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## Overcoming Food Service Industries Post-Covid -19



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### ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic might impact consumer demand for food service industries. These impacts relate to the structure of preferences in the context of a pandemic, income and time constraints, and price effects. Discussion includes accounting for differential impacts of COVID-19 on demand for foodservice across socio-demographic characteristics in India, and several high-level issues and observations related to where and how to impact home consumption. My thinking leads me to conclude that demand-side factors will account for most of the changes, we see in Out home consumption. These demand-side effects will be dominated by income effects, the opportunity cost of time, and longer planning horizons on the part of the Food Service Business. In the present time only the foodservice Industry not doing well in the post COVID scenario. Let's be honest, even if tomorrow, the coronavirus moved out, people will still be avoiding ordering food or visiting restaurants or hotels for dining out -for a longer time to come. Small voting on Twitter that was reacted to by 10346 respondents showed more than half (53%) people saying no to ordering food while 13 % said that they may order and the rest 34% said they will continue to order food. This was before the Pizza delivery boy news came. The same goes for any service industry like movie halls/ malls. It is not just the food service industry but as a matter of fact whole of travel and tourism is going to suffer the hostile response of corona. From Movie halls to malls wherever there was interaction, people confined in close spaces, things will have to be reinvented, with newer techniques to minimize human interaction. In this paper, we shall have look at the problems that the foodservice industry will face and maybe suggest a way out. It's been difficult for many operators and the only experience that for best understanding, how to come out of this situation is the learning's from past recessions or economic struggles while Pandemic time. And common sense will teach industries that starting a business in hard economic times is a bad idea and shows challenges to commercial viability, in the current situation has caused businesses to close and now needing to re-open, this is no different from starting a new business during hard times. Something one would normally advise against. Overcoming this challenge will truly define the entrepreneurs amongst them.

## INTRODUCTION-

Restaurants & QSR Industries Post Covid-19<sup>1</sup>- The restaurant business has mainly been affected during this pandemic as the government decided on lockdown and social distancing around the world. This had led to a rapid shutdown of restaurants and hotels. India does not have a bailout package for the hotel industry as of now. While talks are on for some sort of incentive for SMEs & MSMEs, it will take a lot of confidence on the part of customers, for restaurants to keep a shortage of footfalls.

Major Strategies need to take care post Covid<sup>2</sup> –

**A-Re-strategize the market study-** When you restart your business, may face many challenges like- Sanitization maintenance, social distancing, etc... so while opening outlets one should have completed a market study that gives you an understanding as to why you chose that particular location for your business. These factors would have included what the demand generators are around you (cinema, tourist attractions, universities, malls, corporate office, etc). However, these may have now changed. Some offices will have reduced their manpower in size, universities will not have as many international students, tourist attractions will not have the same volumes and it will take some time for malls and cinemas to become full again, find new ways to attract the customers.

**B-Attract competitors Customers-** By offering more value or differentiate your product compared to what your competition and other businesses are offering. Study your competition and see what you can do to influence their customers into becoming your customers. The way your competitors are advertising, Visit their business locations and find out what their consumers like or don't like about those businesses, then design your business strategies accordingly.

**C-Re-working on menu's** – Re-design your menu's full of healthy dishes and food pictures, Fastfood chains in India are seeing quicker recovery and are set to gain as consumers prefer familiar Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) to dine in and order from, especially because of their inherent strength in-home delivery and value-for-money offerings. Over the past few weeks, the impressive response to Burger King India's IPO, Jubilant Food Works' venture into a biryani chain, and Wendy's expansion in India via cloud kitchens underlines both investor and consumer appetite for more branded fast-food chains.

**D- Evaluate of HoReCa Suppliers-** After completing your market study and re-design of menus, start negotiating with your suppliers at the same time as you have the power to ensure you obtain the lowest prices before suppliers start to ramp them back up. Suppliers are in the same position as restaurateurs. They equally need to discount and offer increased service to ensure their business recovers. Therefore, make the most of this period to negotiate and find long-term commitment and develop strong relationships with several suppliers so you are not left in limbo should they go out of business over the coming months. Also, consider local suppliers/markets as many of the large supply companies may keep prices high as their overheads are still high.



