



Food Stall Operations Practices in a Province-Based Food Park in the Philippines

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Abstract

Food parks have been on the rise for several years, offering small business owners an opportunity to cater to consumers' diverse food preferences. This study assessed food stall operations practices in a province-based food park in the Philippines. Using a quantitative-descriptive research design, the study examined the operational practices and challenges of 76 food stall businesses located in the subject food park. A self-structured questionnaire in Google Forms was distributed online to the respondents via a group chat set up by the food park operator. Data analysis included frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean, and multiple regression. Findings revealed that food stall operators effectively practiced strategies in operation management and revenue generation, customer engagement and regulatory compliance, while financial planning and sustainability, and competitive market positioning were areas that needed improvement. Moreover, respondents experienced moderate operational challenges, highlighting the need for effective strategies to address such challenges. Additionally, a strong correlation between location and mobility and operational challenges in terms of regulatory compliance was revealed, underscoring the importance of strategic location in reducing operational barriers for the survival of food stall businesses. However, other food stall operations practices were not significantly related to operational challenges. In light of these findings, the study proposed strategies to boost profitability, operational efficiency, and resilience in food stall businesses, emphasizing the importance of strategic planning and best practices for the success and development of the food park industry.

Keywords: *Food Stall Business, Food Stall Operations Practices, Food Stall Operations Challenges, Province-Based Food Park in the Philippines, Resource-Based View Theory*

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is renowned for its rich culinary heritage and delectable local delicacies. It is a common sight that any province in the country is stepping into the limelight with its vibrant food stalls and night market. As food parks have gained popularity worldwide, province-based food stall operations have blended historical culinary treasures with the energetic atmosphere of modern market culture (San Jose, 2023). The food stall industry has become a dynamic food service sector, offering consumers unique culinary experiences and convenient on-the-go dining options (Beltran, 2018). These markets typically feature a more relaxed atmosphere, allowing visitors to stroll around and enjoy outdoor dining areas, in contrast to the more commercial vibe of daytime markets. The food stall industry has appeared as a dynamic and resilient sector within the food industry and has gained significant popularity due to its low start-up costs, flexibility, and ability to cater to diverse consumer tastes and preferences. Additionally, food stalls can adapt to changing consumer trends and market demands, making them resilient business models in a competitive

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culinary landscape. Understanding food stall operations in rural communities is crucial because of their contributions. Several researchers (Anwar & Karno, 2024; Demong et al., 2020; Edeme & Nkalu, 2018) have articulated its important role in positively impacting sustainable life in the area as a source of employment and its ability to provide the basic needs of the surrounding communities at affordable prices. Despite the socio-economic contributions of the food stall business, this micro-enterprise sector is experiencing operational and regulatory challenges (Ajay & Geetha, 2024). Making their operations sustainable can improve entrepreneurship in rural communities and the standard of living of their people.

Several studies have explored the impact of food stalls on various aspects of society and the economy. Globally, street food plays an essential role in urban communities worldwide, providing affordable and accessible meals to millions of people daily. By offering reasonably priced meal alternatives and generating jobs, street food might help developing nations like Malaysia and Mexico solve their social and economic problems (Alimi, 2016). In the United States, the food truck industry has had a significant impact on social, cultural, and economic fronts, helping both vendors and food enthusiasts (Thomas, 2016). Likewise, in the Philippines, the rise of food parks has revolutionized the culinary scene, offered innovative fare, and created community-building spaces for food enthusiasts (Beltran, 2018). Based on the researchers' knowledge, no comprehensive study has explored the long-term socioeconomic impacts of food stalls on rural communities, particularly in developing countries. As noted by Salamandane et al. (2023), many developing nations lack detailed records on food stall operations in rural communities; thus, the information published in scientific articles tends to focus on specific geographic areas, such as capital cities and major metropolitan regions. This gap in the literature presents an opportunity for further research, especially focusing on food stall operations practices in province-based food parks in the Philippines.

Despite the growing popularity and potential of food stalls, there is a need to understand the specific challenges and opportunities faced by these businesses. It is crucial to explore these aspects in depth to discover effective innovation and sustainability strategies. Thus, this study examined food stall operations practices in a province-based food park in the Philippines. Specifically, it assessed operations practices and challenges across several key dimensions, including operation management and revenue generation, regulatory compliance, location and mobility, customer engagement, financial planning and sustainability, and competitive market positioning. The study also explored the relationship between operational practices and challenges encountered by food stall operators. Based on the findings of the study, this study proposed strategies that aimed to enhance the effectiveness and resilience of food stall operations. These strategies are designed to address specific challenges while fostering the growth and sustainability of food stalls in province-based food parks or similar locations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review examines the critical areas essential for the successful operation of food stall businesses, focusing on economic management, regulatory compliance, location and mobility, customer engagement, and financial planning and forecasting. These factors contribute to business resilience, customer satisfaction, and profitability.

