

Exploring Fast Food Restaurants' Business Survival Strategies during Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: Covid 19 pandemic has had a big impact on the Fast-food industry resulting in various problems in the fast-food industry. And because of the government, implementation of Enhanced Community Quarantine fast-food industries' operations is become limited from 100% operation down to 50%, and it depends on the level of the Community Quarantine because this implementation helps to reduce the number of covid 19 cases in the Philippines and to ensure the safety of the employees and customers. But it results in a huge negative impact on the Fast-Food industry because they need to spend money on safety equipment. Therefore, we decided to conduct this study to help future businesses and provide information and guidance on Covid 19 pandemic to survive various problems. To gather information to help the future, the researchers are using a qualitative paradigm method based on the purpose of the study. That the characteristics aim to collect data answers based on the survey and interview reviews of the participants and the researcher also expanded the framework by adding Community Quarantine which is also the mediator variable. The data that is going to collect is to respond to the demographic profile of the participants such as company name, position, expertise, and location of the company.

Keywords: Covid 19 pandemic, Fast-food industry, Business Survival Strategies, company.

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction of the Study

Fast-food restaurants businesses, also known as a quick service restaurant, that specifically offer speed in service, convenience and affordable products which belongs to Food and beverages Industry, facing a problem with the covid-19 pandemic impacts. Before the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, Fast-food restaurants were one of the booming in the food industry line in Dasmariñas City of Cavite because of the characteristics. Therefore, this study aims to Explore Fast-food Restaurants' Business Survival Strategies During Covid-19 to provide guide and helpful information for Fast-food restaurants from various problems caused by the covid-19 pandemic, as the Covid-19 pandemic has created so many problems for Fast-foods Restaurants and even throughout the food and beverages industry such as company losses, company suffering and above all the most unfortunate of all is the unexpected closure of many companies or branches. Many are having a hard time recovering from the collapse due to the impacts of this pandemic, so perhaps continuing this study will give hope to recover and it will help to make Fast-food Restaurants better prepared in the future in case there is pandemic recurrence and moreover to emphasize the importance of a contingency plan for a pandemic event or to be included in risk management plans.

Research Paradigm

This research study used the qualitative paradigm method based on the purpose of the study. Its characteristic aims to collect data answer based on the survey and interview reviews of the participants. With a research gap of the impact of Covid-19 to stability of fast-food businesses in times of community quarantine and one of this is the unexpected closure.

To fill this gap the researcher will conduct a survey with the use of google form to collect information and an interview thru online platform for more accurate answer from the participants. This will help the researcher to identify the business survival strategies of fast-food restaurants in Dasmariñas City of Cavite. The total of five fast food businesses such as Company 1, Company 2, Company 3, Company 4 and Company 5.

In this study the data will be nondependent in collecting statistical data but rather in collecting information about the survival strategies of fast-food businesses. With the concept of interpretivist, the finding of the study will not be generalized from one study to another because the study in the case of human behavior will be change from time to time depending on a variety of situations and environmental factors.

The researcher used conceptual framework to show the cause-and-effect relationship of two variables. The cause-and-effect relationship was applied because to identify the key to two variables. The Independent and dependent relationship of Covid-19 pandemic and implementing fast food business strategies. The Covid-19 pandemic as the cause and also the independent variable, while implementing fast food business strategies was the effect and also the dependent variable.

The researcher expands the framework by adding the types of community quarantine which is also the mediator variable. The types of community quarantine affect both the independent and dependent variable of the study. It was used to further explain the relationship between the two variables.

The researcher also adds control variable, the health. Because it is likely if the community was vaccinated it will lower the cases of Covid-19 pandemic based on the DOH. As the result the fast-food restaurants will be most likely to go back to its normal business routine before the pandemic.

