

Profiling Selected Restaurant Industry: A Post-Pandemic Lens on Business Dynamics and Demographics

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to profile restaurant industries based on operating attributes and owner demographics to know their flexibility, resilience, and sustainability within a competitive and advancing industry. Portraying data collected from 60 restaurants, the study reveals a mix of establishments in terms of years of operation, business types, and ownership compositions. Most businesses function under sole proprietorship and are primarily labelled as eateries and "Eat On Resto" types. The results highlight that most business owners are in the 31–35 age group, female, and possess at least a bachelor's degree, indicating a shift toward younger, educated individuals—especially women—launching entrepreneurial efforts in the food service sector. In addition to profiling, the study investigates relevant variables such as years of management experience, sources of additional income, and involvement in business or skills training. Many owners have 6–10 years of experience and diversify their income through loaning, renting, or small businesses. However, a significant portion of respondents reported having no formal training, stressing the need for continuous career development. These insights are dynamic for practitioners, policymakers, and academic scholars, as they provide evidence-based direction for strategic planning, workforce development, and policy formulation to enhance crisis resilience and promote innovation in the restaurant industry.

Keywords: Business Dynamics, Profiling, Restaurant Industry

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The restaurant industry, a vital segment of the service economy, has undergone significant transformations due to socio-economic disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the operational and demographic profiles of restaurant businesses provides essential insights for fostering resilience and innovation. Restaurant qualities ought to constantly be a priority to deliver an optimistic response and steady customer involvement since it immensely increases the probabilities of a customer recurring to do more business Espanola et al., (2024).

This study aims to profile restaurant businesses based on years of existence, type, organizational structure, and owner demographics, drawing implications for strategic business development and policymaking.

Statement of the Problem

This study specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the restaurants when it comes to the
 - 1.1. Years of existence.
 - 1.2. Years of start of operation:
 - 1.3. Type; and

1.4. Business Organization Type?

2. What is the demographic profile of the restaurateurs in terms of the following

2.1. Age.

2.2. Sex.

2.3. Educational attainment.

2.4. Years of experience in managing a business; an

2.5. Other source of income?

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative research method, particularly the descriptive survey research design. This was applied as a process for learning pertinent or precise information about an existing situation or phenomenon. Data collection is a critical stage in any research study, permitting researchers to collect information must for resolving research questions, assessing hypotheses, and realizing study objectives (Karunarathna et al., 2024).

The descriptive survey design was chosen and seemed to be appropriate for the study because it aimed to understand the demographic profile of restaurants.

Research Sampling Procedures

Cauayan's diverse culinary landscape, featuring a variety of cuisines and restaurant styles, presents an opportune setting to explore a broad spectrum of challenges. By focusing on this specific geographic location, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the unique obstacles restaurateurs encounter within the local context. All the restaurants in Cauayan City, Isabela, were considered as the population of the study. Purposive sampling was used in identifying the restaurants and restaurateurs to be included in the study. The researcher selected the restaurateurs as the respondents of the study.

The following were the inclusion criteria set by the researcher:

1. Restaurants that were in operation for 1-5 years.
2. Restaurants that are classified as eateries, QSR/Fast food restaurants, casual dining restaurants, and cafes.
3. Restaurants that continue operations to present.

Research and Delimitations

The study will only include restaurants that met the set inclusion criteria.

This study was delimited to the following variables: profile of restaurateurs and restaurants.

Research Locale

Cauayan City is geographically located at approximately 17.3228° N latitude and 121.6177° E longitude. The city is strategically positioned within the Cagayan Valley region, boasting a mix of urban and rural characteristics. Its accessibility is facilitated by major road networks, connecting it to key cities in the region. Studying restaurants in Cauayan, Isabela, is appropriate due to its diverse culinary scene, potential representativeness of broader trends, economic significance as a local hub, a mix of urban and rural characteristics, relevance to local government policies, community impact, and practical considerations for

data collection. The city's unique features offer a valuable context for understanding the managerial challenges faced.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained approval from the proper authorities before distributing the questionnaire to the identified respondents. Permission was granted, and the researcher conducted her study personally. The researcher obtained an information sheet and informed consent from the participants, who gave their involvement voluntarily and without fear or pressure. The questionnaires were distributed to ensure clarity and to avoid respondents becoming confused, which could skew the results.