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

This research is based on the RBV Theory, which examines a company's assets, abilities, capabilities, and intangible assets, including its internal resources, and determines its strategic advantage (Lubis, 2022). The RBV theory is a collection of resources that can be used to gain a competitive advantage and deliver strong organizational performance in the short or long term.

Kozlenkova et al. (2013) added that the RVB framework is often used to describe variations in business marketing tactics and the level of competitiveness. This study emphasizes the similarity of food stall operations practices to the core tenet of RBV, which determines the company's ability and access to manage resources and its competitiveness. According to Russo and Fouts (1997), there are two categories of resources: 1) tangible resources, which are financial and material, and 2) intangible resources, which are not readily clear, including knowledge, technology, and reputation.

The primary resource categories related to each company's activities are physical, organizational, financial, and human resources, as Barney and Hesterly (2020) stated. Purkayastha and Mazumdar (2023) added that physical resources involve tangible materials and facilities that can influence customer experience. Examples of these characteristics are the quantity and quality of offerings, the existence of buildings, and the vacancy rate of store areas (Oskam, 2021). In the context of food stall businesses, applying the RBV the following are the essentials that company owners may look into consideration: (1) valuable unique recipes or special ingredients that enhance the taste of the foods; (2) rare—prime location in a high-traffic area where few competitors are present; (3) inimitable—strong brand reputation built over years of consistent quality and customer service; (4) non-suitable exceptional cooking skills or a unique cooking method that cannot be easily replicated by others.

Operations Practices of Food Stalls

Food stalls must meet specific operational challenges that affect their profitability and long-term viability. Studies on food parks in some parts of the Philippines show that operational practices and regulatory compliance significantly affect overall business sustainability. In Nueva Ecija, night market kiosks deal with fluctuating supply costs, particularly for staple items like rice, which significantly affect production expenses and customer attraction (Austria, 2024). Conversely, vendors in Zamboanga del Norte must maintain rigorous food safety standards to ensure customer satisfaction and compliance with health regulations (Solon, 2022).

Effective management of revenue generation strategies involves prioritizing cost-effective inventory management and efficient labor practices (Maglumtong & Fukushima, 2022). Regulatory compliance is crucial for vendors to maintain essential health and safety standards and build a credible public image (Ku et al., 2021). Customer engagement strategies such as loyalty programs and social media marketing help keep customers and ensure repeat business (Nitto, 2020). Competitive market positioning involves offering unique culinary experiences and maintaining high food safety standards to drive customer satisfaction and business growth (Ku et al., 2021).

Every day, approximately 2.5 billion people consume street food worldwide. In India, street vendors make up about 2.5% of the population, and in Latin America, street food accounts for more than 30% of urban family budgets (Bellia et al., 2016). All ages and various socio-economic classes enjoy street food globally (Al Mamun & Turin, 2016). Building loyalty and maintaining profitability in food stall businesses largely depends on customer engagement. According to Austria (2024), night market food stalls face challenges like increasing prices of the products, thus affecting customer attraction. Austria (2024) suggested that food stall operators should take part in marketing courses and implement engagement tactics like annual food fairs to address these issues, helping kiosks attract and maintain regular customers even during economic uncertainties. Engaging with customers is crucial for fostering customer loyalty and increasing sales. Li et al. (2024) also highlighted that regular communication and personalized care can enhance client experiences. By actively interacting with customers both on social media and in person, food vendors can gather valuable feedback and adjust their menus to meet customer preferences. According to Solon (2022), adapting to changing consumer trends, such as preferences for healthier

options or unique culinary experiences, can significantly affect their positioning strategy.

In the Philippines, street foods are commonly found in busy locations like churches, schools, plazas, markets, and boulevards, attracting people to these convenient and affordable eating options. Street food is becoming increasingly popular in the informal economy of commerce in the Philippines (Njaya, 2014). Food stall operators must strategically position themselves to attract diverse clientele, maximizing visibility and sales. Strategic location and mobility are key to customer satisfaction and market positioning. Rane et al. (2023) emphasized that selecting high-traffic locations enhances operational efficiency and shapes customer interactions. Proximity to public transportation and parking facilities is also important because it enhances accessibility and contributes to customer satisfaction. Hill et al. (2018) highlighted that positioning food stalls in high-traffic areas improves visibility and customer attraction.

