



**“TO UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES FACED AND REMEDIES ADOPTED BY
HOMESTAY OPERATORS PRE AND POST PANDEMIC” (COASTAL REGION OF
MAHARASHTRA)**

Author1: Dr. Anita Moodliar

Principal

Maharashtra State Institute of Hotel Management and Catering

Technology-Pune

Author 2: Dr. Seema Zagade

Professor

Maharashtra State Institute of Hotel Management and Catering

Technology-Pune

Author 3: Ms. Sakshi Tanpure

Student

Maharashtra State Institute of Hotel Management and Catering

Technology-Pune

Introduction

Maharashtra is one of the states of India which is blessed with a scenic and serene coastal area, very prominent and popular amongst the weekenders and family tourists, it has also observed a lot of infrastructure development in last decade. The locals have always been very hospitable and have adopted various strategies for promoting tourism in the this belt. They have always been showcasing and promoting their local cuisines and culture and the alternative form of tourism i.e. Homestays have been one of the most preferred accommodation facilities amongst tourists both domestic and International. The destinations along coastal belt is well connected by roads and rails. Tourism over here has seen a footfall all round the year but most busy season starts from March.

And Beginning of 2020 was no different until the Pandemic started showing its signs . The alarming spread of the coronavirus infection (COVID-19) has affected the world, especially hitting the tourism and hospitality industry most severely. Unexpected travel restrictions and border closures for most countries across the world have caused millions of livelihood and jobs lost. Because of COVID-19 Homestay business was also affected from February 2020. Bookings were initially suspended via online and travel agencies till the March 2020. The revenues have been so seriously hurt that it was difficult to pay the staff and utility bills. Homestays were trying to create a model that would allow tourists to enjoy the quintessential homestay experience, while also ensuring the safety of both guests and hosts. Both staff and

visitors were put through thermal screening. Few Homestays also created separate entrance for guests.

A Home-Stay, by its combined words (home stay) is staying in some one's home as a paying guest for short time period, guests are provided accommodation and services by individual family and community too. Therefore, the Home- Stay Regulation has accepted it as run (managed) by an individual or community. The Home Stay seeks to draw tourists away from posh and crowded urban areas to the rural locality full of splendid natural surroundings, by providing them with clean, comfortable and budget-friendly accommodation and food. Thus, homestay offers the traveller a unique local experience and possibilities of interaction with the host family. It offers the chance to experience new and untapped places which has enabled the government to popularize new tourist destinations, and provide alternative source of income to the rural folks. In home stay tourism visitors get a chance to spend time with the family observing their customs, values and culture, which gives them the opportunity to feel the taste of rural life.

The main objectives of this research paper, is to provide an overview of the challenges faced and remedies adopted by Homestays operators, pre and post pandemic. Because of pandemic, Homestay revenue were affected , to recover and deal with future challenges homestay had to optimize cleaning strategy, rework with the existing layout, create a mini market for essential to avoiding movements of tourist, take advantages of new marketing channels, seek diversification, improve sanitization, self-care, hygiene standard as per WHO, etc.

1.4 Objectives:

- To understand the concept of Homestays.
- To identify the change in operations of Homestays.
- To analyse the sustainability of homestays in future market.

Literature Review

1. Sandeep Kulshreshtha and Ruchika Kulshrestha (12th August, 2019) author of 'The emerging importance of "homestays" in the Indian hospitality sector' talking about the benefits of homestay tourism from the perspective of homestay stakeholders and the impact on economic, social, and cultural life, as a result of growth in the homestay concept and also the rising trend toward homestays. Author also mentioned about the homestay means they provides travellers a sense of feeling at home, guest will interact with the host family, first-hand relationship with locals, also experience the local culture, and it's a low-cost accommodation so homestay is affordable for everyone.

2. The newspaper article in The Hindu (13th March, 2020) 'Homestays gear up for hard times' written by M. P. Praveen, presents the current scenarios of the homestays in India. "The future hardly looks bright though mixed fortunes appear to be

in store for homestays in the district. Usually, homestays record 70% occupancy during March. But this time it has gone down for majority of homestays with the future bookings not looking that bright,” said by the M.P. Sivadattan, He is a director of Kerala Homestay and Tourism Society. Usually the rooms were full till the end of March. But because of COVID-19, business were affected since February 2020. Remaining bookings also got suspended via online booking and travel agencies which was done for the month of March. ‘The revenues have been so seriously hurt that it would be hard to pay the staff and utility bills’, said by one of the homestay operator. Some homestays also voluntarily chose to block the bookings till March 31 for the safety purpose of family. But at another side one homestay operator chose to take bookings, he have bookings by foreigners till March 15,2020 after that they were mostly expecting domestic tourists till the airports are not get closure.

3. Jiang Yangyang (30th April, 2020) as mentioned in the Shine news that ‘How homestay industry survives after COVID-19’ and also gave some suggestions for the industry to recover and deal with future challenges like have do optimize cleaning strategy in which he written that safety and health were highly valued by consumers following the outbreak. Specifically, more than 90 percent of potential customers were concerned about hygiene in rooms and the health of service staff. Therefore, homestay businesses should optimize and advertise the cleaning process to reassure customers. For example, they may use multiple media such as websites, WeChat and live streams to show their cleaning and disinfection procedures. In addition, they could also provide a "reassurance card" in rooms which have record of the cleaning times and the temperature of the housekeeping employee. Rework with the existing layout means they may adjust the layout of public areas by increasing the space between chairs and tables, using screens to divide public areas, and allocating or limiting the time public spaces could be used. Create a mini market for essential to avoiding movements of tourist. Take the advantage of new marketing channels i.e. Social media platforms, webcasts and online videos have become popular channels for marketing promotions. Homestay businesses should increase brand awareness by sharing the homestay experience through live broadcasts. Seek diversification because diversification could enable homestay businesses to withstand risks and uncertainties. Specifically, the coronavirus pandemic has made the public adopt healthy lifestyles, which facilitates the development of rural tourism and ecotourism. Therefore, the rural homestay industry should launch experiential products that focus on meditation and returning to nature. For urban homestay businesses, launching long-term rental products might be an option for diversification. They may also share spare rooms and public spaces with other enterprises during the off season, for instance, by jointly creating a wedding venue. Improve sanitization, self-care, and maintain hygiene standard as per WHO in Homestay for safer stay of guest.

4. The newspaper article in The New Indian Express (17th June, 2020) ‘Homestays stare at a bleak future’ written by Gautham S., presents that the lockdown affected the tourism industry badly. Most of the homestays were run by the elder people. Hence, they were afraid to take in guests due to fear of the pandemic. Though the

government allowed all homestays to open from June 8, it came with conditions like all hotels and homestays should have thermal scanner and should only accommodate one guest per room as per the guidelines. In the current situation, homestay owners cannot even afford the thermal scanners because of no business and less revenue. Ganesh House Homestay, run by Manoj M P, is one of the most popular homestays in Kovalam. Manoj has been awaiting guests from April. He said that the homestay was started by his parents as a source of income during their retirement life. During peak season, they make a profit of 30,000 per month. Though many enquiries have been coming, they were scared to take any bookings. If a guest is infected, the entire family will have to go under quarantine, forcing the homestay to shut down too as per the guidelines by government. Many foreigners who visit Kovalam every year were ready to come back if flight services restart. But if the outbreak was not contained soon, several owners will have to migrate to other businesses. One of the homestay operator, Rita Madhukumar, who runs Rita's Homestay in Varkala, said they get enquiries from tourists within the state. But they also were not taking any bookings because of COVID 19. Another homestay operator, Sivadathan said that homestay owners will have a tough season this year. Even if homestays start taking bookings, neighbours may raise issues due to fear of the pandemic. They can only sustain in this business if the government supports them in this situation. Because almost 10 per cent of the state's total income comes from tourism sector. Hence, the government should act to sustain the tourism business. Even auto rickshaw drivers, cab services and small shops depend on the tourism sector. The government should give long-term interest-free loans to homestay owners to revive their livelihood.

5. The blog was written by the Karan Kaushik on the official website of Outlook Traveller (27th June, 2020), 'While some homestay owners have already hosted guests since they reopened, others are still fickle minded about opening their doors for tourists'. Homestays were trying to create a model that would allow tourists to enjoy the quintessential homestay experience, while also ensuring the safety of both guests and hosts. One homestay operator said that both staff and visitors will be put through thermal screening and every room will have facemasks. Also, they were created separate entrance for guests. They also made changes in cooking style, nowadays guest will self-served their food which create home away from home feeling. They were requesting to their guest to promote their rural tourism business and also guest were supporting them by sending their relatives and friends and some of their regular clients will also be coming to stay at his destination. The operator belongs to a family of traditional weavers and aims to preserve the dying art of interlock weaving through his homestay. They make beautiful durries and their guests love to participate in the weaving process and learn about their art. They also organises village walks, wildlife safaris and sunset treks for their guests. Some homestay have long staying guest so they were provide kitchenette for them and encouraging their guest to cook food for themselves. Some other homestay operator said that homestays were not their only source of income. They also do farming, wool work, and they take people on treks and expeditions. These activities help them to sustain in this situation. They were making short videos and trying to explain the guidelines in a simpler way to other people.