To ensure a systematic approach, the researcher began by introducing herself and the study's goal. This procedure helped respondents avoid confusion and made participation easier. The researcher distributed the questionnaires after obtaining informed consent. The replies were given sufficient time to complete the required information. Clarifications regarding the surveys were accommodated by the researcher. Appropriate instruction was reported to ensure adequate comprehension.

The following steps were undertaken by the researcher:

1. Upon panel approval of the research proposal, the researcher drafted a letter to all selected eateries inviting them to participate in the study and interview.
2. Permission was given, and the researcher promptly conducted and distributed a survey to restaurateurs to obtain the necessary data.
3. Following the completion of the questionnaire and the collection of quantitative data via questionnaire, the researcher examined, analyzed, and interpreted the results.

All the surveys were completed and collected. The researcher tallied and submitted to the researchers' statistician for treatment and analysis. The findings, interpretation, conclusion, and suggestions were drawn from the data acquired.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The insights garnered from this research can serve as a guide for practitioners within the restaurant industry, policymakers, and academic scholars, providing a foundation for informed decision-making, strategic planning, and further research on the significance of profiling studies and research in the restaurant industry.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

Profile of the Restaurants

Table 1.1 Restaurants' Distribution and Frequency According to Years of Existence

YEARS OF EXISTENCE	Frequency	Percentage
1 TO 3	12	20.00
4 TO 6	14	23.33
7 TO 9	15	25.00
10 AND ABOVE	19	31.67
TOTAL	60	100.00

The distribution indicates a varied span of businesses, with a significant proportion (31.67%) operating for 10 years or more. This showcases a mix of both established and relatively new entities. The data indicates a varied distribution of restaurants based on their years of existence. There is a substantial presence of more established

restaurants, with 31.67% having been in existence for 10 years or more. The distribution suggests a mix of both relatively new establishments (1 to 3 years) and those. The distribution across different time frames can provide insights into the lifecycle and longevity of restaurants. Since the eighteenth century, restaurants have only become more important, and the use of the household definition contributes to their better understanding, both historically and conceptually (Symons, M. 2013). The restaurant industry is quite profitable. In addition to the initial capital outlay, this investment has the potential to generate a steady stream of income and afford you a decent standard of living for the rest of your life (Djukic, 2021). Running a restaurant for over a decade offers several benefits, since it demonstrates long-term viability and achievement in a very competitive field. It can provide a well-established reputation, a devoted client base, brand awareness, a strong supplier relationship, and financial stability. Although these benefits are typical for well-established restaurants, it is crucial to acknowledge that achieving success in the restaurant sector necessitates continuous endeavors to fulfill client expectations, adjust to evolving trends, and uphold a dedication to excellence and service.

Table 1.2 Restaurants' Distribution and frequency According to Years of start of Operation

Year of Start of Operation	Frequency	Percentage
2018 and BELOW	22	36.67
2019	4	6.67
2020	10	16.67
2021	9	15.00
2022	6	10.00
2023	9	15.00
TOTAL	60	100.00

The highest number of entities started before 2018, highlighting a considerable presence of established businesses. However, there's a notable presence of new businesses starting from 2021 and 2023. The data reflects a diverse temporal distribution of restaurants, highlighting a mix of well-established businesses and newer entrants. The years 2020 and 2021 show notable activity in terms of restaurant openings, demonstrating the industry's ability to adapt and innovate even during challenging times. The distribution across different years provides insights into the growth and evolution of the restaurant industry, with the ongoing establishment of new businesses. Restaurants have experienced robust sales growth since the Great Recession, and 2017 was no exception, despite a dip throughout the industry. There is a possibility of positive developments in the future, as a steadily strengthening economy, supported by increasing income and stable employment figures, is expected to sustain growth in restaurant industry sales during the remainder of 2018 and 2019. In 2018, the industry may not have had significant growth to satisfy all its participants. As a result, there will be a competitive climate where companies will strive to gain market share (Zacks, 2018).

