A STUDY ON THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF FOOD SECTOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RESTAURANT INDUSTRY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIODS IN TRIVANDRUM DIST-KERALA

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ABSTRACT

A Pandemic is not a new event that encountered in the history of humanity, because mankind has failed various pandemic in history, The Covid-19 has impacts negative effects on the global economy. Considering food chain supply especially Restaurant Industry on of the most important sectors of the economy, Covid -19 has an impact on the whole process in the field of restaurant industry, it concerns about food productions, processing and distribution as demands.

Therefore the central government issued order for Trans movement of Agri-food products in India under covid-19 pandemic situation,. Government announces the lock down is slightly impact the movements of food products in India like transportation facilities, people lock down in home etc. But government allowed to maintain the safety precautions and prevent an increase in food safety is a primary important criterion for fighting against this type of pandemic spreads across the world.

COVID-19 outbreak has presented unprecedented circumstances before the fragile tourism and Restaurant industry. The highly infectious novel coronavirus continues to thwart the sector and raises serious questions about the present and future survival of the food sector. This pandemic situation created the entire industry has been down economically, socially, and mentally,

The research addresses two important concerns, first the Challenges and Issues faced by the restaurant industry and the suggestions and recommendations for survival of business.

Key words: Restaurant industry, Food sector, Covid-19, socio-economic factors, consumer behaviour etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

As the Covid-19 diseases spread rapidly in all over the countries, on beginning many countries are declared national emergency period issues related to health. On March 11 2020 WHO declared the global pandemic virus and take plans, actions for fighting against Covid-19 virus.

As the contingencies of the Covid-19 crisis, for food workers were developed to provide guidance for continuity of operation in food processing facilities, especially Restaurant industry can be defined as the critical sector in food supply. The Government announces continues monitoring their workers, customers, and disinfect with use of various PPE method, and compulsory provide home for quarantine, and various educations programs for workers for prevent the spread of corona virus.
The Restaurant industries not different from other industries, they are produce foods for daily life. The restaurant owners knows once they shut down the restaurants the entire crews has been started and the process and distributions are infected.

Restaurant industry are faced more challenges than other industry, it connects with daily needs, tourism, programmes, etc. During the Covid-19 periods the restaurant industries almost shut down in few days. it will reflect the business collapse for the restaurant owners.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of Restaurant business in India

Food is the big part of our life and culture, especially Indian foods are very famous across the globe, in India the restaurant concepts starting early 250 BC, that provide food hungry to travellers, the street vendors and stationaries also sold food in local food markets and most of Indian towns and villages.

But modern Restaurant industry flourish and switch to modern concepts, adopted the style of western cultures, and all common people very much interest to open restaurant very easily, it provide nice income and the growth of restaurant industry is spectactlor way, according NRAI The restaurant industry handled 50000 cores INR business per year in India.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOSIATION IN INDIA (NRAI) THE VOICE OF RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

NRAI is the voice of restaurant industry, NRAI stands intermediary for helping restaurant related issues, and they are very intimate for clearing the all levels of restaurant start up issues.

NRAI is to support the vast number of employees that make up the restaurant industry, through the challenging times Covid-19 related lockdowns, the core firm of NRAI youth committee hosted live interactions in between restaurant industry and provide guidelines for practice the food business.

NRAI suggested various solutions for food industry owners are.

1.1) Digital ordering and Billing solutions:

In the wake up of Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lock downs NRAI entering the effort have been projecting the relief, requested for the restaurant industry in central and state location.

1.2) Live sessions and Interactions:

NRAI provide platform for live interactions and sessions for the restaurant owners for interacting and raising the issues which faced under the Covid-19 situations, also giving live sessions and motivational class through online for surviving present pandemic situations.

1.3) Special packages for restaurant industries:

NRAI Provides special packages for Restaurant industry, under the Athma Nirbar Barath scheme. It consist special economic packages which encompass the rejuvenating restaurant industry.

1.4) Ease of opening new business:

NRAI Provide advices and recommendations for open new entering of restaurant business, ease of documents, financial assistance, and certifications, special interact sessions from experts etc.

Restaurant industry the Belly Button of Tourism and Hospitality Management

The world tourism pertaining to food consumption, and it bears symbolic meaning and can be associated with travel motivation. Tourists perceive restaurants as an important attributes of attraction, destination, food quality, food service and physical environment comes show local traditions and culture and then shape the tourists gastronomy experiences, the tourists always seeks the authentisity, quality and loyalty of foods.

The direct and indirect economic contribution of the tourism industry in India which includes airlines, hotels, hospitality and other estimated 10% of India GDP. Restaurant industry also plays an important role the
development and maintains of tourist destination image. The experience and subsequent memories associated with restaurants can be in important component of satisfaction assessment of destination.

However food consumption in a tourism context has been seen to be a unique form of eating that often occurs in on the other hands tourists generally consider food to be as important as other travel elements such as leisure activities and shopping plan to trip etc.