6. 'Emptied by COVID, homestays find the going tough' this article is written in The Hindu Newspaper, by John L. Paul (1st August, 2020). He mentioned in the article that the homestay sector, which along with Ayurveda and backwaters played a key role in putting Kerala on the 10th best global destinations in all over the world. Pre-COVID figures put the number of homestays in Kerala at over 1,500 and 500 of them were classified by tourism agencies based on the amenities they provide. Most homestays in locals like Wayanad and Idukki managed to weather the COVID-19-induced storm since their owners have at least 50 cents of cultivable land, where they grew vegetables, tapioca and other essentials. But homestays at heritage zones in West Kochi, on the Marari beach, and numerous other spots are severely affected since they were situated in three to five cents of land. Most of the homestays were operated by the elderly couples who invest their life savings in getting their house readied as good lodges for tourists. Foreign tourist also banned in India because of COVID 19 so this also hit them hard and the maids and other staff for cleaning and cooking also not coming since march. Declaration of containment zones also made the situation worst for the homestays. In this situation, homestay have to pay commercial tariff towards fixed charges of power, water, etc. this will be complicated because they have no business as well as less income. Some homestay owners have found a way to sustain in the crisis by trying to rent out their facility to returnees to Kerala who have to be on quarantine. But they are stopped by neighbours. People considered as they were COVID-19 carriers. Few homestay have opened their gates for foreigner tourist who were there in Kerala. Those tourist were helping them in cooking and also played indoor games. They also did the farming in the compound during their stay.

7. The blog was written by Sanna Nalwalla (10th September, 2020) on the official website of whats hot, 'Before You Plan a Holiday Go through These New Homestay Guidelines in Maharashtra'. As per the guidelines issued by the Tourist Department for Homestays, all travellers checking in will be screened at the entry point and only asymptomatic travellers will be allowed to enter. Room service will be contactless by leaving the food outside the room doors and all the communication between the staff and guests should be carried out via an intercom or a phone call. If guests move around on the property, they need to be wearing a mask at all times. CCTV cameras at all accommodation units must be fully functioning to monitor the guests.

8. 'Post Covid-19: Developing a Homestay Business by Adopting a Social Entrepreneurship Approach' this article is written by Mohd Mushin Ismail (13th September, 2020). He mentioned in the article that, to make the homestay industry more competitive after the COVID-19 outbreak, they have to adopt a social entrepreneurship approach. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malpaysia (MOTAC) and its agency responsible for developing the home stay industry. The homestay industry have to improve their economy, then they become more competitive in this business.

9. The blog was written by Tania Tarafdar (25 September, 2020) on the official website of Curlytales, 'Indians Prefer Homestays over Hotels as Safer Option amid COVID-19 Pandemic'. She mentioned in the blog that the pandemic has hit the travel and tourism industry so severely that it could take years for the industry to revive.

Tourist prefer homestays over hotels because Homestays were perceived as contactless, cleaner and more isolated where Hotels have a huge turnover of guests. A lot of customers at check-in and check-out in the reception, and hence, people would feel much more safe and comfortable staying at short-term rentals like vacation homes. Homestays were going to be a new normal in the coming times. Apart from the crowd, the location of the property also matters to the guests. Also Homestay Hosts were Marketing Themselves as COVID-Friendly and in this situation sanitisation is most important because of this guest were attracted towards the homestays. The homestays in India were continually adapting by ensuring the public health guidelines which is given by the Health Ministry of the Government of India, as well as provide exceptional experiences to their guest.

10. Binita Chakraborty (2020) mentioned in the Research paper, 'Homestay as a reliable promotional tool for Cultural Tourism and Security in Indian context' that Homestay could be a potential component when cultural tourism were concerned. It adds authentic sociocultural richness to the tourist's experience. A prerequisite for tourism is development of cultural resources which are in abundance in India. Homestays were an attractive alternative tourism product to portray the cultural richness in India. It appeals more often searching for local lifestyle experience, novelty, personalized service, and authentic social interactions.

11. 'Airbnb partners MTDC to promote state's unexplored tourist destinations' this article is written in The Economic Times Newspaper, by Gaurav Laghate (11th November, 2020). He mentioned in the article that, the American tech-hospitality platform Airbnb will promote homestays and bed & breakfast (B&B) tourism, which will help enhance the economic prospects as the benefits of tourism will reach many more communities. Airbnb has partnership with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) to promote nearby travel-to destinations in the state, which are off the beaten track and offer a unique experience to the travellers.

12. The article was written by Mandeep S. Lamba and Dipti Mohan (28th March, 2021) on the official website of HVS, 'Homestays in India are Gaining Popularity in the Post-COVID Era'. They mentioned in the article that the popularity of homestays has increased manifold in the post-COVID era when social distancing, cleanliness, hygiene, and privacy have become the top priorities for travellers. With the advent of the 'work-from-anywhere' environment, homestays at motorable destinations from city centres have been witnessing exponential growth in the past one year driven by long-stay, staycation and workstation packages because Homestay has less touch point and less footfall compared to hotels. In the past few years, an increasing number of international and domestic travellers in the country have been preferring cosy homestays over conventional hotels in their quest for authentic, local travel experience. The homestays segment is still at a nascent stage and is highly unorganized, with the presence of very few branded hospitality players, especially in the luxury segment. The Indian government has over the years provided several incentives such as subsidies and relaxation in licensing rules etc. for homestays as it helps in promoting eco-tourism, rural tourism and improves the socio-economic conditions of the region by creating

alternate income for the local communities. More recently, the Ministry of Tourism also introduced training workshops to enhance the hospitality skills of homestay owners in the country. This initiative is also creating awareness amongst local communities about the benefits of homestays. Developing a good quality homestays network can help in tapping the full potential of leisure tourism in India in the future. A growing number of travellers are seeking 'memorable experiences' at previously unexplored leisure destinations in the post-COVID era. There are several such unexplored and underdeveloped hill stations, wildlife sanctuaries, beaches and heritage sites in India which can be developed into established tourism destinations but are lagging due to lack of quality accommodation. Homestays can help bridge this gap especially at places where developing a hotel can be commercially unviable due to the high land and construction costs and the tedious approval process. Developing a luxury homestay at such locations will be a better value proposition due to lower overhead costs and higher profitability compared to a regular hotel and will also help in the holistic development and growth of the destination itself.

Concept of Homestay

There is a saying in India, "Athithi Devo Bhava", which means "The Guest is God". Indians consider it a huge honour to have guests in their home, and go out of their way to please them. There's nothing like Indian hospitality. Sadly, most visitors who come to India and stay in hotels never get to experience true Indian hospitality. The good thing is that all this is changing as a result of the growing popularity of homestays in India.

Home Stay refers to book accommodation to anyone's residence outside his own local community that allows the tourist to experience a different lifestyle, authentic culture or even language. Here in the host community offers their furnished accommodation to tourist packaged with a personalized, homely hospitality which is authentic to local habitat. The infrastructure like amenities, living space etc. is shared with the tourist such that they can enjoy a homely hospitality. To make it an experience, the offering is usually packaged with meals, utility items and even allowing them to participate in their local festivals. Homestay packages are highly customizable based on the preference of any individuals based on the length of their stay or even extended or long stays unless specified by the host.

Apart from accommodation, the Home Stay offers various activities for the guests to exclusively experience the cultural nuances of the area. Activities could be different from one home to another, which depends on the position of the geographical area. Instances like at a home stay in Thailand offers tourist to interact with monks, participate in nature tours, learning how to weave silk or cotton cloth, participating in agricultural activities, learn a specialized local skill such as cooking Thai Cuisine. Likewise in Japan one can learn craft of doll-making. Similarly, in India many Homestays in Kerala offers serene experiences of houseboats sailing around backwaters through narrow canals in canoes. In some of the Homestays in Rajasthan offers safaris by jeep or camel rides into the countryside, interact with tribes and to face-off with wildlife. In the hill stations, treks are offered by the host or tourist are engaged for nature

walk to experience flora and fauna of the habitat. Few host family also hosts guests to take them around the sights of their town or village, sharing local history and insights and an experience far removed from the usual tourist trudge.

The home stays are not just a regular holiday which to spend a few days to exploring the local area, they are a holiday destination in themselves. Homestay tourism can occur in any part of worldwide; residents of homestay countries can encourage the host community in order to develop their tourism industry. Also as a concept homestay can brings people from varied backgrounds under a single umbrella, quite literally, and can offers an ideal platform for long lasting sustainable development in society and in tourism business.

