

# Documented Experiences among Food Service Businesses towards Future-Proofing the Industry

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## ABSTRACT

Food service businesses such as restaurants and catering services encountered challenges during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic. This quasi-phenomenological qualitative research approach documented the idiosyncratic experiences of Food Service Business Owners and Managers during the COVID-19 Pandemic, determined the challenges encountered by the Food Service Business Owners and Managers, identified the measures implemented by Food Service Industry during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic, and a recommended future-proofing framework in the Food Service Business. The researcher interviewed the selected Registered Food Service Businesses in the

economic center of the Second District of Albay, Philippines using an open-ended interview questionnaire and presented a consent form to the participants for it to be recorded and documented. Scrutinized data have determined that the point of view and experiences of the Food Service Business Owners and Managers were relatively comparable. Consequently, Food Service Business Owners and Managers would always be willing to adjust to the current situation or to any business disruption that may occur, particularly on the demands of their customers, by adopting the technological trends, which means having a digital platform to continuously cater to their queries and orders.

**Keywords** — Business and Management, food service business, future-proofing framework, COVID-19 pandemic, business disruption, quasi-phenomenological qualitative, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

Food-related business is a good choice to have an abundant amount of income, mainly before the occurrence of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The food service industry in the Philippines is expanding at a 4.5% CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) during the foreseeable timeframe (2019-2024). The Philippines' food service business witnessed continued growth in sales because of a healthy economy in recent years and an increase in the number of restaurants. Additionally, the number of restaurants expanded because of a rise in the frequency of eating out, which was affected by rising prosperity, busier lifestyles, a preference for convenience, and the arrival of several foreign brands into the Philippine food service market. Furthermore, the Philippines' growing number of value-conscious customers who are eager to try out new eateries with a variety of menu options, including interesting international and local cuisines, as well as those that could accommodate a busy lifestyle, will likely continue to drive this market in the future (Dublin, 2019).

Food Service Businesses such as restaurants and catering services encountered challenges during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic. Both small and large businesses were demanded to change the way they operate their businesses. In the article "Restaurants and COVID-19: Challenges and Changes affecting the industry," with that challenges like new risks as they follow a new safety measure protocol, Supply shortages if the usual products that they use are out of stock, Limited staff as required to operate at 50% capacity only, consequently,

with these challenges they were able to adjust considering the delivery and carryout, however, it added on their supply costs because of the packaging for the condiments and other foods. Furthermore, the best way to adjust to a challenging situation is to make the best of it (Previsor, 2020).

Recalling what happened before, according to the Provincial Tourism and Cultural Affairs Office (PTCAO) in Albay, the tourism sector has been severely hit by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic but was able to recover leisurely. In addition, As stated by the PTCAO chief, the government's declaration of community quarantine rules as a health measure to limit and prevent the spread of the virus resulted in PHP500 million in losses for the province's tourist and hotel industry during the first half of the year. Recognizing data from the previous year, the office reported that during the first half of 2019, roughly a million local and foreign visitors arrived, spending PHP499 million on travel services, accommodation, and dining. According to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in Bicol, various businesses claimed revenue losses of almost PHP5.4 billion because of the region's temporary shutdown owing to the expanded community quarantine (ECQ). According to the regional director of DTI, 61,522 out of the 75,000 registered businesses in Bicol were closed because of the ECQ from March 16 to April 30, 2020. 139, 321 people were temporarily out of work because of the two-month lockdown, while only 14,000 of the previously stated crucial and essential businesses involved in the distribution of power, water, food production and distribution, banking, and health services were allowed to continue operating (Serrano, 2020).