**National emergencies Lock down announced by Indian government**

National lockdowns under declared by different phases will affected the food sector entire in India

**Phase – 1** is the critical periods under lock downs, because the peoples are not allowed to crowd publically and they have restricted times for purchasing food items. Government supported to release the time for purchasing food grains in limited times.

**Phase -2** Under this periods some of the industries are open with restricted times and they can allowed minimum number of consumers at once time .Restaurant industry can open and deliver food parcels and online services they don’t allowed for entertain customers inside the restaurants for consume foods.

**Phase -3** under this periods 50% of restaurant industries are opened and they resumes works normally, but the allowed customers has been limited, and the safety requisitions has taken inside the restaurants.

**Phase -4** The restaurant industry has fully opened and they has allowed the customers are enjoy foods on table.

The Major concerns shared by all restaurant owners are business losses, and preserving the employees’ health. The sufficient work force due to those who do not want to work because of fear of covid-19 virus ,also the major portion of employees may suspended or dispersed under covid-19 periods ,maintaining the flow of food and commodities widely affected the covid-19 periods .The major commodities ,essential shops are shut down or restricted time open the covid-19 period ,so the restaurant owners failed to collects sufficient food materials for daily activities.

Consumers are not aware about to how to come food on table; however the concerns about food and safety in the global pandemic have attention to responsible for creating safe and reliable food supply to customers.

The major challenges that have been faced by restaurant owners is demand of consumers, because of the restrictions and not free the movements for public, and the lock down affects the consumer absenteeism, and most of people prepared food self at home. However the largest industry food supply restaurant faces severe business losses and negative of their routine revenues.

**III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To understand the present situation of Restaurant industry in Kerala.
- To evaluate the challenges and issues to Restaurant industry under Covid -19 period.
- To study the consumer behaviour against Restaurant industry under Covid -19 period.
- To study the business regain after Covid -19 periods.
- To provide the suggestions and solutions for recovering and sustain business the Covid 19 period.

**IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research output is the study of issued and challenges faced by the restaurant industry that faced under Covid -19 period. This is basically Qualitative research and follows Descriptive study research, it sets primary data for its analysis, based on research method, like collect feedback through questionnaire, consulted with food vloggers ,bloggers experts and information’s from restaurant owners and employees directly.
V. SCOPE OF STUDY

This study indicates the present situation which faced by the Restaurant industry in TVM district Kerala, and it how does overcome the present covid-19 situation also how survived present days. This study is concluded with various suggestions and recommendations for effective implementations for come to power back operations like pre- covid period, and make a good result for produce better quality of food and attractive customers as well in better atmosphere.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Through this study the various limitations come under the study of challenges and issues in restaurant industry under Covid -19 periods

1. This study is only limit inside the Trivandrum district.

2. The researcher has limit to cover up the restaurant industries which located in Trivandrum District due to Covid 19 virus.

For data collection the researcher used a structured questionnaire for conducting survey among Restaurant owners.

Sample size = 25 numbers

The Following table shows the opinions collected through questionnaire from Restaurants industries owners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Type of Questions?</th>
<th>What does the data represent?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you have any Restaurant business entity registered as per the FSSAI legislation of the Government of Kerala?</td>
<td>100% people comply they have restaurant industry under FSSAI legislation and rules and regulations followed by Govt of Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If Yes, which Sector? Open/catering</td>
<td>100% people stated they have both type of industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you agree that present Pandemic situation adversely affected your business?</td>
<td>100% people stated they have affected their business due to covid-19 pandemic situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Do you agree that the present situation will have a greater implication in your business in the way forward? (New Challenging Situations)</td>
<td>99% people stated covid-19 pandemic created greater implications in their business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you think the present financial burden will stand against the survival of your business?</td>
<td>100% people stated they have faced financial burden on their business due to covid-19 pandemic situation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Do you agree that there are substantial financial (fiscal) policies / schemes required for you to rejuvenate your business especially for Restaurant Industry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% owners strongly agreed, they need substantial financial (fiscal) policies/schemes required for rejuvenate their restaurant business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% owners agreed, they need substantial financial (fiscal) policies/schemes required for rejuvenate their restaurant business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% owners neutrally agreed, they need substantial financial (fiscal) policies/schemes required for rejuvenate their restaurant business.</td>
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7. How do you rate the present financial (fiscal) policies / schemes announced by the State and Central governments will help overcome the present condition?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Owners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% owners rated 1 (less use full) for helping and overcome present situation through financial and fiscal policies announced by central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% owners rated 2 (lenient useful) for helping and overcome present situation through financial and fiscal policies announced by central government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. What additional things are to be implemented in the present condition for the sustainability of your business?