**E- Change your operations style-** Plan your operational systems before the re-opening. How you run your restaurant should always tie back into serving the needs of your target guest, however, we are now aiming to find a wider demographic coupled with the added tasks of more stringent hygiene standards and implementation of new policies. Standards for cleaning the front of house, kitchen, restrooms, and general area that people constantly touch.

How food is handled and rotated?

How guests are greeted and seated, with the post-pandemic situation in mind?

Order flow and how orders move from the guest to the server, to the kitchen.

Training standards and re-training the teams on product knowledge

Consider the technology and software systems that need to be updated to keep up with contactless capabilities such as no-contact orders, pick up, and/or payment.

**F. Optimum Utilization of resources-** The situation has unfortunately placed more people out of work, for the businesses that continue, there will be more talent available in the market which will give the ability to recruit the 'one' team you have always been looking for.

Before considering replacing your existing team, one thing to note is that 'great war stories create a loyal team'. Adversity brings teams closer together. It has been proven that the more arduous your collective journey, the stronger your team's cohesion. The more adversity a person endures, the greater value they associate with the experience and the higher their degree of loyalty to the team with whom they shared the challenges, develop the most of the situation, and bring the team together. Work as a unit to overcome the situation and create targets to be met with rewards for both the business and the team members over the coming months.

Similarly, train your team to increase productivity and Invest in marketing keep in mind to reduce cost.. Nothing can guarantee success but implementing these can help ensure that your business survives the tough times and possibly even profits from them. It all begins with analyzing how you're doing things now and looking for ways to improve.

Following Steps to part SOP of any restaurants/ QSR/Hotel' or Cloud Kitchens-<sup>3</sup>



While working in Kitchen-

- Train employees and display new sanitary measures in the kitchen.
- Buy local products and communicate with the customers.
- Control product's traceability.
- Reduce food waste with Winnow Solutions technology.
- Set quantifiable targets for reducing food waste.
- Wearing a mask for cooks (linen mask for more comfort) and all other employees until the obligation is lifted.
- Ensure regular hand washing with a timer.
- Review the goods reception protocol (floor marking) and prohibit anyone from outside to enter the kitchen (supplier/delivery person, etc.).
- Remove packaging before storage or disinfect what cannot be unpacked.
- Wash all products coming into the kitchen (for fresh food, do not wash them with a cleaning product, but leave them 24hr in the fridge before their use).
- Reconditioning of all goods received in cleaned containers (plastic or stainless steel) before storage.



Steps for Business Adaptation by Operators<sup>4</sup> –



- Informed of the latest state support measures (example: State guaranteed bank loans) and regulations.
- Informed about the support measures for your region and your city (example: exemption from certain taxes, including the public domain occupancy charges for terraces and stands) and local regulations.
- Discover about partial unemployment measures and their duration.
- Make sure the permanent supply of consumables items (hydro-alcoholic gel, wipes, soaps, gloves, masks, trash bags, etc.).
- Set up a partnership with bicycle delivery companies.
- Propose takeaway meals to compensate for the decrease in seating.
- Exhibit the takeaway menu outside the restaurant and on the restaurant's website.
- Ecological and quality packaging for takeaway and delivery dishes (adapt the meals so that they are easily transportable and keep good quality once delivered).
- Provide tutorials on the internet to explain how to reheat the food.
- Offer takeaway meals at collection points at local shops (click and collect model).
- Propose homemade derivative products, for example, delicatessen.

- Propose baskets of (organic) products with a recipe (to be cooked online afterward with the chef).
- Offer picnic baskets.
- Generate vouchers payable in advance for loyal customers who want to support the restaurant.
- Decrease the menu offers to avoid losses and implement daily specials.
- Prioritize seasonal products.
- Association with local producers.