Successful financial planning and management strategies are crucial for food stall operators to thrive in a competitive marketplace. Careful monitoring of marketing, spending, and income ensures business stability. According to Paulino (2018), strategic entrepreneurial management frameworks are essential to guide financial planning and assess revenue potential. This is particularly important because food stalls in food parks typically run for only one to two years. Effective economic management is key to maintaining operations. Hill et al. (2018) emphasized the need for evidence-based financial practices among street food vendors. By checking operational costs, setting strategic prices, and planning for revenue changes, operators can improve profitability and achieve long-term success. Prioritizing high-quality food, customer-focused marketing, and consistent service contributes to revenue growth (Hidayat et al., 2020). Cost management strategies include minimizing costs through waste reduction, bulk purchasing, and efficient labor practices. Accurate financial record-keeping is emphasized to facilitate informed decision-making.

Customer engagement efforts include using social media marketing, loyalty programs, and promotions to attract and maintain customers (Nitto, 2020). Competitive market positioning involves differentiating from competitors and creating a unique presence in the market (Parks et al., 2015). Strategic economic management, resource management, and growth planning heavily rely on exact financial planning and forecasting (Phongpheng, 2021). Precise financial planning enables food stall owners to forecast sales, manage expenses, and make wise investment choices. Forecasting techniques help businesses prepare for seasonal fluctuations and economic changes, ensuring their viability in competitive markets (Paulino, 2018).

Relationship Between Food Stalls' Operations Practices and Challenges

This section delves into the literature addressing the meaningful relationship between food stall operations practices and the challenges they face. Studies have revealed varying impacts of operations practices on business outcomes. For instance, efficient operation management and revenue generation strategies, such as cost-effective inventory management and labor practices, play a pivotal role in mitigating production expenses (Maglumtong & Fukushima, 2022). Regulatory compliance is crucial for maintaining food safety standards and building a credible public image (Ku et al., 2021).

Additionally, location and mobility are critical, as strategic placement in high-traffic areas can enhance customer satisfaction and operational efficiency (Johnson & Lee, 2021). Customer engagement through social media marketing, loyalty programs, and personalized care helps keep customers and foster loyalty (Nitto, 2020). Financial planning and sustainability efforts are necessary to ensure long-term viability, with practices such as strategic economic management and effective budgeting being essential (Phongpheng, 2021).

Furthermore, competitive market positioning involves differentiation from competitors, offering unique culinary experiences, and maintaining high food safety standards to attract and retain customers (Ku et al., 2021). The literature notes that improving these operational practices can significantly influence the challenges food stall operators face, such as fluctuating supply costs, regulatory compliance, and customer engagement.

To understand the relationship between these variables, the study employed a multiple regression analysis. The null hypothesis (Ho) stated below states that there is no committed relationship between operational practices and the operational challenges faced by food stall operators. This hypothesis is presented in null form to rigorously assess the assumption that operational practices do not affect challenges, thereby allowing the study to either confirm or reject this assumption based on empirical evidence.

Ho: There was no significant relationship between operational practices and operational challenges encountered by the food stall operators.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative-descriptive type of research to systematically collect and comprehensively analyze data on the operational practices and challenges of food stall businesses in one of the provinces of the Philippines. As stated by Antwi and Hamza (2015), quantitative methodology is concerned with attempts to quantify social phenomena, collect and analyze numerical data, and focus on the links among a smaller number of attributes across many cases, while the goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. The entire census of the currently 86 operating and registered food stalls of the subject province-based food park participated in the survey for this study, and 10 of them were interviewed for the pilot testing. The remaining 76 food stall managers or owners were then requested to answer the mass survey. They were chosen because they had direct experience and full knowledge of the overall operations and challenges encountered when running a food stall business.

The questionnaire used for data collection was self-structured and tailored specifically to address the unique aspects of food stall operations in the chosen food park. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by two subject matter experts: one was a Certified Public Accountant in Treasury in a government agency, and the other had a Doctorate Degree in Business Administration and was a professor in entrepreneurship in an academic institution. Their suggestions were reviewed, discussed, and considered before the participants completed the questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 49 items, consisting of 2 sections; the first section focuses on the demographic profile of the respondents, and the second section measures the operational practices and operational challenges of the food stall businesses. The finalized questionnaire was then pilot tested with a sample of 10 respondents, which allowed adjustments based on respondent feedback, and then checked by a statistician for a Cronbach's alpha test for reliability. A Cronbach's alpha test is conducted for reliability to provide a measure of the internal consistency of a test or scale. Table 1 shows that the reliability statistics indicate values ranging from 0.923 to 0.928 for the 49 items, indicating a high level of consistency (Taber, 2018).