The key factors remain in the industry, not just by considering competitors and the present trend, but as an owner and manager, one would also consider the possible contributions of it to the economy, community, and the future business maneuver. In the article of Katigbak (2022), future-proofing could imply investing in measures that make you adaptive enough to expand as needed for yet unknown events and opportunities. In addition, it also means making sure that something does not become obsolete. It means to be ready for things beyond the here and now. Moreover, as a result, industries and professionals need to make investments to ensure the future viability of their offerings. The emphasis for several years was on enhancing the current services and skills. After all, as technology has advanced and business demands have increased, there is increasing focus on the future. Customer demands will increase as technology develops, and business operations will become more complex. In having the skills to advance into more difficult roles in the future, professionals should be fully

equipped to fulfill the tasks and responsibilities of their current positions. It's all about being resilient, as well as innovative and forward-thinking.

## FRAMEWORK

To direct and assist the study, the study is supported with certain theories. These were utilized to interpret and validate the replies of the Food service businesses with various levels of experience, to explain relevant variables, and to analyze the study's goal.

To direct and assist the study, the study is supported by certain theories. These were utilized to interpret and validate the replies of the Foodservice businesses with varying levels of experience, to explain relevant variables, and to analyze the study's goal.

The first theory that guided the researcher's study was Schumpeter's Theory of Creative Destruction by Joseph Schumpeter; during the Pandemic the majority of businesses were affected and closed their business momentarily, also considering the decline of the economic status. The idiosyncratic experiences of the Food business owners and managers made them more creative and innovative in sustaining their business operations. In addition, the use of digital platforms made them switch to it so they could constantly communicate and serve their customers. The profit motivation drives entrepreneurs to develop new goods and technology with the intention of improving their circumstances. In the marketplace, new products and services, businesses, and sectors compete with established ones to win customers by providing lower prices, superior functionality, novel features, eye-catching styling, quicker service, more convenient locations, higher status, more aggressive marketing, or more appealing packaging. Another seemingly incongruous feature of creative destruction is how the pursuit of one's interests sparks advancement that benefits society as a whole (Alm & Cox, n.d.).

The second theory that guided the researcher's study was Schumpeter's Innovation Theory of Business Cycle by Joseph Schumpeter; the pandemic brought numerous challenges to everyone, especially in the Food Service Industry, since the gatherings were limited and there were protocols that needed to be followed. Many people created their businesses, such as takeout and delivery orders, on a lower and more affordable price and packages; thus, it challenged the established Food service businesses to lower their prices and compete with the new ones. Consequently, they were forced to anticipate new ideas and inventions to keep up with the competitors. Five innovative techniques that will help your

company succeed are as follows: the launch of a new product, the adoption of a novel production technique, the opening of a new market, the search for new sources of raw materials or partially manufactured goods; and reorganization of a company's production procedures. Innovations are entrepreneurs' commercial implementations of their inventions (Kumar, 2020).

The third theory that guided the researcher's study was the Rational Expectations Theory by John F. Muth (1961). With all the idiosyncratic experiences and challenges encountered by the Foodservice businesses, they have practiced and followed specific measures to steadily open their business during the peak of the pandemic. In addition, the Food business owners became more connected with their businesses; hence they could not be as complacent as before. Furthermore, they always anticipate what will happen next in the Foodservice industry; therefore, they are committed to what will happen now in the future. In macroeconomics, the rational expectations theory is a theory and modeling approach that is frequently applied. In the theory, people make decisions based on three main considerations: their human rationality, the facts at hand, and their prior experiences. Moreover, according to the concept, people's current expectations for the economy have the power to directly affect how the economy will develop in the future. Contrary to popular belief, government policy has little bearing on financial and economic decisions (Tardi, 2020).

The study's paradigm is described below to help you comprehend the study of Documented Experiences among Food Service Businesses towards Future-Proofing the Industry.