The word Home-Stay as a combined words 'home & stay' is replicates that staying or loading in somebody's home as a guest by paying some monitory value or book a room on rent basis for some specific tenure. Guests are offered accommodation with some other necessary services by specific host family and community. Thus, the Home-Stay tourism or business has managed by an individual host or community. The 'Home Stay' gives tourist to experience far away from busy, hectic, and crowded infrastructural urban areas to the peaceful calm locality with full of splendid natural surroundings, by offering them to stay in natural, clean, comfortable and pocket-friendly accommodation and authentic local food. Thus, homestay provides to the tourist an inimitable authentic local experience and the charming interaction to the local host community. It opens the possibilities to understand a new and untapped place which the government enable to promote widely as a new tourist place and arrange for an alternative source of income to the rural host population. In home stay tourism visitors get an ample of chance to spend a quality time with the local family observing their customs, values and culture, which is an excellent opportunity to feel the taste of rural life. India is one of the famous destinations for homestay tourism for its culture, heritage and geographical land. The environments along with culture are inseparable in tourism business. Market value of this homestay business has been grown up with the demand of visitors. This business offers financial reward and monitory help to the local native community for restoring, protecting and conserving the environment and their indigenous culture. We can count tourism as a component wherein development is concerned, giving importance to discover the ways of expanding constructive impacts and reducing damaging impacts. To minimize the-rural poverty and reverse migration homestay tourism can play a significant role. It assimilates many type of activities like trekking, cultural tourism, agro-tourism, health tourism, and ecotourism. Homestay business is known for good source of income generation as well as making foreign currency. It helps to increased tax revenue in the particular country also upsurge to economic development of the nation and creates the employment opportunities and helps to overcome with poverty reduction. It may also stimulate new markets for local community to show case and trade their local products, for example agricultural products, crafts and others. The progression of tourism business can help to increase the literacy rate. Also with the growth of tourism can motivate people to obtain for higher education and look for new jobs and livelihood. This community development can lead to the upcoming generation to feel the hunger for redefine and reclaim their cultural and ethnic identity. But the main concerns are giving training in hospitality and basic skill of local tour guiding to the local so that they could optimized the opportunity of the homestay business. Also provide them the opportunity to

educate about the safety, security, basic hygiene, tourism as a business and conservation of environment techniques.

Homestays offer several advantages such as exposure to everyday life in another location, opportunities for cultural diplomacy, friendship, intercultural competence, and foreign language practice, local advice, and a lower carbon footprint compared to other types of lodging; however, they may have restrictions such as curfews and work requirements and may not have the same level of comfort, amenities, and privacy as other types of lodging. Independent travellers typically arrange homestays via social networking services.

The family provides to the guest a decent room, attached toilet, toiletry kit and breakfast. This is why the facility is also called Bed and Breakfast. The guest may avail of other meals - lunch, dinner, snack- at an extra cost, if the family agrees to provide these. Evidently, the family would expect advance notice for cooking/serving such meals.

• **Benefits of Homestays in India**

There are a number of reasons why staying at a homestay can be preferable to staying in a hotel. The benefits include:

1. Distinctive and Characterful Accommodations -Homestays offer an unparalleled opportunity to experience the incredibly diversity and delights of India. The options are almost endless and include plantation bungalows, historic havelis (mansions), forts, and remote rural cottages. One on hand, it's possible to stay with a royal family. On the other, a tribal family. There's no better way to interact with Indians from all walks of life!
2. Personalized Service -In contrast to a hotel, a homestay usually only has a few rooms. The family who resides there runs it, and acts as host. This guarantees that guests receive plenty of individual attention. You can spend as little or as much time with the host family as you like. Some guests choose only to dine with them, while others spend hours chatting to them. Regardless, staying with an Indian family is the easiest way of finding out about Indian culture. Many guests and hosts find that they bond with each other so much, they keep in touch long after the vacation is over.
3. Safety -If you are a solo female traveller who is visiting India for the first time or are simply concerned about staying safe, you will have a family who looks after you at a homestay. They will provide you with advice, and may even pick you up from the airport or provide a car and driver.
4. Local Knowledge -The wealth of information that the hosts have about their local area makes deciding what to see and do a breeze. Such local knowledge is extremely helpful in getting the most from your visit. Many hosts are delighted to show their guests around their local area, providing them with invaluable insights that simply aren't available from a guide book. Hosts usually have reputable contacts and can assist in making travel bookings too.

5. Home Cooked Food -There's a huge difference between the Indian food served in restaurants and hotels, and the food that's cooked in an Indian home. By staying at a homestay, you'll be able to taste authentic Indian home cooked food, made to order. It's a lot lighter, and has more variation and flavour than restaurant food. Some homestays even welcome their guests into their kitchen, and let them watch and participate in the cooking process.
6. Unique Activities -As a guest at a homestay, the focus is on you, and your likes and preferences. The hosts are typically very accommodating and will put a great deal of effort into arranging activities that are of interest to you. These activities will vary depending on location. Exploring a coffee plantation, watching a polo match in Rajasthan, herding animals in remote northern India, village visits, picnics, and temple tours are just some of the options. Guests are often invited to attend weddings as well.
7. Celebrating Festivals -The ideal way to celebrate India's many festivals is with an Indian family. You will gain a deep appreciation and understanding of what the festival is about, as well as get to participate in the rituals associated with it. This is particularly the case during Diwali, which is a special family festival.
8. Getting Off the Tourist Trail -Homestays are commonly located in residential neighbourhoods, rather than tourist areas. This means you will be away from all the tourist traps, touts, scams and other hassles.

Staying at a homestay in India is all about immersing yourself in India, rather skimming over it.

- **Government of India Ministry of Tourism Guidelines for Homestays:**

1. The classification for Incredible India Homestay Establishment will be given only in those cases where the owner /promoter of the establishment along with his / her family is physically residing in the same establishment and letting out minimum one room and maximum six rooms (12 beds).
2. The scheme will be on bed and breakfast basis and charges will have to be levied accordingly. The type of breakfast to be offered will have to be specified, the charges will have to be displayed and the visitors will have to be informed in advance so as to avoid unnecessary dispute.
3. The rate of taxes for property, electricity and water to be paid for classified Incredible India Bed & Breakfast Establishments and Homestay Establishments will be those prescribed by the appropriate authorities.
4. An Incredible India Bed & Breakfast Establishments and Homestay Establishment will be classified following two stage procedure.
 - a. The presence of facilities and services will be evaluated against the enclosed Checklist.
 - b. The quality of facilities and Services will be evaluated by the Regional Classification Committee. Due preference will be accorded to the homes, which are able to provide Indian experience by way of Indian

decor, authentic and exotic Indian cuisine etc. (Ref. Approved Guidelines for B and B Homestays 2018).

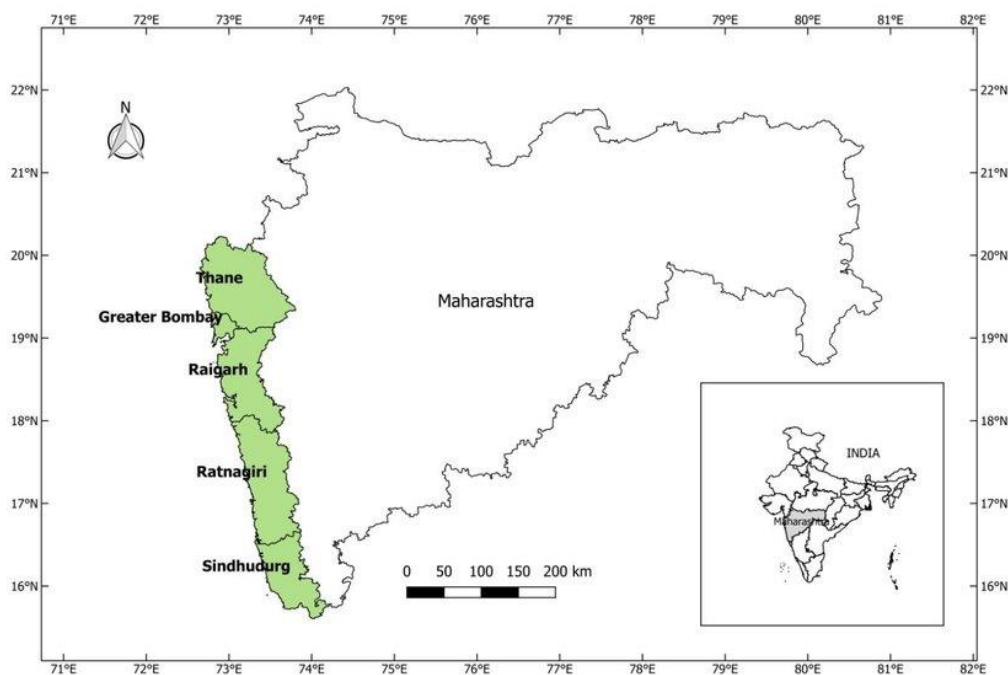
Source: <https://tourism.gov.in>

Coastal Region of Maharashtra

Geographical Location:

Maharashtra coast is popularly known as ‘Konkan’. The Konkan with an approximately 720 km long coastline and a narrow coastal plain stretching from north to south is a distinct physiographic region of Maharashtra (India). The coast lies to the west. On the east, the Konkan is separated from upland Maharashtra by the west facing escarpment of the Sahayadri mountain range. Plateaus and hills dominate the landscape in the narrow stretch of land between the coastal plain on the east and the Sahyadri on the west. It comprises the coastal districts of Thane, Raigad, Greater Bombay, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg. The Shoreline is generally straight. Apart from the beautiful beaches and island forts, the coast is also well known for fruits - mangoes, cashew nuts and kokum-which in turn attracts a lot of tourists and traders. The area is also notable for its unique coastal and marine biodiversity.