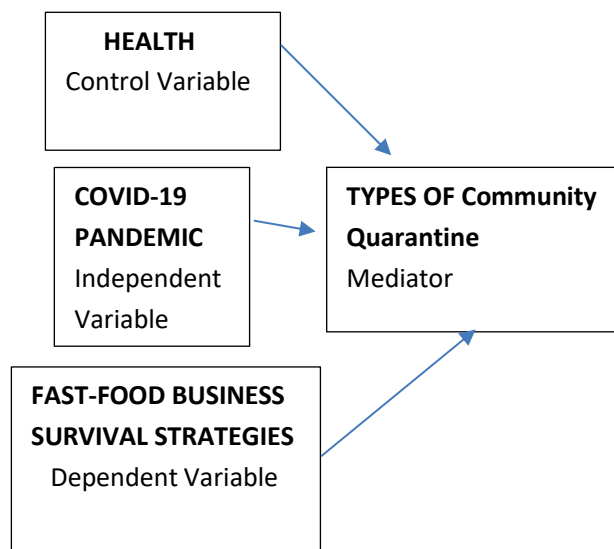


Figure 1

Shows the covid-19 as the independent variable because it was the cause of the Pandemic and Fast-food business survival strategies as the dependent variable as it was one of the effects of pandemic, that Fast-food Businesses must create and implement strategies to be able to survive during covid-19 pandemic.

The mediator is the types of community quarantine to further explain the relationship between the two variables. The types of community quarantine both affect the variable as it is the solution to control the virus while it is also becoming a problem to Fast-food business owners because it limits the customers from going outside.

The control Variable was called health because on the currently situation the covid-19 has already have a vaccine. If the citizen gets vaccinated, they were allowed to go and dine-in outside. This helps the fast-food business owners to gain more customer.

Statement of the Problem

This study will aim to understand the experiences and to look for the survival strategies made by the fast-food restaurants. It aims to explore how Fast-food restaurants survive during covid-19 pandemic and understood by the help of the target participants. This study primarily aims to ask:

1.) What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms?

1.1 Age

1.2 Gender

1.3 Job Title

1.4 Frequency of Visiting Fast-Food

1.5 What device do you

have available?

2.) What are the Survival strategies created by Fast-food restaurants in midst of the challenge of covid-19 pandemic?

3.) What are the protocols implemented of Fast-food Restaurants During community quarantine?

3.1 What is the basis of the company in implementing protocols as a strategy during community quarantine in midst of covid-19 pandemic?

4.) How effective were the measures taken to reach the company's revenue then or at least increase it gradually from the effects of covid-19 pandemic?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The researchers researched related literatures to help for the finding a definitive answer to our study or statement of the problem. In search of the answers to the question such as What are the Survival Strategies Created by Fast-food Restaurants in midst of the challenge of covid-19 Pandemic?

Community quarantine has four types and as a result sudden or unpredictable mandatory closure, cannot be prevented and even if it is for a short time, it has a huge impact on the company. Therefore, the statement Food delivery is effective to maintain the sale of the fast-food restaurant's industry during COVID- 19 pandemics but there is another strategy that is useful in the food industry. According to the study of operations management research that the First Expiry First Out (FEFO) is effective to minimize the risk of product expiry they are using the dashboard to the warehouse so they can monitor the product. Because this strategy can help the financial problem of the restaurant and avoid wasting products (Md. Tarek Chowdhury 2020). A case study on a strategy to deal with the impacts of the covid19 pandemic in the food and beverage industry. It will really help on how companies should manage their supplies or supply chain management and also with this it will lessen the cost of the company. After managing the internal concern, the external strategies will occur that can also help to gain more customer amidst the pandemic. One of the best strategies are from Madeira, A (2021), the impact of pandemic crisis on the restaurant business said that during this type of pandemic fast-food and restaurants should be able to increase their advertisement in order to start to recover immediately. They need to start to create new an idea new tactics to create impact to our customers and safety procedures for the health protocols because in this pandemic one of the important is health safety for everyone and also, they need to learn what is the customer's needs. Even we are in this pandemic we need to be close to our valuable customers. In additional according to the University of Galve, the fast-food industry can survive by adapting e-commerce which is the Platform that can connect to the customer the takeaway orders to make the restaurant sustainable During the covid19 pandemic. (Sonia Sultana),2020 (Ashraful Islam) 2020 Role of e-commerce for the survival of foodservice industry during covid19, which we can really observed right now. Almost are already adapting e-commerce which is stands as a platform for more easier, fast transaction and more clients which is effective in all types of community quarantine.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is aimed Exploring Fast-Food Restaurants' Business Survival Strategies During Covid-19 Pandemic through a qualitative research design. This section of the study discusses the Research Design, Research Locale, Participants of the Study, Research Instrument and Data Gathering Procedures, Data Treatment & Analysis and Sampling Technique of the Study.