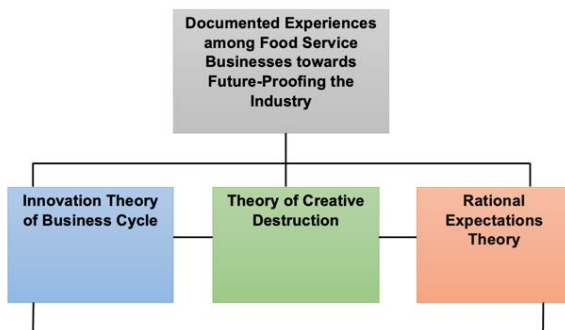


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to document the experiences among the Food Service Businesses towards Future-Proofing the Industry. Specifically aims the following (1) to identify the idiosyncratic experiences of the Food Business Owners and Managers during the COVID-19 Pandemic along with production and operation management, sales and marketing management, finance management, human resource management, technology adoption, (2) to determine the Challenges encountered by the Participants along the above-mentioned variables, (3) to identify the measures implemented by Food Service Industry during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic along the above-mentioned variables, and (4) to recommend a Future-Proofing Framework in the Food Service Business.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The researcher used a Quasi-Phenomenological Qualitative Research Approach, a type of approach that aims to comprehend and characterize a phenomenon's fundamental elements. By putting the researchers' previous notions about the phenomenon on hold, the technique looks into how people interact with the world on a daily basis. In other words, phenomenology research investigates actual events to learn more about how people interpret them, as well as to trace what accurately occurs in the study regarding its variables. It was used in determining and explaining the data and to consider the answers given by the participants while gathering and analyzing the interview answers; hence, it is scrutinized, documented, and verified. The focus of this study is Document the Experiences among Food Service Businesses towards Future-Proofing the Industry.

### Research Site

The study was conducted in the Province of Albay, Philippines specifically in the Economic Centers of the Second District of Albay. The Researcher chose to study Legazpi City and the Municipality of Daraga because the most known Registered Food Service Businesses can be found that cater both onsite and offsite. This place was chosen to interview the selected Food Business Owners or Managers from which the researcher has acquired information. As a result, the

research's core informants provided the most reliable and accurate results.

### **Research Respondents**

The participants of the study are the selected Food Business Owners and Managers of Legazpi City and Municipality of Daraga in the Province of Albay. The chosen participants were the ones who catered both onsite and offsite events, so they have the most knowledge to share their experiences during a global business disruption which is the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with the selected Food Business Owners and Managers. The interview question was composed of two parts: Part I Profile of the Participants and Part II Researcher's Interview Guide.

An Interview Guide was formulated by the researcher after an in-depth reading based on the instrument and interview used by other related researcher and is revised to suit the present study. For validity and reliability of the instrument, which is composed of two parts, was presented to the panel members during the proposal defense for comments and suggestions.

### **Sources of Data**

The researcher used primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data was gathered from the responses of the participants, which are the selected Food Business Owners and Managers of Legazpi City and Municipality of Daraga in the Province of Albay. The secondary data came from information surfed and reading materials.

### **Data Collection**

The data gathering was conducted by taking into consideration the following procedures: a written permit to conduct an interview with the selected participants prepared and noted by the subject Professor, Adviser, and the Dean of the Graduate School in Bicol College. The researcher personally interviewed the Participants with the aid of an interview guide using open-ended questions from among selected participants and asked permission from the interviewee if the researcher could record the interview to gather necessary data and to verify the genuineness of the information from the participants during the face-to-face interview. Come up with the findings and recommendations out of the reactions that were gathered, interpret data sets by identifying common responses, and draw implications of the conclusions and recommendations that were made.