Maintain Sanitary/cleaning condition-



- Set up and display a restaurant cleaning/disinfection plan, visible to customers to reassure them.
- Show up by marking on the ground or any other ways, the distance of at least 1 to 2 meters between clients and employees.
- Get rid of the waste regularly.
- Utilize bins with lid and pedal.
- Ensure more often and regularly the cleaning of the toilets.
- Regular check the presence of soaps and paper hand drying napkins.

- Adjust the ventilation- air circulation system to new sanitary standards. Contact professionals for appropriate advice.
- Keep Training- all employees in new sanitary procedures (update the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, also called HACCP, if necessary). Control and retrain.
- Set up a health chart to follow and involve employees in its establishment (letter to sign).
- Make sure to mention Safety and Health clause in the new employee contracts.
- Apply the 'job advice posters' of your Ministry of Labor (often available on the internet).
- Systematize meals for staff on a different schedule.
- Avoid personal items (cellular phone, bags, etc.) in the restaurant and the kitchen.
- Wash uniforms on-site preferably or make sure the uniforms are washed at 60 degrees and transport in closed packaging.
- Describe the number of people who can have lunch together and leave only the amount of chairs needed.
- Mark the chair location on the ground.
- Clean the employee room (surfaces or equipment in contact with the hands) after each break.
- Pedal taps in the toilets and at the bar.
- Swing doors or automatic door opening (including bathrooms).
- Prefer furniture made of aluminum, steel, sky, or any material that can be easily disinfected.
- Prefer tables and bar tables with a rapidly disinfected surface.



Maintain front office –



- Prioritize on reservations to avoid unforeseen groups.
- Have an online reservation system.
- Have a pre-order system via mobile app or restaurant website.
- Extend hours of operation and service.
- Give priority to outdoor spaces and have signs and floor markings. Control the flow of clients to avoid overcrowding (safety first, but it is also part of your reputation too).
- Implement an uninterrupted service and spread out customer arrivals.
- Have a hydro alcoholic gel dispenser available at the restaurant entrance, on the tables, and at the toilet entrance (adopt this measure to the type of establishment, for example, upper-luxury hotels will prefer more personalized options).
- Provide a mask to your customers if needed.
- Take the temperature of customers upon arrival.
- Establish a unique and logical flow of circulation in the restaurant to prevent people from crossing paths.
- Provide a cloakroom at the entrance and avoid coats in the restaurant.
- Take customer contact details to ensure contamination tracking/traceability if necessary.
- Use the COVID-19 tracing applications but consider the right of privacy of each individual.



- Respect the distance between tables.
- Install customers in staggered rows on rectangular tables.
- Place individual disinfectant wipes on the tables.
- Install a screen between tables when social distancing is not possible.
- Install a Plexiglas display case in front of the bar.
- Eliminate unnecessary items on the tables.
- Invite the customer to download the menu to their mobile phone using a QR code.
- Display the menu on a blackboard or overhead projection on the wall.
- Display the drinks menu behind the bar.
- Display the bottles of wine/alcohol on a wine list.
- Post the origin of the products and goods to inform the customers.
- Eliminate dressing items on tables or have individual portions of salt and pepper.
- Avoid aperitifs (e.g., chips, peanuts) to share on the table.
- Wearing the gloves according to the type of service while being very vigilant about regular hands disinfection.
- Place drinks on the table and let the customers refill their glasses.

- Serve individual bread in a paper bag or on request.
- Place the cutlery wrapped in a napkin or paper envelopes.
- Protect cheese and dessert carts with Plexiglas windows.
- Take orders on an electronic device with instant impression in the kitchen and at the bar.
- Have a light signal when the toilets are occupied to avoid too much traffic in the restaurant.
- Send the bill via a mobile application directly to the customer's phone.
- Include to the electronic bill an online customer satisfaction questionnaire (including hygiene to improve) to be returned by the customer within 24 hours, and act on it.
- Prefer contactless payment and disinfect the bank card machine after each use.
- For hotels, develop the room service offer
- Target/broaden your clientele base to local customers
- Offer plate service only
- Prioritize the portions on a plate and individual portions on the buffet (if buffets are allowed).
- Develop Show Cooking and Live Station to maintain a buffet and avoid touch/contact with customers. Install Plexiglas screens and sneeze guards to protect the food from customer.
- Carry out feedback and share experiences of the uncertainties of the day to adapt the procedures and measures initially planned.
- Be present and active on social media and update the website to inform customers on the hygiene and sanitary measures taken about COVID-19 (have an Instagram page, post stories, and photos...).
- Work with e-reputation and digital communication agencies or train an employee.