Table 1.3 Restaurants' Distribution and Frequency According to Type of Restaurant

TYPE	Frequency	Percentage
CAFÉ	10	16.67
EATERY	23	38.33
FASTFOOD	6	10.00
EAT AT RESTO	21	35.00
TOTAL	60	100.00

Cafés, representing 16.67% of the surveyed restaurants, contribute to the overall diversity within the industry. While constituting a relatively smaller portion, cafés likely offer a specialized and distinct dining experience. Eatery establishments are the predominant segment, comprising the largest portion at 38.33%. This suggests a

significant prevalence of diverse dining establishments, potentially offering a wide range of cuisines and menu options. Fast-food establishments, though representing a smaller proportion at 10.00%, play a notable role within the surveyed restaurants. (Jaworowska et al., 2013) Although existing evidence indicates that the nutrient profiles of takeaway and fast foods may be linked to various adverse health outcomes, research on their specific health impacts remains limited. However, recent years have seen efforts aimed at improving the nutritional quality of these food options. This indicates the presence of businesses catering to consumers seeking quick and convenient dining options. Individuals display various preferences when they select a restaurant. Concerning the choice experiment, the investigation of the status of the qualities for the final choice reveals how price and provision quality are forever considered as the most imperative ones (Scozzafava et al., 2017). Eat On Resto" businesses constitute a significant portion, accounting for 35.00% of the surveyed restaurants. This category likely encompasses establishments that provide a combination of dining and restaurant services, contributing to the diversity of the restaurant landscape. This diversity in business types suggests a varied culinary landscape, catering to different consumer preferences and dining experiences. The prevalence of eateries indicates a substantial focus on providing diverse food offerings and dining experiences to the surveyed population.

Table 1.4 Restaurants' Distribution and Frequency According to Type of Business Organization

TYPE	Frequency	Percentage
SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP	42	70
PARTNERSHIP	8	13.33
COOPERATIVE	0	0
CORPORATION	10	16.67
OTHERS	0	0
TOTAL	60	100

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Frequency	Percentage
Undergrad	16	26.67
Bachelor's Degree	32	53.33
Master's Degree	10	16.67
Doctor's Degree	2	3.33
TOTAL	60	100.00

The figures for the division of restaurants according to the type of business establishment show a mixed panorama of the plotted residents. Most restaurants, forming 70% of the total, operate under the sole proprietorship model. This authority of sole proprietorships suggests a commonness of individually owned and controlled establishments, echoing a significant level of individual private enterprise in the restaurant business. Partnership models account for 13.33%, indicating a noteworthy but comparatively smaller proportion of restaurants structured under collaborative ownership arrangements. Interestingly, there are no restaurants reported as cooperatives or falling under the "Others" category, indicating a concentration of establishments within the sole proprietorship and partnership models. Corporations make up 16.67% of the surveyed restaurants, demonstrating a presence of larger, potentially more structured, and institutionally organized entities in the restaurant sector. A study in Rio de Janeiro found that self-service restaurants, cafes, and snack bars were the most patronized institutions for lunch, with factors such as age, gender, education, and income influencing support forms (Branco et al., 2003). Overall, the distribution underscores a diverse mix of business organizational structures, ranging from individual proprietorships to collaborative partnerships and corporate entities, contributing to the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the restaurant industry. (Yun, J. et al 2025), As

a key segment of the service industry, the restaurant sector offers valuable insights into the essential factors for building sustainable business models, with long-standing restaurants potentially holding the keys to such success.

Demographic Profile

Table 2.1 Age

AGE	Frequency	Percentage
21-25	13	21.67
26-30	7	11.67
31-35	25	41.67
36-40	10	16.67
40 AND ABOVE	5	8.33
TOTAL	60	100.00

The age bracket of 31-35 years old might have a substantial influence on the restaurant sector, since seasoned experts possess a more profound comprehension of diverse facets. They may also have a greater willingness to embrace novel trends and technologies. Nevertheless, the success of these endeavors can be greatly influenced by individual circumstances, market conditions, and geographical considerations. Significant demographic-based differences were identified in perceptions of food quality, service quality, and ambiance-related factors. (Española, A. Y., et al., 2024). The amalgamation of ardor, commitment, flexibility, and familiarity with the local market is vital.

Table 2.2 Sex

SEX	Frequency	Percentage
MALE	20	33.33
FEMALE	40	66.67
TOTAL	60	100.00

The success of female restaurant owners is not contingent upon their gender, but rather on a confluence of talents, expertise, and personal attributes. Food involvement was significantly impacted by gender differences. Okumus, B., Shi, F., & Dedeoglu, S. B. (2021).