MAP of Maharashtra (Coastal districts are highlighted)



(Ref. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-Maharashtra-coastal-districts-are-highlighted_fig1_326251714)

Tourism destination of Konkan Coast:

The beauty of the Konkan coast doesn't really need many depictions as the beautiful sea beaches, delicious seafood, splendid ruins, and gorgeous waterfalls make it even more stunning. Tourist can never stop admiring the beauty of this place that has plenty of beautiful places they can explore on vacation. Close to the top cities like Mumbai, Pune, Konkan coast is an ideal weekend getaway destination. However, they may find it hard to select places that will be safe after the global pandemic. So here there are 10 beautiful places in Konkan coast tourist can visit for a thrilling experience on next trip.

Alibaug:

Alibaug is the one of the best places to visit in Konkan because of the mesmerizing beauty the place offers. Tourist can visit Alibaug Fort, Magen Avot Synagogue, there is also Siddheswat Mandir and Kanakeshwar Mandir where thousands of pilgrims come and visit throughout the year. Konkan coast is popular for exotic beaches and find some of them here too, Tourist can take a stroll on those virgin beaches here including Kashid Beach, Nagaon Beach, Akshi Beach, and so on.

Added attractions: There are several homestays in Alibaug that offer the best hospitality and modern amenities, along with delicious seafood cuisine, and for the adventure lovers, there are water sports to enjoy.

Ratnagiri:

Immensely popular for the delicious Alphonso mangoes that are produced here, this place home to the hilly Western Ghats and the gorgeous Arabian Sea, making Ratnagiri an ideal weekend holiday destination. Apart from the natural aspects, Ratnagiri also offers a lot of water sports and will offer a relaxing holiday in the lap of nature.

Added attractions: Guhagar beach and the Ratnagiri lighthouse are some attractions near the beaches, and also the Marine Biological Research Station, Thibaw Palace, and the birthplace of Bal Gangadhar Tilak are there that have made Ratnagiri one of the beautiful places in Konkan coast.

Sindhudurg:

Sindhudurg is one of the most popular tourist places in Konkan and is mainly significant for Chhatrapati Shivaji's fort with the same name that is an amalgamation of elegance and antiquity. According to the locals, Chhatrapati Shivaji's hand and footprints are still conserved here. There are some other places worth-visiting like Kunkeshwar, which is a gorgeous temple dedicated to Lord Shiva and Tarkarli, which is a beautiful beach in the region.

Added attractions: This place should be visited during winter to get the best Scuba-diving experience in winter near the fort. Malvani cuisine is extremely famous over here along with the Alphonso mangoes.

Dapoli:

Situated on the Sahyadri hills, this hilly town is often called “mini Mahabaleshwar” because of its pleasant climate that stays the same throughout the year. Among other tourist places in Konkan, this place gets attention from history lovers. The history of British settlements before independence is a theme that attracts tourists from all across the country, with so many beautiful beaches around, this is one of the ideal places to visit in Konkan coast.

Added attractions: Ancient temples such as Keshavraaj and Vyaghreshwar Temple can be found here which some major attractions in Dapoli are making it one of the beautiful places in Konkan. In addition to this, the forest trekking experience and Dolphin sightings are some fun things tourist can do besides enriching there self with culture.

Harnai:

While talking about the best places to visit in Konkan, this place shouldn't be overlooked. Even though it is located in Dapoli, Harnai deserves a special mention because of the splendid sea beaches, the virgin coastline, and magnificent locations it offers. Tourist would get to experience authentic Konkani hospitality, in Harnai. There are some villages that are slightly low-key and hence people can get the opportunity to enjoy the bliss of solitude near the beautiful sea beaches such as Ladghar, Kelshi, and Anjarle.

Added attractions: The warm hospitality of this small town is the major attraction for all the tourists. Also, Parshuram Bhumi and Suvarnadurg are there which offer a wonderful trekking experience.

Mahad:

Mahad is home to Buddhist Gumpas and Maratha forts that make this place one of the most ancient places to visit in Konkan coast. The town possesses a touch of ancient history as this city used to be the capital of the Maratha Empire under Shivaji. Because of the frequent floods, the area resembles a triangular peninsula with water on three sides.

Added attractions: Gandhar Pale Buddhist Caves, Raigad, Pratapgad, Birwadi, Warandha Forts, etc in Mahad that will reminds the history of Maratha Empire.

Kelshi:

This small village in Dapoli taluka is still untouched by the harshness of city life and famous for the beach it has. Utambar Hill reaching the Arabian Sea at this place, along with plenty of flora and fauna, making Kelshi a picture-perfect landscape.

Added attractions: Apart from the gorgeous beach, tourist will find multiple varieties of the Kingfisher bird in this area, along with mangroves and coconut plantations. If tourist visit Kelshi during winter, they fall in love with the majestic sight with hundreds of migratory birds that can be spotted here making tourist holiday more special.

Roha:

Roha, which is located between Kalasgiri hills and the Kundalika River, has become a popular tourist destination over the years. This small town of Ratnagiri district is famous as a haunted place. The village also offers activities like river rafting, etc.

Added attractions: Tourist can take a trekking experience to the Avchitgad Fort ruins, visit famous monuments like The Dhavir Temple and the Bande Ali Shah Dargah and also enjoy the stunning view from the top of Hanuman Tekadi.

Amboli:

Located right before the borders of Goa, Amboli is a blissful getaway destination and one of the top tourist places in Konkan coast. The hill station has a variety of flora, fauna, and stunning views. As per some locals, there are supposed to be around 108 Shiva temples, which are still being discovered until recent years.

Added attractions: The beauty of this small hill station gets enhanced during monsoon, with lush green hills and waterfalls around.

Chiplun:

This place is the abode of Parshuram and hence a very sacred place among the locals and tourists as well. There are several temples in Chiplun to discover the time of Parshuram. Even though the weather is pleasant throughout the year, the beauty of this place gets enhanced during monsoon.

Added attractions: Apart from temples, also visit The Pandavas cave, Narayan Lake, and Kalwande Dam are some famous spots. Enriched in mythological aspects, tourist will get to spend an eventful holiday in Chiplun.

Homestay in Coastal region of Maharashtra:

An ideal destination for the nature lovers, it also entices a large number of visitors who yearns to explore and discover the region's authenticity. Irrespective purpose of visiting, the homestays in Konkan always serve as ideal retreat to all the visitors to this region. Homely ambience, warm hospitality, plenitude of things to do and the other offerings of these homestays make them ideal for the visitors.

Out of the many Home Stays of Maharashtra, the Konkan region is the most understated. And Ratnagiri is its crown jewel. Ratnagiri is that one place that silently invites the tourist and it is also home to one of the most breathtaking home stay near Mumbai.

Sindhudurg in South Konkan is renowned for its authentic homestays that attracts experiential travellers from all over. These homestays offers guests authentic local experiences in culture, cuisine and from where guests can explore beaches around the area.

Ref <https://www.slideshare.net/HolidayIQ/hiq-home-stays-trends-and-patternsfinalv3>

Impact of Pandemic on Tourism Industry

In the past decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and became one of the fastest growing economic sectors globally. The sector witnessed a 59% growth over the decade in international tourists' arrivals from 1.5 billion in 2019 compared to 880 million in 2009. Tourism is also a key driver for socio-economic progress, with tourism specific developments in an increasing number of national and international destinations. Globally, the tourism industry contributed to \$8.9 trillion to the global GDP in 2019 equalling a contribution of 10.3%. It is also to note that 1 in 10 jobs around the world is in tourism, equalling 330 million jobs. However, the strong historical growth has been halted in 2020 amid the global Covid-19 pandemic. With airplanes on the ground, hotels closed and travel restrictions implemented, travel and tourism became one of the most affected sectors since the very start of the virus spread. The pandemic has cut international tourist arrivals in the first quarter of 2020 to a fraction of what they were a year ago. Countries all over the world applied travel restrictions to limit the coronavirus spread. Airport closures, the suspension of incoming and outgoing flights, and nationwide lockdowns are just some of the measures that countries are implementing in an effort to help contain the pandemic. After the spread of the pandemic in the first two quarters of 2020, at least 93 percent of the global population lived in countries with coronavirus-related travel restrictions, with approximately 3 billion people residing in countries enforcing complete border closures to foreigners.