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to provide sufficient information on how the fast-food industry, are managing their business, during covid-19 pandemic

And gathered adequate information about the strategy that they used during the covid-19 pandemics and to continue the exploration we will use the qualitative procedure that has the potential to become an important part of the problem. Because the qualitative characteristics can get a better understanding of how the Covid-19 impacts and changed the regular operation of fast-food restaurants.

Qualitative design is conducted in a natural setting. It also has the multiple methods that we need for this study. Qualitative has a unique case orientation to balance the situation and the advantage of qualitative is we can use the natural way to gain data from the participants by allowing them to be themselves, during the research process so they can Express their feeling experience and perspective.

Research Locale

The study will be conducted in the province of Cavite in the municipality of Dasmariñas City the largest City in terms of area and populations and compose of seventy-five barangays (75) and 703,147 populations. According to the 2020 census. And one of the fastest developed City from 1900s to 2020 They developed shopping malls, University, Industrials, Restaurant and Residential Subdivision. And that is the good opportunity to conduct the study about the Impacts of Covid-19 pandemic and survival strategies made by the Fast-food Restaurants because Dasmariñas City is one of the municipalities that highly urbanized and there is a lot of Fast-Food Restaurants here in Dasmariñas City that from a big company that has a big number of establishments in the Philippines.

Participants of the Study and Research Sampling

The participants of the study are 1 manager and 2 customers representing each fast-food restaurants businesses chosen by the researchers.

The participants must be working in Mc Donald, KFC, Jollibee, Mang Inasal and Greenwich with a position as manager. Because according to Indeed (2021), the main duties of manager include training, hiring, creating and implementing business strategies that is delegate to operate the business. Together with an additional of 2 customers to verified if the strategies were effective.

The total of five fast food restaurants was selected in Dasmariñas City of Cavite. The scope of the location of the study was choose because of the efficiency and safety of the researchers.

The researchers used convenience sampling technique on selecting participants because the researchers are utilizing the geographic location due to the set limitations by the covid-19 pandemic and to have a participant who are easily accessible and convenient to the researchers. Also, convenience sampling technique is aligning the best across nearly all qualitative research designs. Therefore, the participants are all from Dasmariñas City, where the researchers are located which makes the participants accessible and it is with the permission of the recruit participants (Sonia Sultana 2020).

Research Instrument and Data Gathering Procedure

The study will be conducted in a two-phase data collection process. The first phase will be conducted in a survey with the use of Google form to collect information, this process is used to help or guide of the researchers to understand the experiences already recorded. The second phase of the data collection process will be done through an interview with the selected participants, the interview shall be semi-structured interview by the researchers as a interview guide in generative the qualitative data for this study.

Data Treatment and Analysis

The data that is going to collect is respond to demographic profile of the participants such as, company name, position, expertise, location of the company and What device are available for them? This was also applied to support the research question, (a) What are the Survival strategies created by Fast-food restaurants in midst of the challenge of covid-19 pandemic? (b) What are the protocols implemented of Fast-food Restaurants During community quarantine? (c) What is the basis of your company in implementing protocols as a strategy during community quarantine in midst of covid-19

pandemic? And (d) How effective were the measures taken to reach the company's revenue then or at least increase it gradually from the effects of covid-19 pandemic?

With data analysis the researcher will utilize the information from the participants using qualitative research design. The collection of data will be using survey and interview guide questions with the participants who are willing to participate on this study. The researcher will do survey with the use of Google form and an interview that will be conducted in an online format. The interview guide question is consisted of demographic questions and research question that led to provide answers from the respondents. The researchers select five (5) Fast-food Restaurants' within Dasmariñas City of Cavite. The results of the interviews will be analyzed and arranged to identify the most effective patterns of survival strategies made by the Fast-food Restaurant.