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

| Indicators | Cronbach's Alpha | No. Items |
|--|------------------|-----------|
| Food Stall Business Operations Practices | | |
| 1. Operation Management and Revenue Generation | 0.925 | 5 |
| 2. Regulatory Compliance | 0.928 | 6 |

| Indicators | Cronbach's Alpha | No. Items |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| 3. Location and Mobility | 0.926 | 5 |
| 4. Customer Engagement | 0.926 | 5 |
| 5. Financial Planning and Sustainability | 0.925 | 5 |
| 6. Competitive Market Positioning | 0.927 | 5 |
| Food Stall Business Operations Challenges | | |
| 1. Operations Management and Revenue Generation | 0.926 | 5 |
| 2. Regulatory Compliance | 0.925 | 6 |
| 3. Location and Mobility | 0.923 | 5 |
| 4. Customer Engagement | 0.924 | 5 |
| 5. Financial Planning and Sustainability | 0.928 | 5 |
| 6. Competitive Market Positioning | 0.927 | 5 |

The finalized questionnaire in Google Form format was distributed to respondents through the group chat set up by the food park operator; this allowed the researchers to have a streamlined and accessible data collection process. A confidentiality note was provided in the survey questionnaire to assure the respondents that the information provided would be used only in the study. To interpret the survey responses, the researchers analyzed the gathered data using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and multiple regression.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results and interpretation of the data collected from the managers and owners of the food stalls in a province-based food park in the Philippines are presented in this part. The tabulated data is then thoroughly discussed and analyzed to support the study aims.

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile of the respondents shows the length of business operation, types of food being served, and the type of ownership by food stall owners. Table 2 shows the respondents' profiles.

Table 2. Profile of Respondents

| Profile Indicator | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Length of Business Operation | | |
| Less than 3 months | 4 | 5.26 |
| 3–6 months | 45 | 59.21 |
| 6 months to 1 year | 14 | 18.42 |
| 1–2 years | 7 | 9.21 |
| More than 2 years | 6 | 7.90 |
| Total | 76 | 100 |
| Types of Food Being Served | | |
| Meals | 36 | 47 |
| Snacks | 23 | 30 |
| Beverages | 11 | 14 |

| Profile Indicator | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Snacks and Beverages | 4 | 5 |
| Others | 2 | 3 |
| Total | 76 | 100 |
| Types of Ownership | | |
| Independent | 73 | 96 |
| Franchised | 3 | 4 |
| Total | 76 | 100 |

It can be gleaned from the data that the majority of respondents have just been operating their food stall business for less than six months, and only a few survive for a year or more. This analysis shows that most of them are relatively new in the business, and this suggests that most food stalls are short-lived, and a study is crucial to help better understand the factors that influence the industry's volatility (Parks et al., 2015). Most respondents served meals at the food park, indicating that they offer a wide variety of food choices for customers. Most of the food stalls were independently owned, and only three were franchised.

Food Stall Operations Practices

Effective management of operational practices is fundamental to the success of food stall businesses. Each area's effectiveness is measured from the perspective of food stall operators, who provide insights into their current practices. Table 3 shows how the various key areas of business operations are being practiced by food stall operators.

Table 3. Food Stall Operations Practices

| Food Stall Operations Practices | Average Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Operations Management and Revenue Generation | 3.36 | Mostly Practiced |
| Regulatory Compliance | 3.33 | Mostly Practiced |
| Location and Mobility | 3.30 | Mostly Practiced |
| Customer Engagement | 3.41 | Mostly Practiced |
| Financial Planning and Sustainability | 3.22 | Moderately Practiced |
| Competitive Market Positioning | 3.24 | Moderately Practiced |
| Composite Mean | 3.31 | Mostly Practiced |

The findings reveal that food stall businesses mostly practice effective operations strategies in several key areas. In operations management and revenue generation, food stall operators prioritize minimizing costs through waste reduction, bulk purchasing, and efficient labor practices, which is consistent with the strategies discussed by Hidayat et al. (2020). High-quality food, customer-focused marketing, and consistent service contribute to revenue generation, with a notable emphasis on correct financial record-keeping for informed decision-making. These practices resulted in an average of 3.36, indicating that they were mostly practiced.

Regulatory compliance includes securing necessary licenses and permits, keeping exact standards for food safety and hygiene, and implementing effective waste management practices (de Oliveira et al., 2016). These efforts help build consumer trust and operational efficiency, with an average mean score of 3.33, suggesting that these are mostly implemented.