The world is facing an unprecedented global health, social and economic emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel and tourism is among the most affected sectors with a massive fall of international demand amid global travel restrictions including many borders fully closed, to contain the virus. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) fell by 72% in January-October 2020 over the same period last year, curbed by slow virus containment, low traveller confidence and important restrictions on travel still in place, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decline in the first ten months of the year represents 900 million fewer international tourist arrivals compared to the same period in 2019, and translates into a loss of US\$ 935 billion in export revenues from international tourism, more than 10 times the loss in 2009 under the impact of the global economic crisis. Asia and the Pacific saw an 82% decrease in arrivals in January-October 2020. Data on international tourism expenditure continues to reflect very weak demand for outbound travel. While demand for international travel remains subdued, domestic tourism continues to grow in several large markets such as China and Russia, where domestic air travel demand has mostly returned to pre-COVID levels. UNWTO expects international arrivals to decline by 70% to 75% for the whole of 2020. This would mean that international tourism could have returned to levels of 30 years ago. Looking ahead, the announcement and the roll-out of a vaccine are expected to gradually increase consumer confidence and contribute to ease travel restrictions. UNWTO's extended scenarios for 2021-2024 point to a rebound in international tourism by the second half of 2021. Nonetheless, a return to 2019 levels in terms of international arrivals could take 2½ to 4 years.

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS BY REGION



(Ref. <https://www.unwto.org/impact-assessment-of-the-covid-19-outbreak-on-international-tourism>)

The lockdown due to the pandemic has affected the tourism industry across the globe, and the hotel sector is among the hardest hit. Global hospitality data company STR compared 2020's first quarter status to 2019 figures, hotel occupancy rates dropped as much as 96% in Italy, 68% in China, 67% in UK, 59% in USA and 48% in Singapore. There's no doubt that the hotel industry has witnessed a severe impact by the pandemic and the lockdown status. The hospitality industry is likely to be hit hard. March has borne the brunt of many large-scale cancellations across the corporate, MICE and leisure segments. Tier 2 and tier 3 hotel markets in India continue to witness a small erosion in business. Occupancies in at least the first half of March were only partially lower despite the spread of the virus in some states. Restrictions placed on travel and stay-at-home orders issued by the authorities led to sharp decline in hotel occupancies and revenues. However, the reopening process has slowly begun and authorities have started to ease restrictions, for example, allow dine-in restaurants to reopen at a reduced capacity with strict social distancing guidelines, and gradually reduce restrictions on domestic and international travel.

Data Analysis

4.1 Research Methodology:

- **Primary Data:** Primary data was collected from respondents by circulating structured questionnaire and interaction with Homestay operators.

Questionnaire circulated to the 30 homestay (coastal region of Maharashtra) out of which 15 respondent gave their feedback and were able to help data analysis for the given topic.

- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data was collected by referring various print and published material, which was available in the form of e-books, official websites, e-journals, e-paper, etc.

Sampling: The Coastal region of Maharashtra was considered for the project, and the age group of the respondents was 30-60years. Totally there were 15 responses which were received for the same.

4.2 Analysis and Interpretation

Profile of the Homestay Operators:

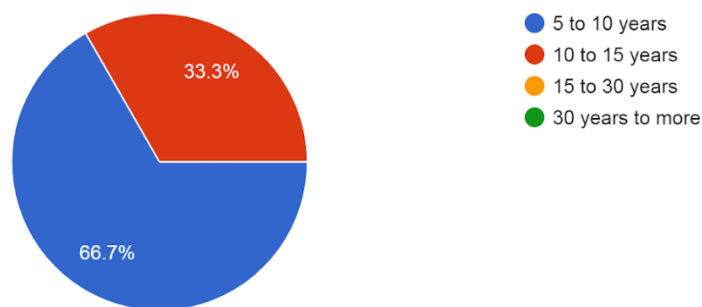
Sex: Majority (93.3 percent) of the Homestay operators are male.

Age: Regarding the age, majority (86.7 percent) of the homestay operator's age is between 30 and 40 years.

About the Homestay:

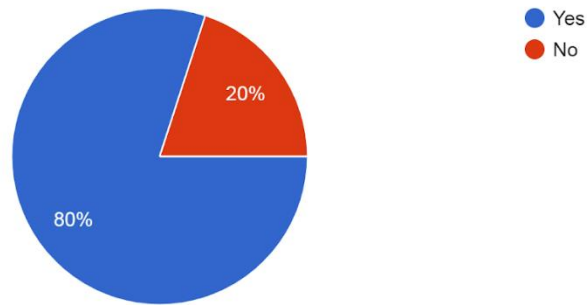
1. How long have you been in this tourism business/ Homestays?

15 responses



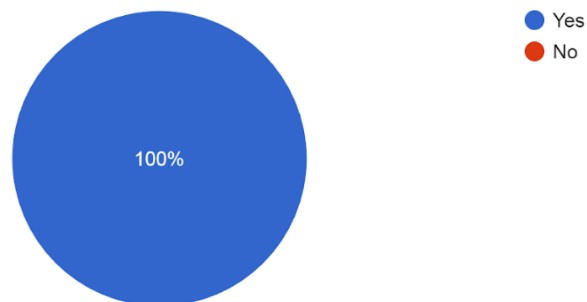
Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, the question asked for how long have they been in this tourism business of homestays out of which , 33.3% homestay operators mentioned that they are doing this business from 10 to 15 years and 66.7% homestay operators mentioned that they have recently started this business i.e. from 5 to 10 years.

2. Is this your Family Business?
15 responses



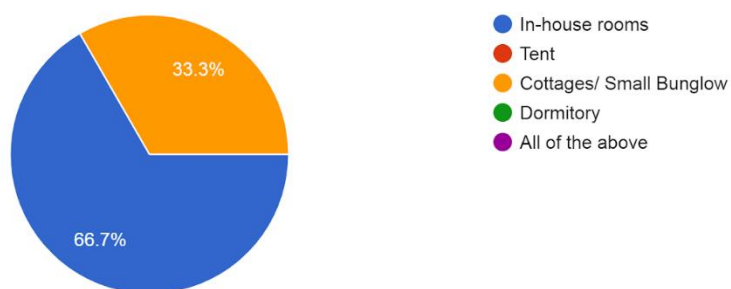
Analysis and Interpretation: This pie chart contains, 20% operators have started this business recently and 80% operators its their family business.

3. Do you personally operate your business or it is outsourced?
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: All the 15 responses, operate their business on their own.

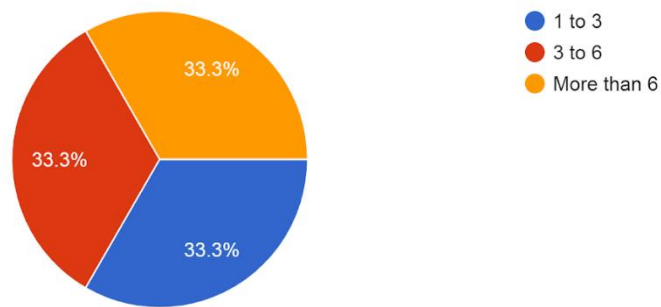
4. What are the various accommodation facilities available at your destination?
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Various types of accommodation facilities are available at homestays in the Coastal Region. 5 operators have mentioned that cottages along with small individual bungalows are available at their destination. 10 operators have mentioned that accommodation is provided in the extra rooms that are available in their own residences but exclusively let out for homestays business.

5. The total number of rooms available at your establishment?

15 responses

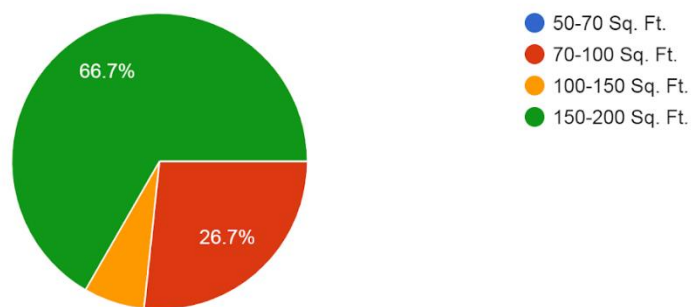


Analysis and Interpretation:

The availability of rooms at the coastal region was minimum 3 and ranged up to 6 however the bungalows which were available had a provision of minimum 3 rooms within and was preferred by families who like to stay together.

6. Approximate area of the room?

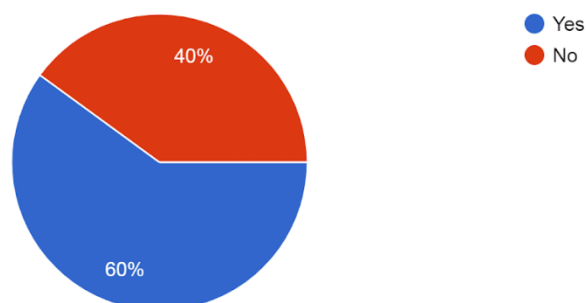
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: As homestay is opted by both families and solo travellers minimum area offer was 70sq.ft. Per room to 200sq.ft. Per room.