### **Sampling Technique**

The researcher used purposive sampling wherein the participants of the study were chosen based on the type of food service business and the audience that they cater to. Therefore, the total number of participants was based on the legality of their compliance as Registered Businesses that also have complied with other requirements such as DTI and Sanitary Permit, whether they cater and serve in offsite and onsite locations.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The study used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved steps of coding and the transcribing of interview tapes. The researcher had the opportunity to review potential themes that the researcher had first identified by reading and rereading transcripts. The second level of analysis involved a review of these original codes. When creating overarching motifs and higher-level sub-themes, the researcher gave considerable thought to how to preserve the diversity of the original codes. The research questions focused on the Documented Experiences among Food Service Businesses towards Future-Proofing the Industry, filled in the process.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data are presented thematically below, followed by cross-referencing based on the literature review and the implications of each outcome to the overall course of the targeted issue. Four (4) theme topics were offered based on the transcript of the phenomenological study: (1) The COVID-19 Pandemic: The Food Business Owners and Manager's Idiosyncratic Experiences, (2) The COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges encountered by the Food Business Owners and Managers, (3) The Measures implemented during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Food Service Industry, and (4) The Future-Proofing Framework in the Food Service Industry.

This theme outcome is broken down into five (5) sub-variables in the objectives: (a) Production and Operation Management, (b) Sales and Marketing Management, (c) Financial Management, (d) Human Resource Management, and (e) Technology Adoption.

The interview transcript from the researcher's semi-structured interview



served as the basis for this thematic outcome.

## **Part 1: The COVID-19 Pandemic: Food Business Owners and Managers' Idiosyncratic Experiences**

### **A. Production and Operation Management**

*Production focused on ordering and buying the supplies, assigning the personnel in the kitchen and service area, food preparation, and food service and food delivery.*

Along with *Ordering and buying the supplies*, most of the participants have the same point of view of their experiences, such as having difficulty buying goods both at the mall and wet market because of the long line and limited stocks. In *Assigning the Personnel in the Kitchen and Service area*, since it was the peak of the pandemic, a few of the participants mentioned that their way was by shifting the staff and assigning them half of their normal duty days since it was needed to skeletal scheduling. In *Food Preparation*, each participant gave out their insights; a participant shared that they were able to avail of same-day delivery of fresh goods from the mall and at the wet market. Lastly, in *Food Service and Food Delivery*, most of the participants had done the same routine, such as disinfecting the service car before and after delivery and chose to avail and partner with their preferred delivery.

*Operation Management Focused on Planning, Organizing, and Supervising*

In *Planning* an event or function both onsite and offsite, many participants planned preparation of the needed ingredients, utensils, cloth, seating capacity for social distancing, and manpower loading. In *Organizing* an event or function both onsite and offsite, most participants followed the protocol of having fewer events and a number of pax and assigned at least one head waiter or supervisor in each of their events. Lastly, in *Supervising* an event and function both onsite and offsite, just a few participants have shared their experiences in supervising the events; hence they have said that as the owner, they also supervised the events and doubled checked all the assigned tasks of the waiters. **Sales and Marketing**

### **Management**

*Sales Focused on Catering Sales, Restaurant Sales, and Online Sales*

In Sales Management, having their *Catering Sales, Restaurant Sales, and Online Sales* in general; for a long time in the food service business, it is just now that the participants have experienced this kind of unexpected and uncontrollable

financial crisis.

*Marketing Management Focused on Exclusive Deals or Promo, Social Media Marketing, and Affiliate Marketing*

In *Exclusive Deals or Promo*, many have their own experiences of delivering it, such as by giving appreciation gifts to regular customers and giving more pax as a freebie for their loyal and regular customers. While doing the *Social Media Marketing*, it was convenient for all of them as they could post on their Facebook account or page to promote, and most of the inquiries were coming from the social media platforms. Lastly, in *Affiliate Marketing*, all the participants did not have affiliate marketing.

## **B. Finance Management**

*Focused on Capital Budgeting, Capital Structure, and Working Capital*

In *Capital Budgeting* many of the participants struggled with their capital budgeting because it was a type of business's disruption that was out of control. For the *Working Capital*, just a few of the participants entertained this part since they already mentioned their struggles with their capital budgeting. Lastly, the *Capital Structure* was not used by any of the participants.