The importance of location and mobility is highlighted by the strategic placement of food parks in high-traffic zones, ensuring accessibility for pedestrians and vehicles (Johnson & Lee,

2021). Maintaining a clean, safe, and appealing environment, along with aligning operational schedules with customer demands, is essential for maximizing sales. This area has an average of 3.30, implying that it is mostly practiced.

Customer engagement strategies such as social media marketing, loyalty programs, and promotions are crucial for attracting and keeping customers (Nitto, 2020). Effective engagement leads to increased customer satisfaction, repeat business, and positive referrals, reflected in an average mean score of 3.41, making it the most practiced area. According to De Ramos and Briones (2024a), improving the level of functioning of service quality can enhance customer engagement.

Financial planning and sustainability efforts involve setting clear financial goals, budgeting, forecasting, and resource allocation (de Oliveira et al., 2016). Sustainability efforts focus on responsible business practices and minimizing environmental impact (Tarigan & Asbullah, 2024). Despite these efforts, this area has an average of 3.22, showing it is moderately practiced.

Competitive market positioning focuses on differentiating itself from competitors and creating a unique market presence. This is essential in competitive environments like food parks, and although effective, it shows an average mean of 3.24, denoting that it is moderately practiced.

The data reveal that many aspects of operations practices in food stall businesses are mostly practiced, with operation management and revenue generation, regulatory compliance, location and mobility, and customer engagement being the most effective areas. The moderate practices of financial planning and sustainability, as well as competitive market positioning, suggest that these areas have room for improvement.

The alignment of the findings with the existing literature indicates that while food stall operators are effectively managing cost, compliance and customer engagement (Hidayat et al., 2020; de Oliveira et al., 2016; Nitto, 2020), there is a need to further enhance financial planning and market positioning to ensure long-term sustainability and competitiveness. By focusing on these areas, food stall operators can continue to thrive in a competitive market, ultimately supporting the success and growth of their businesses. Enhancing these aspects will contribute to the long-term success and resilience of food stall businesses (Parks et al., 2015). Improving financial preparedness for unexpected challenges and aligning pricing strategies with market conditions will further strengthen firms' competitive edge. Addressing these areas ensures sustained growth and stability in a dynamic market environment (Sitinjak et al., 2023). Implementing more robust inventory management systems and improving operational processes can help reduce costs and increase revenue (Nitto, 2020).

Food Stall Operations Challenges

The operational challenges faced by food stall businesses can significantly impact their overall success and sustainability. By finding and addressing these challenges, food stall businesses can enhance their operational effectiveness and ensure long-term resilience. Table 4 shows the summary of major operations challenges faced by food stall businesses.

Table 4. Food Stall Operations Challenges

| Food Stall Operations Challenges | Average Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Operations Management and Revenue Generation | 2.73 | Moderate Challenge |
| Regulatory Compliance | 2.92 | Moderate Challenge |
| Location and Mobility | 2.83 | Moderate Challenge |
| Customer Engagement | 2.91 | Moderate Challenge |
| Financial Planning and Sustainability | 2.74 | Moderate Challenge |

| Food Stall Operations Challenges | Average Weighted Mean | Verbal Interpretation |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Competitive Market Positioning | 2.96 | Moderate Challenge |
| Composite Mean | 2.85 | Moderate Challenge |

The table presents a summary of the operations challenges faced by food stall businesses, focusing on key areas and their associated average mean scores and verbal interpretations. The average mean scores in the range of 2.73–2.96 indicate that these challenges are experienced to a moderate extent, highlighting the need for effective strategies to address them. This suggests that although food stall businesses are aware of these challenges, they have not yet fully addressed them, leading to their moderate impact on operations.

Operations management and revenue generation are critical aspects of food stall businesses, and their challenges posted an average weighted mean score of 2.73, indicating a moderate challenge. This area encompasses various aspects, such as efficient resource allocation, cost control, and maximizing revenue streams. Effective operational management is crucial for maintaining smooth business operations and ensuring profitability. Revenue generation, on the other hand, focuses on strategies to maximize sales and profitability. Challenges in this area can arise from inadequate process management, inefficient resource allocation, and fluctuating customer demand. Implementing robust management practices and leveraging technology can help mitigate these challenges and enhance overall business performance ([Sales et al., 2024](#)).