7. Is your home stay accessible for differently abled guest?

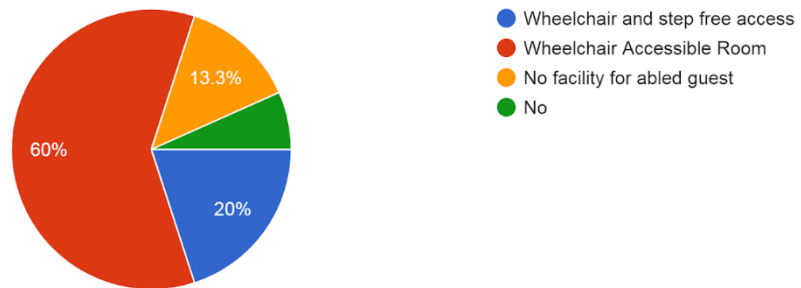
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, only 9 operators have made their homestays accessible for differently abled guests

8. What are the facilities provided for differently abled guest?

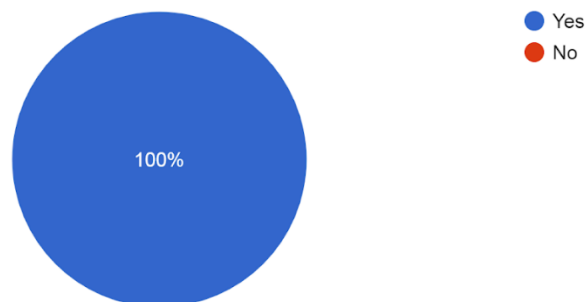
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: As we mentioned facilities provided for differently abled guest, 60% has mentioned that rooms are easily accessible by the wheel chair, 20% has mentioned that property has wheelchair and step free access, 6.7% never had facility for differently abled guest.

9. Has pandemic affected your business?

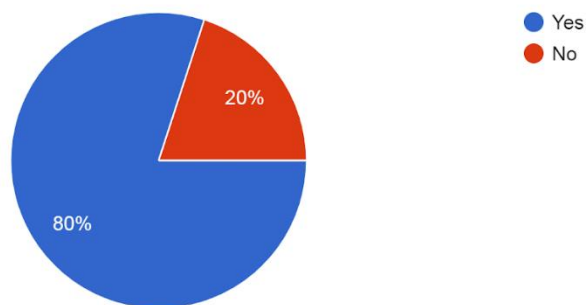
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: All respondents mentioned that they have been severely affected due to the pandemic.

10. Is there a change in the facilities/ amenities due to pandemic?

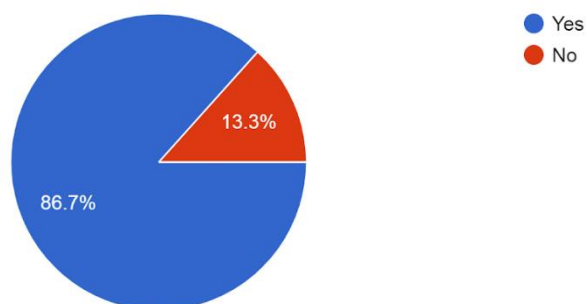
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 12 people have said that they have changed their facilities due to pandemic. 3 respondents haven't changed the facilities.

11. Were you placing any amenities before pandemic?

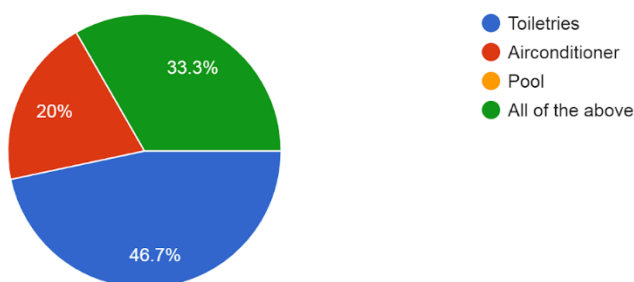
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 13 responses have been placing amenities before pandemic.

12. Amenities/ Facilities which were available/provided at your establishment before pandemic ?

15 responses

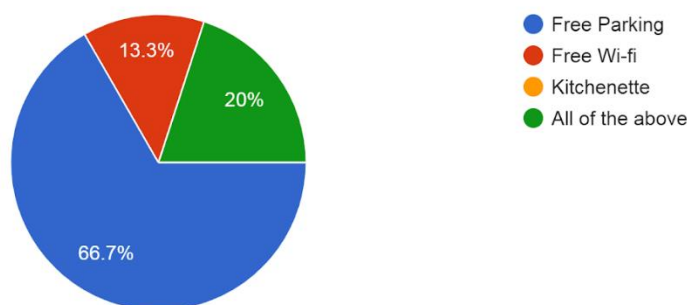


Analysis and Interpretation: The question asked to the respondent regarding type of amenities/facilities provided by their establishment before the pandemic. So Out of 15 responses, maximum respondent said basic toiletries were provided by them to the

guest, 3 people said that they had AC rooms , 5 homestays had the luxury of Swimming pools.

13. Facilities provided by your establishment before pandemic are?

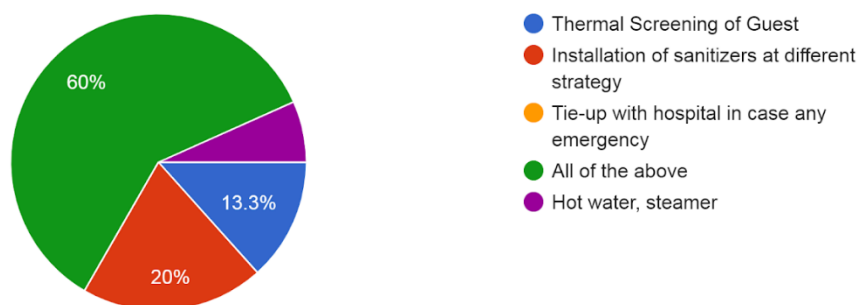
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Facilities provided before pandemic, out of 15 responses, 10 respondents mentioned that their homestays were providing free parking facility to the guest. 2 respondents were providing free Wi-Fi facility, 3 mentioned the homestays had all the facilities above but also included a kitchenette for guests convenience.

14. Precautional Facilities provided by your establishment Post pandemic are?

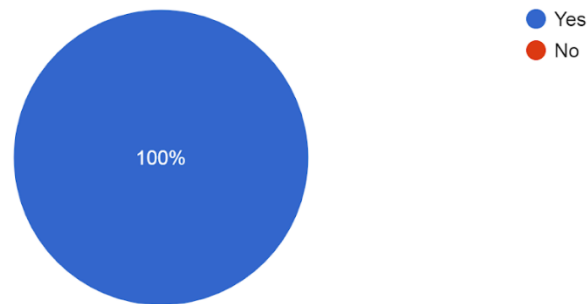
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 9 homestays have said that they were providing all the facilities after the pandemic like thermal screening of guest, Installation of sanitizers at different strategies, Tie-up with local hospitals in case of any emergency, Provision of Hot water, steamer, etc. 3 homestays have mentioned that they have only install sanitizers at different strategies. 2 homestays have mentioned that they have only thermal screening facility. 1 homestay mentioned that they have only provide hot water, steamer and could not provide other.

15. Do you critically follow the safety and precautionary measures?

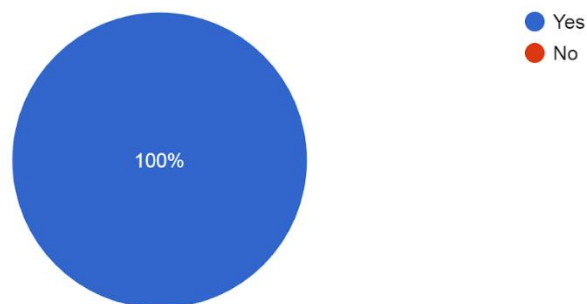
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: All 15 Homestay operators were aware and following the safety and precautionary measures.

16. Have you trained your staff regarding safety and precautionary measures taken for COVID-19?

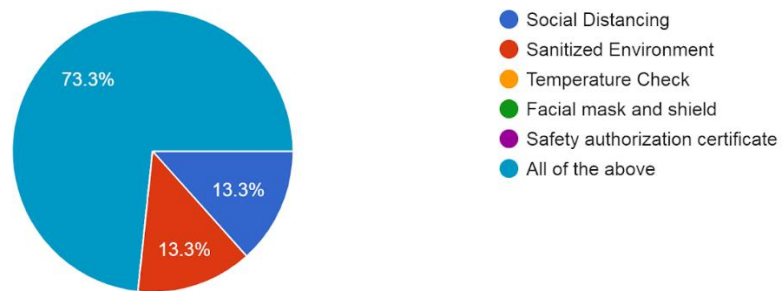
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: All 15 respondents have mentioned that they have trained their staff regarding safety and precautionary measures to be taken for COVID-19. Local Grampanchayat helped to train homestay staff for the safety and precautionary measures by providing them guidelines documents and giving them demo for the same.