## **C. Human Resource Management**

*Focused on Hiring Staff, Tracking Employee Hours, Running Payroll, Employee Records, and Business Licenses*

In *Hiring the Staff*, they did not hire anyone because there was no task to be worked on. Contradictorily, a participant hired those who have an experience with the food business and is willing to accept and train PWDs (Persons with disability) and working students. In *Tracking the Employee Hours*, they also have dissimilar experiences as a participant did not track hours; instead, they assigned them with a specific time of coming to work, and on the other hand, a participant implemented an early out of their employees if there was no event or function. For the *Running of Payroll*, many participants have mentioned that they have reduced their salary. For the *Employees Records*, just a few of the participants have mentioned that they just required an employee record for their regular staff, such as requiring a resume, community clearance, and a vaccination card. Lastly, for the *Business Licenses*, a certain number of participants have shared their different experiences in applying for or renewing their business licenses as a participant said that there was no difference prior to and during the pandemic, and a participant

also said that the LGU's (Local Government) have been lenient and easy.

#### **D. Technology Adoption**

*Focused on Mobile Applications, Website, Digital Platforms, and Online Payment Methods*

In *Mobile Applications*, none of them have a mobile application. While for the *Website*, just a limited number of participants had them as its purpose is for the packages and menu and pictures of the foods and venue. On the other hand, all the participants had an advantageous experience in using the *Digital Platforms*, which were on Facebook-Page and Messenger. Additionally, a few of the participants have also considered the use of Viber, Instagram, and Email. Lastly, the implementation of the *Online Payment Method*; was also useful and convenient both for the owner and the customer.

Ruggieri (2018) concluded that the current study emphasized the function of business platforms in advancing novel value proposition models and mediating between supply and demand, supporting the ongoing shift to the digital economy in this way. The author's multiple-case analysis provided empirical support for some common patterns and characteristics of this sort of business that were, in some cases, already mentioned in the literature.

### **Part 2: The COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges encountered by the Food Business Owners and Managers**

#### **A. Production and Operation Management**

*Production focused on ordering and buying the supplies, assigning the personnel in the kitchen and service area, preparation of the food, and food service and food delivery.*

In *Ordering and Buying the Supplies*, the participants' challenges were comparable. They have encountered various challenges, such as price increases of the goods and commodities, and the clients refunded and canceled their events; hence they were challenged about it since no one even booked an event or function. In *Assigning the Personnel in the Kitchen and Serving Area*, a few of the participants have stated that the first challenge or issue with it was the transportation of their employees, and some of the staff resigned due to the difficulty of transportation at that time, hence without them, it would be difficult on their end to assign or re-assign the personnel. In *Preparation of the Foods*, a few of them shared their challenges. A participant had difficulty finding fresh

meat at the market since many of the consumers opted to buy canned goods at that time. Lastly, in *Food Service and Food Delivery*, a couple of the participants shared their challenges, likely the price increase of gasoline and the same food service businesses owner they were not able to increase the menu since it was still pandemic time.

*Operation management focused on planning, organizing, and supervising.*

In *Planning* for the events and function, the participants encountered different challenges, such as planning for the seating capacity. Another challenge for a participant was the on-calls who would not show up after making a plan of their assignments and tasks. In *Organizing* the events and functions, the participants also shared different challenges that they encountered likely. A participant tried to offer a photo booth for additional activities during the events; however, the result was they must disinfect the props every after use of the guests, so it added to their expenses, such as buying a Lysol. Lastly, in *Supervising* the event or function, the participants had certain and dissimilar challenges as a participant sentimentally shared that they had experienced a covid-scare at one of their events which few of their employees were exposed to that event even so, that the client had supported the employees that could not come to work.

## **B. Sales and Marketing Management**

*Sales Focused on catering sales, restaurant sales, and online sales.*

In *Catering Sales, Restaurant Sales, and Online Sales*, the participants were challenged since there were no events at that time, so there were no income and negative sales.