- Know and contact influencers on social media to develop loyal customers and compensate for the loss of international clientele.
- Have proactive communication: newsletters and emails sent to customers to reassure them and encourage them to come safely to the establishment.

Some Other steps to follow-



- Write the servers' first name on their masks.
- Draw a smile on the waiters' mask.
- Film the kitchen and project live on a screen in the restaurant.
- Have an open kitchen to the room or glazed.

Street Food in India post covid<sup>5</sup>-

Street Food of India is known worldwide for its taste, diversity and easy accessibility in various cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Kerala, and Bangalore to name a few. Few street dishes like Kathi rolls, Daulat ki chaat, chholebhature, and misal pav are quite famous.



Indian street food is one of its kinds, apart from local consumers, a lot of foreign travelers liked by Indian street food. If you happen to be a die-hard street food lover who just cannot resist the urge of digging into roadside delights. There are some street foods are most famous as under-

#### From the Street of Gujarat -Dabeli-



Known to have originated in the Kutch region of Gujarat, *dabeli* is an interesting blend of softness and crunch in one go. Enter Gujarat and you'll see big streets and narrow lanes thronged with *dabeli* stalls. This scrumptious cousin of vada pav is prepared by stuffing spiced potato mixture in buttered *paos* that are grilled on a *tawa*. A special *dabeli masala* goes into the making of this delight along with garlic and tamarind chutney. To add an extra crunch to the dish, generous portions of *sev* and juicy pomegranate seeds are sprinkled over the same. This Indian Street food is also very common in the state of Maharashtra and is immensely loved by locals.

#### From the Street of Kolkata Kathi Rolls-



There is no denying the fact that Kolkata thrives on its kathi rolls; a look around Kolkata's streets is enough to justify the same. Made with a delectable filling of *kebabs* and raw veggies, kathi rolls are not only a treat to the eyes but to the palate as well. The filling is stuffed inside a *maida*-based paratha, which is flaky and crispy. A stroll through Park Street in Kolkata is only complete after having a dose of kathi rolls.

### From the Street of Delhi & central UP Nagori Halwa -



This combination of sweet and savoury flavours is sure to make any foodie crazy. *Bedmi aloo sabzi* with *nagori puris* and *halwa* is the favourite breakfast go-to option of almost every Delhiite. Commonly available in the streets of Chandni Chowk, Agra, Ghaziabad, these *dal*-stuffed puris are served with a spicy potato-based curry and *sooji halwa*. It is a complete meal in itself and is best relished when paired with a chilled glass of sweet *lassi*.

### Available Everywhere- Street Chaat -



Such street food item, which only makes an appearance during the bone chilling months. If you wish to savour the same, then you'd have to wait for some time. This fine and delicate dessert is known by different names in different cities, such as *daulat ki chaat* in Delhi, *malayo* in Varanasi, *nimish* in Lucknow, and *malaimakhan* in Kanpur. Its creamy and frothy texture is derived by whisking sweetened milk for hours. It is then kept overnight in the open to soak in the dew. The garnishing of *malai*, *khoya*, *pistachio* and powdered sugar gives this delight a mildly sweet taste.

### From the Street of Rajasthan- Mirchi Ke Pakode and pyaaz ki kachori-



Famous street snack in Rajasthan is also known as Jodhpuri Mirchi pakora. The joy of bingeing on big-sized green chillies that are slit open and stuffed with spicy potato filling is above all. What makes this Rajasthani street food even more delicious is the crispy deep fried coating, which is done after dipping the *mirchis* in *besan* batter. Pair it with some coriander chutney and you're done for the day and similarly Pyaaz ki kachori made by maida or Onions & Spices etc.