17. What are the safety and precautionary measures followed in your establishment for COVID-19?

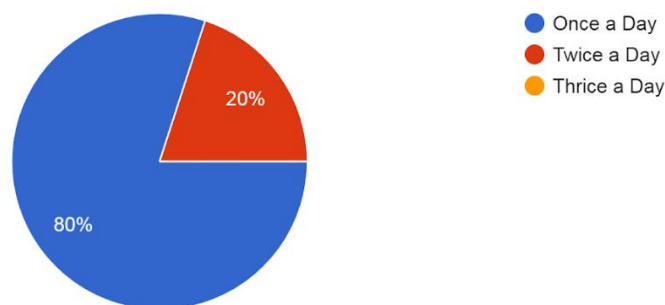
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, maximum respondents i.e. 11 of them followed all the safety and precautionary measures for COVID-19 like social distancing, sanitized environment, temperature check, facial mask and shield, safety authorization certificate. 2 of them only sanitized the environment. 2 respondent follows social distancing norm i.e. maintained minimum 6 feet physical distance.

18. Frequency of room cleaning?

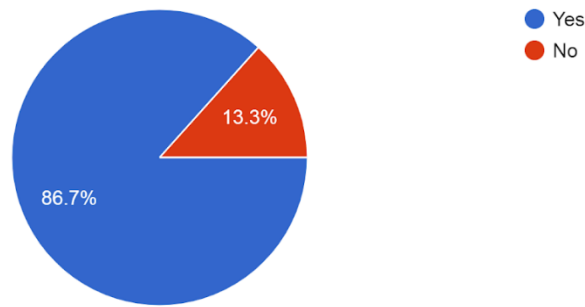
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 12 people do the room cleaning once a day and 3 of them do it for twice a day.

19. Do you find any change in the selection of cleaning agent brand for hygiene and safety purpose, pre and post pandemic?

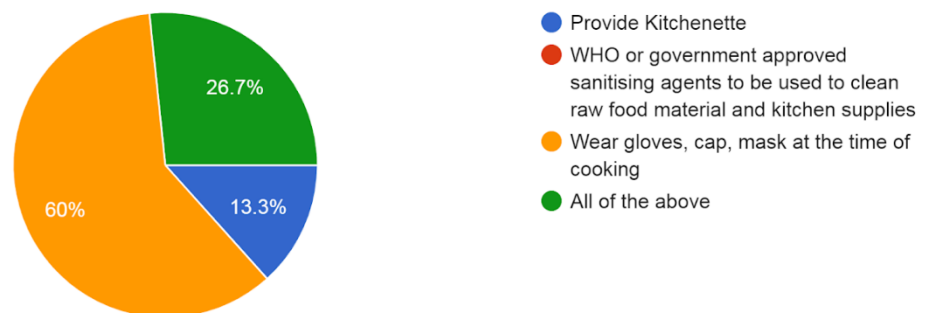
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 13 respondent have mentioned that cleaning agent brand changed because of pandemic. The WHO recommended agents were used as to keep the safety of both operators and guest in mind.

20. Have you adopted any changes even for kitchen after the pandemic?

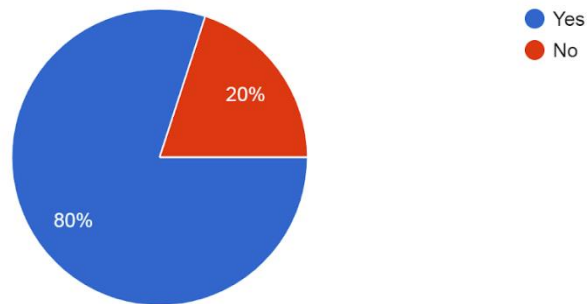
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 9 respondents has said they have adopted the changes for kitchen after the pandemic, while working in the kitchen wear gloves, cap, mask at the time of cooking. 4 operators has said they follows all the norms for kitchen after the pandemic like safety gears, WHO approved sanitizing agents, provide kitchenette.2 respondents has said they only provide kitchenette. Also raw food was removed from menu.

21. Do you find any changes in the guests stay duration during this phase?

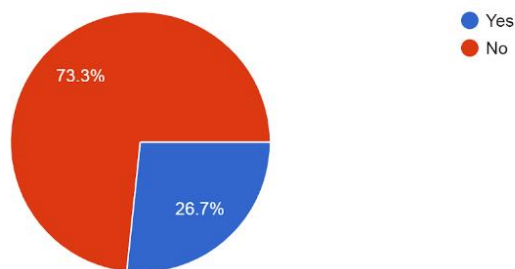
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 12 respondent mentioned that they find the change in the guest stay as in the duration was more compared to earlier as guests liked the concept of workcations and felt better combining the two aspects of leisure and work.

22. Have you changed the layout/ setup of establishment after pandemic?

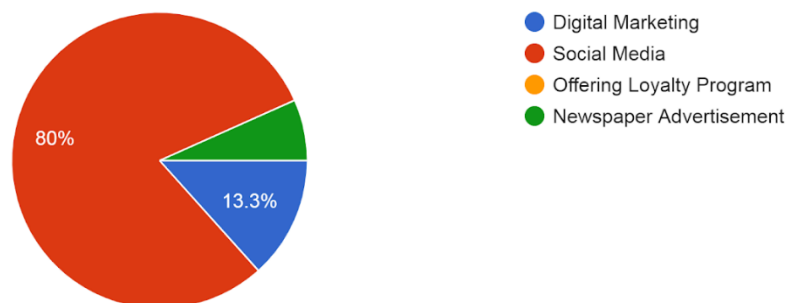
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Out of 15 responses, 11 respondent said they are working in same layout, they didn't change the layout. 4 respondent said they changed the setup of their establishment after the pandemic.

23. What are the marketing strategies you are using for promoting your establishment, during the pandemic?

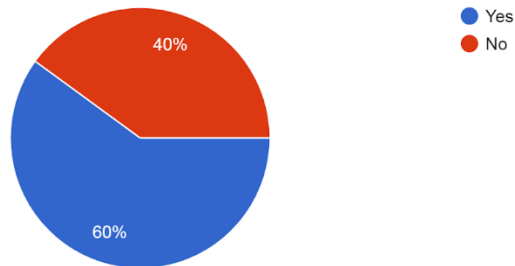
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: due to pandemic tourism industry saw a major crisis so , Homestay operators applied various strategies for promoting their establishment. 80% operators were using social media e.g. Facebook, Instagram, etc. 33.3% operators were using digital marketing tools like Websites, Email marketing, etc. 6.7% operators were using traditional newspaper advertisement for promoting the business.

24. Due to pandemic, is there any change in number of employees?

15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Question was also asked about the changes in number of employees, where 9 operators said there is change in number of employees and 6 operators said there is no change in the number of employee because they were operating their business with the help of family members.

25. The number of employees working in your organization/ Homestay?

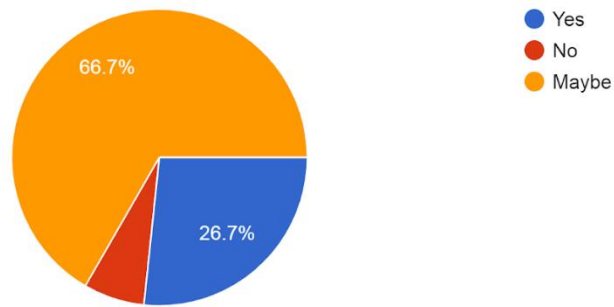
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Minimum number of employees working in homestays were very less and ranged up to or less than 5.

26. Did you find any stress in maintaining the whole setup of your establishment due to pandemic?

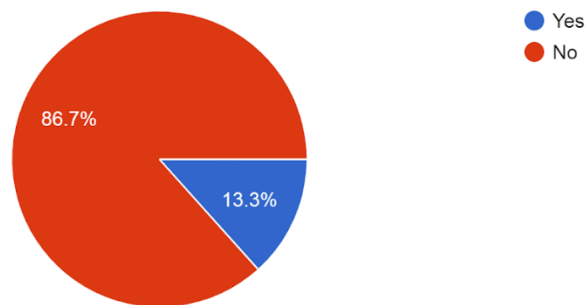
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: 10 operators didn't find any stress as it was well managed by the family members but few like 4 operators observed stress while one respondent was neutral.

27. Have you opted for any alternative business/ job during the pandemic to support you financially?

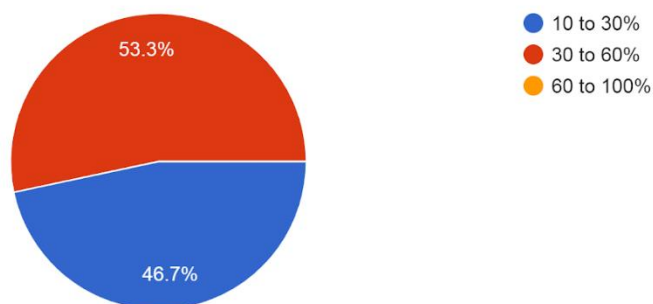
15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: only 2 out of 15 respondents took an alternative source while 13 remained waiting for the situation to change.

