hotel implements stricter safety measures than ever at every touchpoint of the consumer journey and what it does to make guests' stay safe and enjoyable. User testimonials could also be a great way to convince customers of the reliability of services being offered as they bring down uncertainty, especially from the perspective of a new customer. Once consumers trust a hotel and experience the service, they will likely develop loyalty towards it and return in the future. Establishing exactly why a consumer should have faith in the hotel service will help influence their choice while making booking decisions.

Amidst a time when demand level and revenue fall have been a significant concern for hotel businesses (Gursoy & Chi, 2020), such measures will likely help hoteliers enhance their business strategies and respond to the presented challenges because of the COVID-19 pandemic in a better fashion.

## **Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research**

The study aims to add to the existing literature on booking/purchase intention in hospitality management during pandemic times and provide practical implications for hotel stakeholders. However, this study, like any other, has limitations. The study is limited to the hotel business. It only assesses four factors: positive online reviews, brand image, hotel trust, and perceived health risk. However, other elements, like price and place attachment, could impact consumers' booking intentions. The study does not differentiate among the types of consumers in terms of previous experience with hotel stays, geographical differences, leisure or business purposes, etc. Further, it was conducted at a single point in time while consumers' inclination to make hotel bookings might vary depending upon the stage of the crisis.

The limitations mentioned in the above section suggest the scope for further research. The model can be utilized in other industries to make the conclusions broader. Further research could add new independent or moderating factors to the model and explore how they affect booking intention. All consumers are considered identical in the current study. However, further research could collect and analyze different characteristics of consumers, like their cultural set-up or level of experience with hotel stays, as such traits might influence consumers' perceptions. A more diverse study that compares the model findings across different geographies will allow deeper insights. While the current study is cross-sectional, future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to detect how consumers' behavior concerning booking intention varies with time as the COVID-19 pandemic passes through different stages. Lastly, the study shows that perceived health risks do not significantly impact hotel booking intention. Understanding the reasons behind this, however, requires further scholarly attention.

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#### **Authors' Contribution**

Garima Pal wrote this study's introduction, literature review, conclusion, management implications, and theoretical implications. Dr. Ashutosh Pandey came up with the idea for the model, found the research gaps through literature, analyzed the data, and added to the discussion.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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### **Appendix**

Table A1. Constructs and Items Used in the Study

| Construct                  | Item  | Variable Codes | Source                 |
|----------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------|
| Hotel Trust                | I believe this hotel would be trustworthy.  | HT1            | Kim et al. (2017)      |
|                            | I believe this hotel would be reliable.   | HT2            |                        |
|                            | I believe this hotel would be responsible.  | HT3            |                        |
|                            | I would have confidence in this hotel.  | HT4            |                        |
|                            | This seems like a good quality hotel.   | HT5            |                        |
| <b>Positive Online</b>     | I pay more attention to positive reviews.   | POL1           | Zhao et al. (2015)     |
| Reviews                    | Positive reviews are of more value.   | POL2           |                        |
|                            | I pay more attention to hotels that have a larger volume of positive reviews.                                 | POL3           |                        |
| Perceived                  | Given the current situation, I prefer to avoid hotel bookings.  | HR1            | Shin and Kang (2020)   |
| Health Risk                | Given the current situation, I prefer to shorten the duration of my hotel booking.                            | HR2            |                        |
|                            | I feel more averse to hotel booking because of the risk from the COVID-19 pandemic.                           | HR3            |                        |
| Brand Image                | The hotel brand is reliable.  | BR1            | Lien et al. (2015)     |
|                            | The hotel brand is attractive.  | BR2            |                        |
|                            | The hotel brand is pleasing.  | BR3            |                        |
|                            | The hotel brand is a social status symbol.  | BR4            |                        |
|                            | The hotel brand has a good reputation.  | BR5            |                        |
| Hotel Booking<br>Intention | After reviewing the hotel website, the likelihood of booking this hotel is high.                              | BI1            | Chiang and Jang (2007) |
|                            | If I am going to book the hotel, I would consider booking this hotel at the price shown.                      | BI2            |                        |
|                            | The probability that I would consider booking this hotel is high.  My willingness to book this hotel is high. | BI3<br>BI4     |                        |

#### **About the Authors**

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