In terms of adherence to regulatory compliance, food businesses face significant challenges, including complex compliance requirements, lengthy delays, and frequent regulatory changes. Navigating a complex regulatory landscape can be burdensome, leading to compliance fatigue and potential legal repercussions. Delays in obtaining necessary permits can disrupt operations, hinder growth, and increase costs. Frequent changes in regulations create uncertainty, requiring constant adaptation of business practices, which increases operational costs and administrative burdens. With an average weighted mean score of 2.92, these challenges underscore the need for effective strategies to mitigate their impact ([Nitto, 2022](#)). To avoid challenges in regulatory compliance, food stall operators in the Philippines should regularly review and update their licensing and permit requirements. Building strong relationships with local regulatory bodies can also ease compliance processes. According to the [Department of Trade and Industry \(2018\)](#), starting a food business involves registering a business name, securing necessary permits from local government units, and following food safety standards. Additionally, Republic Act No. 10611, known as the "Food Safety Act of 2013," outlines the responsibilities of food business operators to ensure that food satisfies safety requirements and mandates collaboration with regulatory authorities to prevent risks to consumers ([Aquino et al., 2014](#)).

Location and mobility challenges include attracting sufficient customer foot traffic, addressing safety concerns, and ensuring accessibility. Low foot traffic and inconvenient locations can negatively affect business performance, while safety concerns like food hygiene and sanitation can deter customers and lead to regulatory issues ([World Health Organization, 2023](#)). Addressing these challenges through strategic planning and effective solutions is crucial for success and sustainability. Strategic location and mobility planning must be improved to ensure maximum accessibility and visibility. This includes regularly assessing foot traffic patterns and adjusting locations based on customer behavior ([Johnson & Lee, 2021](#)).

In terms of customer engagement strategies, food stalls face challenges due to poor visibility, ineffective social media use, and a lack of customer feedback. Poor visibility undermines the ability to attract and engage customers, and ineffective social media efforts limit their marketing

reach ([UpMenu.com, 2024](#)). Not gathering enough customer feedback hinders the ability to improve products and services, which are crucial for customer satisfaction and competitiveness ([Osum.com, 2024](#)). Food stalls should invest in effective marketing and customer engagement strategies, such as loyalty programs and active social media presence, to attract and retain customers ([Nitto, 2020](#)). Personalized marketing efforts and consistent communication can build a loyal customer base ([Tarigan & Asbullah, 2024](#)). Digital marketing can also help connect with customers through various digital channels. According to [Telaumbanua et al. \(2023\)](#), businesses can be promoted online, which can most likely increase sales. As further emphasized by [Silitonga et al. \(2022\)](#), an effective marketing strategy is considered a success factor for any business enterprise.

Regarding financial planning and sustainability efforts, challenges in contingency planning, budgeting, and reliance on short-term gains are prominent. A lack of contingency plans affects resilience against unforeseen events, whereas inadequate budgeting impacts financial stability. Overreliance on short-term gains suggests focusing on immediate profits at the expense of long-term sustainability. Developing comprehensive financial plans that include budgeting, forecasting, and sustainability goals is essential. Food stalls should also focus on minimizing environmental impact by adopting sustainable business practices ([Vignola & Oosterveer, 2022](#)). Green supply chain management practices can also be adopted by food stall businesses to further improve their organizational performance. As [Mwanaumo et al. \(2023\)](#) this kind of sustainable practice can reduce production costs and prevent further environmental degradation.

Competitive market positioning challenges include market saturation, failure to differentiate, and price wars. Addressing these issues involves improving visibility, enhancing social media engagement, and actively using customer feedback. Food stall operators should explore innovative ways to differentiate their offerings and avoid price wars by focusing on unique value propositions ([Davies & Messer, 2018](#)). Differentiating oneself from competitors through unique value propositions and innovative offerings can strengthen the market position. Regular market analysis and adaptability to changing customer preferences are crucial ([Parks et al., 2015](#)). As further emphasized by [De Ramos and Briones \(2024b\)](#), the implementation of appropriate marketing strategies should always be anchored on the marketing goals of the business enterprise.

Overall, a composite mean of 2.85 reflects that food stall businesses face moderate operational challenges. Addressing these challenges to a greater extent will enhance the resilience and success of food stall businesses. By focusing on effective operation management, regulatory compliance, strategic location planning, customer engagement, robust financial planning, and competitive positioning, food stalls can thrive in a dynamic market environment. Enhanced financial preparedness and alignment of pricing strategies with market conditions will further strengthen firms' competitive edge, ensuring sustained growth and stability.

Relationship Between Food Stalls' Operations Practices and Challenges

The significant relationship between operations practices and operations challenges among food stall operators was analyzed using a multiple regression analysis, which tests the null hypothesis described by the researchers that there is no significant relationship between the operations practices and challenges faced by the food stall operators.