28. did you observe any sales when the curbs were lifted for some time and travel was allowed?

15 responses

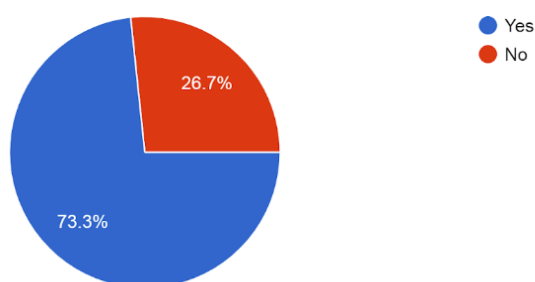


Analysis and Interpretation:

8 respondents did not find any enquiries even when the travel was allowed as the travellers were still scared and not ready to take any sorts of risks, 7 homestay operators saw some enquiries and sales but not as it used to be earlier.

29. Were the shopkeepers or vendors able to deliver the recommended (WHO) cleaning agents, kits/safety gears?

15 responses



Analysis and Interpretation: Due to changing norms, the hygiene and precautionary measures were a extremely important and mandatory , homestay operators had to use specific tools/agents preferred by WHO like mask, sanitizer, cleaning agent, etc. for safety of guests and operators. So procuring this for 4 respondent was difficult, for 11 respondent it was possible.

Subjective question:

30. What are the challenges faced by the establishment during pandemic?

Due to pandemic the cost of operations increased but there was no sale, as the premises had to be well maintained in spite of no business apart from the daily maintenance challenges to cover the cost of overheads was huge.

The electricity, water and taxes still had to be paid, few employees were still within the organisation so the salary component was also to be looked into. The cleaning agents cost had

almost doubled up along with the frequency of cleaning. Some times procurements of things was difficult as they had to travel far to purchase the same. Even if there was any sale reusing was eliminated like earlier so all this contributed to excess expenditure with low or absolute no business.

31. A part from this the respondents also shared their views in an open question and the information received was ,

1. Government needs to keep provision of funds for hospitality industry esp. homestay operators in case some likewise situation arises.
2. They are trying everything possible for the safety and precaution guests.
3. They are assuring the provision of homemade hygienic food which is prepared by keeping in mind all the safety and precautionary measures.
4. No support from government regarding the interest on loan, taken for the homestay business from bank even when there is no business at all.

Findings

- Majority (93.3 percent) of the Homestay operators are male members.
- Regarding the age, majority (86.7 percent) of the homestay operator's age is between 30 and 40 years. It is inferred that mostly youngsters are interested in doing Homestay Business.
- Majority (66.7 percent) of the Homestay operators started their business recently between 5 to 10 years. It is stated that homestay is the need of future.
- All homestay operators operate this business themselves. No outsourcing is done.
- Majority (66.7 percent) of the homestays let out rooms within their own premises . few of the homestays have Cottages along with the small bungalows.
- (60 percent) of the homestays have basic facility for differently abled guest. Most of them provided wheelchair accessible room for them. Some of the homestays do not provide any facility for differently abled guest.
- All operators are severely affected because of pandemic.
- Due to pandemic, homestays changed their facilities for the safety of guests.
- Before pandemic homestays were providing amenities like Toiletries, Air-conditioner and pool. After pandemic swimming pool were closed because of safety protocol and government norms.
- Before pandemic homestays were providing facilities like Free Wi-Fi, free parking and kitchenette. After pandemic they were providing Thermal Screening of Guest, Installation of sanitizers at different strategic points, Tie-up with local hospitals in case of any emergency. Provision of Hot water, nebulizers, etc. according to guidelines by Government were made available.
- Majority of the homestays follow the safety and precautionary measures critically to ensure safer stay of guest. They also trained there staff regarding safety and

precautionary measures which is taken for COVID-19 through safety videos provided by local Grampanchayat.

- According to Government guidelines homestays followed safety norms and precautionary measures for COVID-19 i.e. Social Distancing, Sanitized Environment, Temperature Check, Facial mask and shield, Safety authorization certificate, etc.
- Majority (80 percent) of the homestays do the room cleaning once a day because of no business and also to minimize contact with the guest.
- homestays find change in the selection of cleaning agent brand because of pandemic and recommendations by WHO. They are following safety and precautionary rules and focusing on hygiene and safety measures for increasing the business.
- Some homestays are providing kitchenette after pandemic and some are giving In-room dining service for the guest following all the safety and precautionary measures like Wearing gloves, cap, mask at the time of cooking;
- Majority of the homestays observed change in the guest stay duration.
- Some of the homestays changed their layout for social distancing purpose.
- Majority of the homestays were promoting their business through social media and digital marketing. Very few of them were still promoting their business through newspaper.
- Majority of the Homestays find it difficult in maintaining their establishment because of pandemic. They have to pay electricity bill, water bill, and payment for the staff, etc. and due to no business, it was a burden.
- Very few of them identified alternative business apart from homestay business due to pandemic.
- Sales were rising to 20-30 % when the norms were a little eased out during pandemic.

SUGGESTIONS

1. An exclusive website has to be designed to create awareness about the home stay facilities and through which reliability has to be built in the minds of tourists for choosing Homestay. Also post some videos on the website containing hygiene, safety and precautionary measures taken for COVID-19.
2. To promote homestays, tourism stakeholders should take the responsibility and also tourism entrepreneurs should take the charge to do marketing campaign for the homestay tourism.
3. Provide appropriate facilities to the differently abled guest, for their convenient stay.
4. Follow all the operational guidelines which is given by the Ministry of Tourism Government of India for COVID-19 even when the situation is under control.
5. Adopt new strategies for maintaining the homestays and also for increasing the revenue after the pandemic.

Conclusion

In Maharashtra, Coastal region has got many Homestays and have gained popularity. Home Stay is a good alternative for hotels, cost effective accommodation and also safe and secure for the tourists. Tourists have been opting for homestays even during pandemic where the norms were lifted for a certain period of time. people who had a long term facility to work from home were enquiring on a larger scale for homestays as it would give a combination of both work and relaxation.

Some operators even had enquire for long staying guest. However the Challenges also were big in number meeting day to day expenses and maintaining the norms was a huge expense for these small scale operators.

However they were looking at a better tomorrow, with the situation to come under control and travel norms to be easing out. Homestays operators are keeping the protocols in place and following all safety standards. They have also opted for new tools in marketing and showing their presence on social and digital media for promoting their business. The local authorities also have been joining hands and waiting for the tourism to revive.

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Glossary of Terms

1. Amenities: Amenities are a service or item offered to guests or placed in the guestroom, bathroom, and kitchen etc. for convenience and comfort and at no extra cost.
2. Carbon Footprint: The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular individual, organization, or community.
3. Cultural Diplomacy: Cultural diplomacy is a type of public diplomacy and soft power that includes the “exchange of ideas, information, art, language, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.”

4. Dormitory: A dormitory is a building primarily providing sleeping and residential quarters for large numbers of people.
5. Digital Marketing: Digital marketing is the component of marketing that utilizes internet and online based digital technologies such as desktop computers, mobile phones and other digital media and platforms to promote products and services.
6. Footfall: Footfall is the number of people entering an area in a given time.
7. Hospitality Industry: The hospitality industry is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, food and drink service, event planning, theme parks, travel and tourism.
8. Homestay: Homestay is a popular form of hospitality and lodging whereby visitors share a residence with a local of the city to which they are traveling.
9. Intercultural competence: Intercultural competence, is a continuous and life long journey to increase people's skills in being proficient in intercultural and intra cultural knowledge which can improve the ability to work with people with different culture.
10. Isolate: To keep somebody separate from other people.
11. Kitchenette: A kitchenette is a small cooking area, which usually has a refrigerator, a microwave and sometimes a sink.
12. Loyalty Programme: A loyalty program is a marketing strategy designed to encourage customers to continue to shop at or use the services of a business associated with the program.
13. Motorable: Roads usable by motor vehicles.
14. Nebulizers: A device for producing a fine spray of liquid, used for example for inhaling a medicinal drug.
15. Novelty: The quality of being new and different.
16. Oximeter: An instrument for measuring the proportion of oxygenated haemoglobin in the blood.
17. Pandemic: A pandemic is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of people.
18. Social Media: Social media are interactive technologies that allow the creation or sharing/exchange of information, ideas, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.
19. Thermometer: An instrument for measuring temperature.
20. Tourism Industry: The tourism industry is the total of all businesses that directly provide goods or services to facilitate business, pleasure and leisure activities away from the home environment.
21. Vendor: A vendor is a party in the supply chain that makes goods and services available to consumers.