### From the Street of Delhi Chhole Bhature -



Punjabi street food has taken food lovers by storm. If you're craving for soulful food, then Chhole Bhature fits in like a puzzle. The combination of puffy hot bhaturs with spicy and creamy chhole is every foodie's dream come true. If you happen to be in Punjab, then you're likely to find a plethora of street stalls offering this delight. Pair it with a tall glass of chilled lassi and make the most of this delicacy.

#### Other Like-

- Misal Pav & Pav bhaji, vada Pav from Maharashtra
- Poha Jalebi from Indore
- Paani Ke Patashe
- Nasirabaad Ka Kachora
- Ghugni Chaat & Jhal Muri from Kolkata
- Aloo Tikki/Aloo Chaat, Bhutta (Roasted Corn Cob), Dal Vada, Moong Dal Ladoo, Momos, Matar Kulcha etc...

Street food vendors started the business after lockdown -5 and follow Covid safety Training- Despite several restrictions being eased and the process of 'unlocking' well underway, street food vendors across India continue to struggle. This is not surprising, given that Covid numbers in India are on the rise, and many people are still staying home as much as they can, venturing out only for essential activities. Add to that the fact that street food such as chaat, golgappa, and Aloo Tikki is all contact-based food, still much younger's & foodies started enjoying street food<sup>6</sup>.



1,500 street food vendors across India, who have completed digital training on Covid-19 food safety guidelines, facilitated by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in partnership with the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI). Many vendors have received food safety training and certification (FOSTAC) that they display on their carts or stalls.

Swiggy, Zomato, and other food delivery platforms to initiate home delivery for street food also, Question arises- Why will people want to spend the extra buck on home delivery? And the whole point of street food is to be on the street when it is served, maybe possible whether street food will be redefined in a post-Covid world.

Conclusion- As We, all are aware Post Covid times are hard for the food industry right now, but we will get through this together. We have put jointly some advice, which will help you and your restaurant navigate the crisis-

-Health and safety are on priority -There is currently no evidence or reported cases of food being associated with COVID-19 transmission, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), World Health Organization (WHO), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) among others are asking everyone, including food service workers, to adopt preventative actions to slow the spread of the virus. You've probably heard these many times now but to reiterate, the current guidelines are to-

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap is not available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or bent elbow when you cough or sneeze.



- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Practice social distancing by avoiding large gatherings and staying at least 6ft apart.
- Stay home if you are sick.

Cleanliness, Sanitation, or Disinfection, Take Care of your outlet staff and maintain maximum drive-through pickup and delivery.

As per the National Restaurant Association of India's (NRAI) Food Services Report 2019, the hospitality sector had a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11% between 2015-16 and 2018-19. The organized segment, which is 35% of this sector, had a CAGR of 13% during the same period, its market share growing from Rs 1,01,475 crore to Rs 1,48,353 crore. This segment was projected to grow at a CAGR of 15% to reach a market size of Rs 2,57,907 crore by 2022-23. The outlook was positive. And recently, the NRAI, in a recent press release, has called the current crisis "a battle to retain our mere existence." It stated that the restaurant industry in India has an annual turnover of approximately Rs 4 lakh crore and employs over seven million people, but all of this is at risk because, "as an industry, our business model is such that the proportion of fixed operating expenses is very high, which is a very high-risk model." trend is likely to gain more traction. A recent report by Dineout, a table booking platform, said that cloud kitchens that have a current market share of 13% will increase to 30% in the coming year. It further expects takeaway and delivery channels to grow by 15% and 30.5%, respectively.

The industry is headed for a transformation with digitization at its core. Services will grow to become more personalized and customer-centric, creative service offerings will be launched, health and safety will be standardized, operations will become less labor-intensive and balance sheets will become leaner. All these changes will elevate customer experience and set new standards for the industry in the post-COVID era.

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