Table 5. Relationship Between Food Stalls' Operations Practices and Challenges

| Operational Practices | Operational Challenges | Coefficient | p-value | Interpretation |
|---------------------------|--|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Operations Management and | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.04 | 0.82 | Not Significant |

| Operational Practices | Operational Challenges | Coefficient | p-value | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Revenue Generation | Regulatory Compliance | 0.30 | 0.10 | Not Significant |
| | Location and Mobility | -0.14 | 0.36 | Not Significant |
| | Customer Engagement | 0.09 | 0.63 | Not Significant |
| | Financial Planning and Sustainability | -0.04 | 0.82 | Not Significant |
| | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.22 | 0.16 | Not Significant |
| Regulatory Compliance | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.01 | 0.96 | Not Significant |
| | Regulatory Compliance | 0.27 | 0.14 | Not Significant |
| | Location and Mobility | -0.10 | 0.53 | Not Significant |
| | Customer Engagement | 0.13 | 0.51 | Not Significant |
| | Financial Planning and Sustainability | -0.11 | 0.55 | Not Significant |
| Location and Mobility | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.22 | 0.18 | Not Significant |
| | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.01 | 0.94 | Not Significant |
| | Regulatory Compliance | 0.42 | 0.03 | Significant |
| | Location and Mobility | -0.17 | 0.29 | Not Significant |
| | Customer Engagement | 0.10 | 0.63 | Not Significant |
| Customer Engagement | Financial Planning and Sustainability | -0.06 | 0.77 | Not Significant |
| | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.28 | 0.09 | Not Significant |
| | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.05 | 0.80 | Not Significant |
| | Regulatory Compliance | 0.28 | 0.14 | Not Significant |
| | Location and Mobility | -0.06 | 0.72 | Not Significant |
| Financial Planning and Sustainability | Customer Engagement | 0.15 | 0.44 | Not Significant |
| | Financial Planning and Sustainability | -0.13 | 0.49 | Not Significant |
| | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.23 | 0.17 | Not Significant |
| | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.06 | 0.75 | Not Significant |
| | Regulatory Compliance | 0.30 | 0.10 | Not Significant |
| Competitive Market Positioning | Location and Mobility | -0.06 | 0.71 | Not Significant |
| | Customer Engagement | -0.05 | 0.79 | Not Significant |
| | Financial Planning and Sustainability | 0.07 | 0.70 | Not Significant |
| | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.24 | 0.14 | Not Significant |
| | Operations Management and Revenue Generation | -0.08 | 0.70 | Not Significant |
| | Regulatory Compliance | 0.29 | 0.13 | Not Significant |
| | Location and Mobility | -0.03 | 0.86 | Not Significant |
| | Customer Engagement | 0.10 | 0.61 | Not Significant |
| | Financial Planning and Sustainability | -0.08 | 0.68 | Not Significant |

| Operational Practices | Operational Challenges | Coefficient | p-value | Interpretation |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| | Sustainability | | | |
| | Competitive Market Positioning | -0.30 | 0.08 | Not Significant |

Note: If the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Otherwise, it does not reject the null hypothesis.

Table 5 reveals that most practices, such as operation management and revenue generation, regulatory compliance, customer engagement, financial planning and sustainability, and competitive market positioning, do not significantly affect operational challenges. However, location and mobility showed a significant relationship with challenges in terms of regulatory compliance (p-value of 0.03). This suggests that strategic location and mobility planning play a critical role in mitigating operational hurdles faced by food stall businesses since the food park operation is being regulated and administered by the local government unit. This finding aligns with previous research, highlighting the importance of optimal location and flexible mobility in enhancing business performance (Johnson & Lee, 2021).

Moreover, these findings are aligned with the study of Schuldt (2024), who emphasized the importance of aligning strategic goals with operational practices. Additionally, research on food manufacturing and the food and beverage industry has highlighted the impact of practices like total quality management (TQM) implementation and perfecting production processes on operational performance and reducing challenges (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2023; Wagara et al., 2018).

In conclusion, while certain operational practices like location and mobility are crucial, others may have a lesser impact. Focusing on practices that directly influence operational challenges, like improving location and mobility, could be more effective in addressing these issues.

Strategies for a Profitable and Resilient Food Stall Business

Table 6 outlines the proposed strategies for a profitable and resilient food stall business based on the results of this study.