*Marketing focused on exclusive deals or promo, social media marketing, and affiliate marketing.*

In having Exclusive Deals or Promo, the participants did not share any challenges since it was executed well. However, for Affiliate Marketing, they have not applied it in their business yet. However, in Social Media Marketing, few participants had their situation, such as fear of scams and the cancellation of reservations.

### **C. Finance Management**

*Focused on Capital Budgeting, Capital Structure, and Working Capital.*

With the *Capital Budgeting and Working Capital*, the participants shared their unique challenges such as if a specific client had booked an advance event, after a month/s of the said event it had an unexpected increase of the goods that would be used on that event, therefore the management could not be able to increase the package anymore that was availed of the client, so they have to stick with their old price.

### **D. Human Resource Management**

*Focused on Hiring Staff, Tracking Employee Hours, Running Payroll, Employee Records, and Business Licenses*

In Hiring Staff, the participants did not have any challenges since they did not need new staff. For the Tracking of Employee Hours, the participants did not have difficulty since they tracked them through a logbook or biometric; also, for the Running Payroll, both employer and employee had an agreement regarding the giving and receiving of their salaries, so they did not encounter any problem at all. Similarly, with the Employee Records, they did not share any problems with it because the staff complied with it. Lastly, regarding the Business Licenses, a participant mentioned that they encountered a delay in the processing of the requirements. Furthermore, a certain number of participants were challenged about the yearly increase in payment for the business permits.

### **E. Technology Adoption**

*Focused on Mobile Applications, Websites, Digital Platforms, and Online Payment Methods.*

The use of Mobile applications and websites; the participants did not encounter any challenges since there was just a few participants had these. For the Digital Platforms, the participants did not encounter any challenges in using this. Lastly, few of the participants have shared their problem with implementing the Online Payment Method, likely if a specific application has a delay and has an error.

In the study of Lögðal and Calissendorff (2018), past studies on digital platforms and ecosystems are quite thorough and cover a wide range of

opportunities and difficulties. The author's research revealed that in addition to a technological problem, there are organizational and business model issues that need to be resolved.

### **Part 3: The Measures implemented during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Food Service Industry**

#### **A. Production and Operation Management**

*Production focused on ordering and buying the supplies, assigning the personnel in the kitchen and service area, food preparation, and food service and food delivery.*

In *Ordering and Buying the Supplies*, the participants have shared different ways of their measures such as a participant availed and ordered from an online grocery of the mall with free delivery, also with the free delivery of vegetables and fruits from the wet market, and now with the new normal, they have just maintained it. In *Assigning the Personnel in the Kitchen and Service area*; during the peak of the pandemic, most of the participants have assigned their employees with specific days, such as by MWF (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) and TTH (Tuesday and Thursday) and rotation of schedule as well, but now that it is new normal, they have returned the normal days of their duty days and have a complete staff and have provided a full service for events or functions with the waiter. For the *Food Preparation*, most of the participants practiced necessary measures both for the safety of the management and customers. Lastly, in *Food Service and Food Delivery*, most participants charge mobility charges if direct delivered by the management.

*Operation focused on planning, organizing, and supervising.*

In Planning and Organizing the event and function, a few of the participants have mentioned that they plan ahead of time, such as the manpower and kitchen preparation, and up to now, they are still doing it. While supervising the event and function, a participant has shared that they have been consistent in reminding the staff about the protocols, providing thermal scanners and alcohol at the entrance during the pandemic, and checking the onsite or offsite through video call.

#### **B. Sales and Marketing Management**

*Sales focused on catering sales, restaurant sales, and online sales.*

In catering sales, restaurant sales, and online sales, the participants gave a

different insight into their measures.

In *Catering Sales*, a participant has joined an online community for food service and became more active on Facebook, and with the new normal, they just maintained it. Similarly, a participant has shared that for their *Online Sales*, they became more active on Facebook and Instagram and opened orders through messenger. Uniquely, a participant has added for their *Catering and Restaurant sales*; they had a takeout station to have an additional source of income, and in maintaining it, they have reduced their manpower and supplies, controlled the marketing, lowered the number of pax to be catered, and offered ala carte and small portions for takeout.