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<tr>
<th>Owners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% owners stated Special attention in packages relevant to food sector units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% owners stated Announce and implement packages for Restaurant entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% owners’ stated New financial schemes and handholding by various governmental agencies.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9. How long do you think that will take you to regain the financial position and stability that existed prior to the Covid period?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Owners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% owners stated it might be take 1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% owners stated it might take 2 to 5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the researcher recommended various Findings and Solutions for restaurant industry for surviving present conditions such as.

1. **Special Economic Packages**: The Researcher strongly recommend to development of Special economic packages for Restaurant industry. Recently India government were announced special economic packages under Athma Nirbar Barath Scheme the worth value of 29.65 lakhs core rupees in three instalments, it’s not satisfactory for treating all economic developments in India. So the Restaurant owner has been suggested to government the restaurant industry should bring under special economic zone for gain the special attention like ease to get loan, subsidies etc.

2. **Promote Special Tourism Packages connected with Restaurant business**: Special-interest tours are designed around a particular interest area which could include arts, food and wine, sport, cultural or agricultural. The linkages and ripple effects Created by a rapidly expanding restaurant sector can have dramatic implications for the Restaurant economy. Connecting with various tourism promotion methods like Food Festival, Back water tourism etc. under the banner of Public and private partnership.

3. **Provide Maximum Social and Economic Security**: One of the fastest growing businesses in the country today is the fast food industry. It suggests that social protection needs to move beyond risk management and safety nets to support productive or developmental claims to security.

4. **Create A large Number of Employment opportunities**: Here the researcher suggests developing a big space in Restaurant industry for attracting employees to work satisfactory in Restaurant business. Good packages to the workforce and also hiring the employees are good concept to develop the restaurant business in India. The E-commerce will help to make a good business and lock with good revenue from food service.

**The Financial solidarity by Indian Government**
The Government of India announces 29.65 lakhs cores rupees under ATHMA NIRBAR BARATH relief schemes in three instalments, which including the interest rates etc., Moratorium for bank loans, and new schemes for SME, MSME sector, food supply chain etc. The Government of India announces to reforms Indian Economy and to enhance the efficiency and quality of Indian business.

The Restaurant association of India requested to government increase the central and state levels Moratorium ,on bank consideration , restriction of inputs tax crediting ,goods and service tax (GST) ETC. also request to special package for Restaurant industry for stimulating Restaurant Business.

The Government of Kerala announces 20000 CRORES of rupees as special packages for reforms Kerala economy. And they start the various restaurants under special initiates by COMMUNITY KITCHEN, and Kudmbsaree Hotels,

Strategies adopted in India to face the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19 Period

India, having a denser population comparatively, was forced to take immediate actions to curb the spread of the virus. As the majority of the population is characterized as vulnerable, authorities feared a problem bigger than the pandemic - hunger. The government officials expedited to take resilient measures for protecting the livelihood of many amid the virus.

Social protection measures

a. Kerala, one of the first hit states in India by the COVID-19 outbreak was successful in setting an example for the rest of the country. Government of Kerala took immediate actions to reduce the risk of hunger and starvation of the poorest population. The major actions are as follows:

1 The government announced free ration for all for one month, meaning that the government will provide 35 kg rice for below poverty line families which constitutes 11.3 per cent of the total population in the state, and 15 kg of rice for others through the Public Distribution systems (PDS) and Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation (SUPPLYCO).

2 The government of Kerala has gone an extra mile by initiating the distribution of food kits consisting of 17 items as starting on 8 April for every household, irrespective of income status. It is distributed through the ration shops under the Public Distribution System. These food commodities are sourced from the suppliers registered under Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation and National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India. This project was funded by the Kerala Chief Minister Distress Relief Fund. This scheme was implemented for the first month of the pandemic and the officials are planning to continue the scheme.

Business after Covid -19 periods

Since early march-2020 or industry has been among a hardest hit by Covid -19 pandemic in India. The restaurant industry connected with various sectors such as Hospitality, Retail, Tourism, Aviation’s, and entertainment. These industries are widely affected due to Covid -19 virus means adversely affected and leads to lock down for short span of time. People are scared out to come publically and entire business may collapse.

Scientist and experts estimate that vaccine will become available by on this year start, only after the economy recovery will begin. An optimistic assumption the june-july of 2021 only the industry can open full-fledged.

VII. CONCLUSION

Food Retailing and food services sectors are both important economically in India. Prior to covid-19 periods the restaurant industry has been higher sales, through in restaurant. some reactions by the public such us increased on line purchasing, through Using on line apps like Swiggy, Zomato, Uber eats etc. But differentiate the direct selling and online selling considerably less. because most of the people would like to eat inside the restaurant and consume foods on table.

In Kerala we know the restaurant industry is very high in markets , especially night street foods is famous rather than any other premium Hotel industry, the night travellers widely approached night streets foods especially...
transport commuters, but the lock down periods has been affects the entire business that will break the life of ordinary people.

Now the situations is changes slightly, the Upcoming Vaccines make good news for people, and 99% of Restaurant owners are come back to business, any way the hopes are not ended.

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