All of the information that the researchers is going to collect will go through to a deep analysis to make the result more accurate. And the researcher's idea and information will be set aside in the subject and will open their minds with the participant given information throughout the interview.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The case study was developed through analyzing the results of the survey and interview, researchers managed to have a face-to-face interview with the participants agreeing waiver. Our participants from different companies are gradually recovering from the slump as in the first year of the pandemic in our country. Using the strategies, they used in dealing with the Pandemic to compensate for losses during lockdowns.

I. Internal Concerns/Strategies

As stated on Sonia Sultana (2020) of e-commerce for the survival of foodservice industry during covid19, e-commerce has provided a great opportunity for fast-food restaurants to make up for the company's losses. This became the main strategy based on the responses of our participants which resulted in positive sales, it creates a much wider market and sure customers for being more accessible.

Second, the Alfresco dining opportunity. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Ramon Lopez from April 12 to 30, the National Capital Region, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal or the NCR Plus as well as Santiago City in Isabela, and the provinces of Quirino and Abra were also placed under MECQ which is open for dining-customers but only if the establishment has an alfresco dining. With fast-food restaurants started to redo the floor plan considering the community quarantine level and the flexible floor plan for IATF to approve 50percent capacity in the company.

Third, mandating fully vaccinated employer and employees in the company. We can protect our company if we are fully vaccinated while working here because even if two or only one people test positive for the virus, the closure of the company will be automatic, and we will all be subject to quarantine which will be the cost of the company and losses during the closed days.

II. External Concerns/Strategies

Supply Chain Management has a huge effect to survive amidst of the pandemic managing the deliveries will lessen the cost of the company. Mandatory closures are unpredictable due to community quarantine levels, having proper supply management will help companies. Perishable products should be just enough up until the next delivery or stored them properly to last their life, avoiding unavailable items due to delivery delays and transportation cost during a pandemic (Md. Tarek Chowdhury 2020).

Advertisements also helps fast-food restaurants therefore they increase tactics on their promos to gain customers again. The purpose of it is not just to gain customers in physical store but also to gain the trust of the customers, trust that the company following health protocol and the safety of customers are the priority of the company. It is one of the biggest moves that they did and they considered as an effective strategy (Madeira, A.2020).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The huge impact of the Global pandemic on the Fast-food industry all fast-food stores in Dasmariñas City have various problems. Because of the Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine that the government implements to secure the safety of the community and to stop the rapidly growing number of covid 19 cases in the Philippines. And the fast-food operations were dependent on the level of Enhanced Community Quarantine. Therefore, this study is an instrument to help future businesses.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having a contingency plan will help a company to respond effectively to incidents that may or may not happen, designing preventative controls, and recovery tactics and this should be updated. Most of the participants revealed that they have contingency plans except for a pandemic event. This crisis is a natural disaster that is constantly increasing, and it may happen in the future, but you can significantly reduce the risk by having a contingency plan and natural disaster plans.

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Research Instruments

(Interview Guide Questions)

1. What are the most serious problems for the company during Covid-19 Pandemic?
2. Are there any other business problems that company is facing due to the Covid-19 Pandemic?
3. Before the Covid-19 Pandemic. Does your company have a contingency plan for Pandemic?
4. What are the adjustments made to the operational plan or business plan during Covid-19 Pandemic?
5. What arrangements have been made to cope up During the Pandemic?
6. What is the main means you are considering dealing with the Community Quarantine?
7. What is the main means you are considering to deal with the Health Protocols from the DOH and Government?
8. How effective are the current survival strategies to be able cope up, back to the competition and sustain the stability of the company?
9. What is the expected time for the company's business recovery?
10. How long can your company's current cash flow maintain the company's operation?
11. What do you personally see as the most urgent problem facing the company when it comes to being ready for a Pandemic?
12. What comments or suggestions for the company to deal and survive with the Covid-19 Pandemic?