Table 6. Strategies for a Profitable and Resilient Food Stall Business

| Indicators | Proposed Strategies | Expected Outcomes |
|--|---|--|
| Operations Management and Revenue Generation | Local government units and food park management to conduct training for food stall owners on the following: Improvement of operational processes and cost reduction; Effective inventory management; Efficient revenue generation; and Simplified bookkeeping | Improved efficiency and reduction in operational costs. |
| Regulatory Compliance | Business Permits and Licensing Office of the local government unit to simplify the licensing and permit requirements for food stall owners. | Reduced operational disruption and increased compliance rates. |
| Location and Mobility | Local government unit to implement the following: | Enhanced visibility and better market presence, thereby |

| Indicators | Proposed Strategies | Expected Outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | <p>Increasing foot traffic in the area by designating a public utility vehicle station near the food park area, and enhancing police visibility within the area for the safety of customers.</p> <p>Food park management: Beautifying the food park area and maintaining its cleanliness, Provision of ample parking space for customers</p> | attracting more customers. |
| Customer Engagement | <p>Food stall operators should implement the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalized customer service by attending to special requests of customers on food handling, delivery, etc.; Establish loyalty programs for valued customers; Placing of drop boxes within the store to solicit anonymous feedback from customers; Use of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to promote the products and services; Partnership and collaboration with other local establishments to enhance the popularity of the business, which can ultimately enhance sales and revenue | <p>Increased customer satisfaction and higher customer retention while having valuable insights. Increased brand awareness and enhanced customer engagement</p> |
| Financial Planning and Sustainability | <p>Food park management and local government units to conduct training for food stall owners on the following: financial literacy to improve their personal finance management; Sustainability practices on proper waste management and effective environment practices, efficient labor management practices, and other relevant sustainability practices</p> | <p>Improved economic management and enhanced decision-making. Sustainable practices can result in cost savings, a positive brand image, and long-term viability.</p> |
| Competitive Market Positioning | <p>Food stall operators to implement the following:</p> | <p>Enhanced customer convenience and maximized sales. Improve</p> |

| Indicators | Proposed Strategies | Expected Outcomes |
|------------|---|---------------------|
| | Competitive marketing techniques to encourage customers to patronize the products and services like aligning pricing strategies with market conditions, offering product promotions like buy one take one, offering discounts on special events like birthdays, graduation, and other similar occasions, and partnerships with other local business establishments to introduce the products and services to new customers. | their resource use. |
| | Food park management to implement the following: Extend the operational hours of the food park during weekends and days with special occasions/ events like Christmas season; Limit the number of stalls offering similar products and services; Sponsor big events like assemblies, concerts, and similar activities within the food park area to increase the number of guests and visitors visiting the place | |

The proposed strategies aim to enhance the profitability and resilience of food stall businesses. These strategies are to be properly implemented by the tripartite cooperation of the local government unit, food park management, and food stall owners and are designed to address specific operational challenges while fostering growth and sustainability. When implemented, it could overcome the operational challenges faced by food stall operators and enhance their ability to thrive in a competitive market. As stated by [Austria \(2024\)](#), these programs can help promote best practices and bridge knowledge gaps in business operations.

CONCLUSION

This study highlighted key factors influencing the success of food stall businesses, focusing on demographic profiles, operational practices, and challenges. The majority of respondents are managing independently-owned enterprises that are relatively new in the business, with less than 6 months of operation. These food stall businesses generally serve a variety of meals and snacks to cater to the needs of residents within the area and its neighboring communities.

The study revealed that food stall operators generally practice effective strategies in operation management and revenue generation, customer engagement, and regulatory compliance.

However, financial planning, sustainability, and competitive market positioning require improvement. Moreover, the study confirmed that food stall operators are experiencing moderate operational challenges, highlighting the need for effective strategies to address these challenges. The regression analysis indicates that location mobility significantly affects operational challenges in terms of regulatory compliance, whereas other practices do not. The results emphasize the importance of strategic location planning and customer engagement in addressing operational challenges. Food stall owners should focus on optimizing these areas to enhance business performance. Furthermore, to enhance resilience and profitability, the study suggested strategies to improve the operational processes while mitigating the operational challenges faced by food stall operators. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge by highlighting specific operational practices that significantly impact operational challenges, offering a nuanced understanding of how food stall businesses can achieve sustainability and growth.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

While this study offers valuable insights into food stall operators' operational strategies, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was relatively small and limited to a specific group of food stall operators, which may not fully represent the broader food stall industry across different regions or types of food establishments. A larger and more diverse sample would yield a more comprehensive understanding of food stall businesses' operational practices and challenges. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data, which may introduce biases such as social desirability or recall bias. Operators may overestimate their adherence to certain practices or downplay challenges, which could affect the accuracy of the findings. The study also had a limited focus on operational aspects without accounting for external factors, such as market trends, economic conditions, and technological advancements. Lastly, the research excluded in-depth qualitative data, which could provide a richer understanding of the reasons behind operators' decisions and challenges.

For further research, the role of technology could be explored, such as digital payment systems and inventory management tools, in improving operational efficiency and sustainability. Understanding how food stall operators adopt and use technology could uncover strategies for modernizing and streamlining their operations.

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