*Marketing focused on exclusive deals or promo, social media marketing, and affiliate marketing.*

For the Exclusive Deals or Promo and Social Media Marketing, the participants had different styles of executing their measures but were relatively comparable. A participant offered a civil wedding package for fifty pax with venue decoration and free wine and gave free use of videoke for the senior citizen.

### **C. Finance Management**

*Focused on Capital Budgeting, Capital Structure, and Working Capital.*

In Capital Budgeting and Working Capital, the participants have different ways of applying their measures, such as an owner-financed new set of menus and adapting the trend, and applying it in the present time. For the Capital Structure, all participants did not have this.

### **D. Human Resource Management**

*Hiring Staff, Tracking Employee Hours, Running Payroll, Employee Records, and Business Licenses.*

In Hiring of Staff, many participants mentioned that now with the new normal, they needed to hire more for their manpower. Additionally, with Employee Records, they have required a vaccination card. A participant mentioned that during the pandemic, they did not need new staff. Hence they have just retained their previous staff. Additionally, tracking of their employee hours was just the same. Also, the management took care of the blue card and health cards of their staff, and they have a bookkeeper, but now they are accepting

on-call waiters again. Relatively, for Running the Payroll, a certain number of the participants give payment on the day of the duty, especially for the calls, and give salary and advance payment if needed. Still, with the new normal, they give out the normal rate on the normal days of the duty. Lastly, for the Business Licenses, all participants have complied with all the requirements and availed installments for their permits during and after the pandemic.

### E. Technology Adoption

In using Digital Platforms and Online Payment Methods, most of the participants focused on the use of GCash and Bank Transfers. Also, few of the participants accepted a credit card and PayMaya payment. While for the Website just a certain number of the participants had it, and for the Mobile Application, all the participants did not have it.

Mishra and Tripathi (2020) concluded that throughout the past couple of years, numerous business frameworks and innovative company models had been created. The development of new technologies has altered how businesses operate over time, making the study of business models in digital marketplaces a crucial topic of study if one wants to operate sustainably in the modern digital marketplace.

#### ***Part 4: The Future-Proofing Framework in the Food Service Industry.***

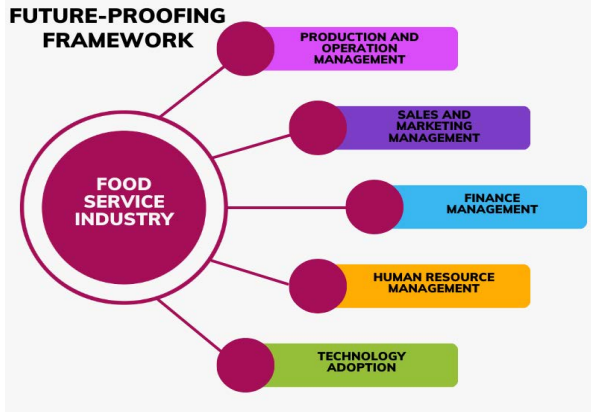


Figure 2. Future-proofing Framework

After all the experiences that the participants have faced, the challenges they



have encountered, and the measures they have applied during the pandemic and in the new normal, it is necessary for them to continuously safeguard their business operations this present time regardless of any business disruption that might come again. Based on the data gathered from the participants' responses, immensely guided the researcher to create a Future Proofing Framework in the Food Service Industry.

**Production and Operation Management;** it is necessary to have a reliable permanent supplier and a well-known substitute supplier. It is also necessary to have an active and regular food delivery service partner. Respectively, it is required to have a trusted employee besides the owner to handle the operation during an event or function.