Table 2.3 Educational Attainment

The findings presented suggest that obtaining a formal education in hospitality or business can improve the skills and knowledge of persons wanting to be restaurateurs, notably in restaurant management and entrepreneurship. While a college degree is not necessary to open or run a restaurant, having a bachelor's or even a master's degree in hospitality management allows you to assess your restaurant business more comprehensively. A bachelor's degree can add to a restaurateur's capabilities by providing worthy knowledge and skills, as well as hands-on experience. Okumus, B., Shi, F., & Dedeoglu, S. B. (2021). Education also materialized as a key basis; interestingly, participants with lower educational attainment demonstrated higher levels of food consciousness compared to those with higher education. Our findings further demonstrated that demographic factors—such as age, gender, and education—significantly modeled dealings with cultural and local cuisines, as well as overall food consumption displays. Successful restaurateurs combine formal education with rational capability, passion, and a strong work ethic, with definite implications dependent on their degree and major. In Malaysia, reasonable dining restaurant patrons were mostly well-educated, high-income individuals who stayed for special circumstances (Salim Abdul Talib et al., 2012).

Table 2.4 Years of Experience in Managing Business

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	Frequency	Percentage
1- 5	15	25.00
6 – 10	31	51.67
11 – 15	7	11.67
16 and ABOVE	7	11.67
TOTAL	60	100.00

The data show that acquiring practical experience and training in tasks such as serving customers, cooking meals, and handling customer inquiries is crucial for successfully managing a restaurant. A significant number of restaurant proprietors commence their careers in low-level positions within the food service industry. In addition, prior experience working in a restaurant is highly beneficial. In the aftermath of the pandemic, customer experience management (CXM) increasingly demands that upscale restaurant managers not only prioritize customer safety but also actively foster a sense of security and reassurance (Hakim et al., 2021). Certain proprietors begin their careers in the sector by performing menial tasks such as dishwashing, table service, or meal preparation. There, individuals acquire knowledge about the organization and progress through various levels of responsibility until they eventually assume leadership roles. Experience in business management is crucial for aspiring restaurateurs, as it provides valuable insights and skills for long-term success in the complex and competitive restaurant industry, despite formal education providing theoretical foundations.

Table 2.5 Other Sources of Income

SOURCE OF INCOME	Frequency	Percentage
LENDING	10	16.67
SMALL BUSINESS	16	26.67
INVESTMENT	5	8.33
LEASE OF PROPERTY	8	13.33
SELLING	12	20.00
BORROWINGS	9	15.00
TOTAL	60	100.00

The data show that Restaurant proprietors can expand their revenue streams by considering their financial objectives, the type of their business, and their financial situation. (Kalaitan, T. et al 2023)., The effectiveness of a revenue management system is crucial for any business, as revenue directly influences overall profitability. Successfully managing multiple revenue streams requires careful planning, efficient time management, and a thorough understanding of the associated risks and rewards. Restaurant owners and industry experts employ various strategies to tap into new income sources and boost profit margins.

Table 2.6 Relevant Trainings Attended

RELEVANT TRAININGS ATTENDED	Frequency	Percentage
SKILLS TRAINING	19	31.67
BUSINESS TRAINING	16	26.67
NO ANSWER	25	41.67
TOTAL	60	100.00

The data show that training benefits businesses as it facilitates staff retention and upselling, enhances the delivery of superior customer service, and facilitates the maintenance of health and safety standards. It is imperative to invest in continuous training for the trainer's ability to convey knowledge during training sessions plays a vital role in determining the success of training outcomes in restaurants (Ballesteros-Rodríguez, J. L. et al., 2020). Restaurant owners and personnel need to achieve long-term success, improve customer experience, boost employee satisfaction, and stay competitive in a rapidly changing sector

CONCLUSION

The restaurant industry exhibits a diverse and dynamic landscape in terms of business longevity, types of establishments, and organizational structures, with a strong presence of sole proprietorships and a notable number of businesses operating for over a decade. This indicates a mix of experienced and new market players, reflecting the industry's resilience and capacity for growth. The predominance of eateries and "Eat On Resto" types suggests a consumer preference for varied dining experiences. Furthermore, the significant presence of women and degree holders in the industry reflects the growing professionalization and inclusivity within the sector.

Restaurateurs demonstrate varying degrees of entrepreneurial ease and capability, as demonstrated by their years of experience, diverse income sources, and involvement in relevant training programs. Most owners have mid-level business experience (6–10 years), perfected by formal education and supplemental income-making activities such as small businesses and lending. However, gaps in training participation signal the need for improved access to capacity-building programs. Overall, the findings emphasize that experience, education, adaptability, and continuous learning are key drivers of long-term success in the restaurant business.

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