In the article of Blutstein (2022) titled "Rise of the digital network: Future-proofing operations against supply chain disruption," here are some of the needed tactics that were mentioned by the author; *Master planning with traffic light ratings will strengthen supplier networks, Keep your finger on the supply chain pulse with warehouse management and a smart factory setup, Optimize production performance by keeping track of outside pressures, and Take the digital leap to avoid the 'butterfly effect' on future supply chains.*

**Sales and Marketing Management;** generally, implement creative deals and offer an affordable menu to the clients to boost sales. Considering the peak season and lean season of the events or function, think of a promotion that will work on that specific season. Be permanently active on social media accounts and consistently advertise the business page on social media.

In the article of Khanoria (2022), the author mentioned that businesses must ensure that their marketing strategies are future-proof because market conditions can alter at any time. For increasing brand awareness and securing strategies for the future, a unified marketing approach that combines offline and online strategies can be effective. Additionally, while posting about the event on media, the author urged offline readers to go online and utilize a hashtag.

**Finance Management;** overall, consider the important expenses and have a record of the expenses. Moreover, always ensure to have a safety budget for every event, function, and restaurant supplies.

In the article by Lawrence (2022) titled "Future-Proofing Finance: Top Three Priorities to Build the Finance Team of the Future," as mentioned by the author these are three strategies finance managers can use to ensure their team's success in the future: Prioritizing technology to attract top talent, Ushering in an expanded set of data skills, and Harnessing data to advance environment, social

and governmental (ESG) goals.

**Human Resource Management;** significantly strengthens the workforce with determined and experienced workers. Appreciate and give extra credit to the hardworking employees. Be more organized and prioritize the needed requirements for the business.

In the article of Coley (2023) titled “Future-proofing the employment relationship to boost retention,” As mentioned by the author, here are some of the ways in which the business could practice: *Employee engagement, Employee contracts, Remote working, and global mobility.*

**Technology Adoption;** considerably, balancing the traditional and techy clients, be more attentive to their demands both offline and online. Consider more options for online payment. Invest on behalf of the clients by having or exploring the website and their mobile application community.

In the article by Steinberg (2019) titled “5 Ways Technology Can Help You Future-Proof your Business,” the author mentioned five significant changes in the business that technology is expected to bring about in the upcoming years and how these seismic adjustments might help future-proof your company and boost output and performance: AI, Analytics, and Predictive Insights, Virtualized and Mobile Workforce Management, Online Payments, Digital Transactions, and Automatic Billing, VR and AR Training and Education, and Cybersecurity.

## CONCLUSIONS

A business disruption such as a pandemic has ruined the way businesses handle their maneuver. This study documented the experiences of the selected Food Service Business Owners and Managers in the Food Industry, focusing on specific variables, which are (a) Production and Operation Management, (b) Sales and Marketing Management, (c) Finance Management, (d) Human Resource Management, and (e) Technology Adoption.

Consequently, the challenges and measures were identified, which assisted the researcher in recommending a future-proofing framework. This study has shown that even though strict protocols were given by the government to all the business establishments they needed to follow during the peak of the pandemic, business transaction was affected as well. Thus the results proved how strategic and acquiescent the Food Service Business Owners and Managers were at that time.

Furthermore, this study has shown that Food Service Business Owners

and Managers could adapt easily to the business trend. Moreover, the use of technology helped them in many ways likely, answering inquiries and accepting orders. Crucially, this study will help future researchers and benefit the readers by knowing more about future-proofing studies that may secure the Food Industry in a time of business disruption.

## **TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH**

Significantly, this documented study will guide the Food Service Business Owners, Managers, and the Food Industry to manage their businesses competently, particularly during planning, developing, and executing their business operations. From the results of this study, the selected Food Service Business Owners and managers had an indistinguishable experience that assisted them in following a set of measures that helped them to survive such business disruption. Accordingly, this study will be exceedingly improved and explored through further studies through journals, news, surfed information from the internet, and documentation in the Food Service Industry.

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