

Study on the impact of epidemic situation on catering industry and its countermeasures——From the perspective of takeout business

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Abstract: *With the outbreak and spread of the COVID-19, all walks of life are bearing immeasurable losses, and the catering industry has become a "disaster area". The way people eat out is limited due to the epidemic, and the off-line passenger flow of the catering industry has dropped rapidly. However, the "take away economy" has soared against the trend. Improving the "take away economy" can become an important means for the catering industry to deal with the negative impact of the epidemic. The paper first analyzes the impact of the epidemic on the catering industry, and then puts forward some thoughts and countermeasures.*

Keywords: *catering industry; take out business; COVID-19*

1. Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, the novel coronavirus spread wantonly, and the social economy was facing a serious crisis. Catering, entertainment, tourism and other industries were suffering unprecedented impact, especially the catering industry was under great downward pressure. As an important component and pillar industry of social service industry, catering industry plays a vital role in social stability and economic development. As the COVID-19 has affected people's normal going out consumption, catering enterprises began to focus on the development of catering takeout business by relying on takeout. Meituan takeout, hungry takeout and other platforms [1].

This paper will deeply analyze the impact of takeout business on the catering industry during the epidemic period, and find out the important influencing factors behind it, so as to help the catering enterprises to recover their vitality and promote the healthy development of the social service industry represented by the catering industry.

2. Impact of epidemic situation on catering industry

2.1 Challenges faced by catering takeout business

2.1.1 The sales volume of food in the hall declined

In the survey, 63.83% of the samples held a negative attitude towards going out of the restaurant. 51.67% of the sample sites offered takeout less frequently than in the normal period, down 14.59% year on year compared with the normal period. From the survey results, it can be seen that the tendency of customers' choice has declined, whether in the dining room or in the takeout.

2.1.2 Customers have concerns about the epidemic prevention safety measures of the external sales business

In the survey, 65.96% of the samples had concerns about the safety of food and beverage takeout, and the frequency of "never" increased from 9.73% to 24.32%. The protection of epidemic prevention safety is also a great challenge faced by catering takeout business.

2.1.3 The working capital of the store is insufficient, and the salary and rent of the store are hard to bear

In the survey, 61.7% and 66.87% of the samples believed that the salaries and rents of stores were unaffordable. Due to the impact of the epidemic, the return of funds from stores was blocked. In addition,

the rent and salary expenses of stores were huge, which made many stores unable to bear, and the takeout business was difficult to develop, even went bankrupt.

2.2 Opportunities for catering takeout business

2.2.1 The scale of catering takeout users has gradually expanded

During the epidemic, 44.68% of the samples who provided takeout services said yes, while only 10.33% said no. When the epidemic was under control, many users turned to catering takeout services in response to the call not to cluster, and the takeout business volume began to rebound, the scale gradually expanded, and the takeout business development ushered in important opportunities.

2.2.2 The supporting services of the takeout platform are gradually improving

In the survey, 76.6% of the samples chose "not knowing about the cooking environment", 62.61% and 60.79% of the samples chose "not knowing about the health status of riders" and "not knowing about the safety of takeout" respectively. Therefore, in order to better adapt to the epidemic prevention social environment, the takeout platform promoted food publicity, eating with care and delivery without contact, and other services, so as to improve the customer's choice of catering takeout business.

2.2.3 Businesses began to pay attention to catering takeout business

In the survey results, 68.09% of the samples believed that catering businesses began to focus on the takeout business, and took the takeout business as an important support point of the turnover. While promoting the cash flow of businesses, takeout business itself is also actively developing.

2.2.4 Government policy support for foreign sales business

In the survey, 35.87% of the samples believed that the government's policy support was responsible for helping the catering industry out of its predicament, and the government issued corresponding policies to help promote the rapid development of catering takeout business.

On the whole, the takeout business is an opportunity for the catering industry to redevelop and a challenge for businesses. A feasible way to break through the difficulties and promote the sustainable development of catering. While facing challenges. We should seize this opportunity to promote the sustainable development of the catering industry. At the same time, it also contributed to the resurgence of the catering industry.

2.3 The users' attention to takeout business in catering industry has shown positive changes

During the epidemic, users were affected by the flow control and self-protection to choose takeout to provide catering services. According to the survey results, the use frequency of takeout during the epidemic period has increased by 17.33% compared with that in the normal period, and the increase of the use frequency reflects the positive change of the takeout business. In order to comprehensively describe the positive changes of takeout business attention, try to explore and analyze from three perspectives of user attitude, behavior and feedback.

2.3.1 The user's attitude towards takeout business is positive

In the survey, 75.68% of users still choose to use takeout during the epidemic period, and even 17.33% of users will increase the use frequency of takeout during the epidemic period, while 44.68% of users agree to use takeout during the epidemic period. Under the impact of the epidemic, the catering industry has been depressed for several times, but the enthusiasm of users for takeout in the catering industry has not diminished. Businesses should recognize the importance of takeout business and actively develop takeout business to help them get rid of difficulties and develop efficiently.

2.3.2 Users have practical behavior in using takeout services

In the survey, 63.83% of the users did not choose to eat at the table during the epidemic period and preferred to take out food. Through cross analysis, 73.65% of the 63.83% users preferred to eat at the table during normal periods, which also shows that users have practical behavior in using the take out service during the epidemic period.

2.3.3 Positive changes can also be seen in user feedback

In order to solve the problem of difficult development of the catering industry in the epidemic situation and promote the healthy development of the catering industry, 68.09% of users in the survey

suggested increasing the proportion of takeout and vigorously developing the takeout business. The attention of takeout business in the catering industry has shown positive changes in terms of user attitudes and behaviors, as well as feedback. This change is just a beacon to help the catering industry get out of trouble. On the basis of understanding these positive changes, the catering industry should make use of them to maximize its role.

2.4 Users have certain dependence on catering takeout business

The outbreak of the epidemic has changed the law and rhythm of people's life, especially the impact on the catering industry. Under the background of personnel mobility control, the dependence of people on selling out business has been growing. Users can obtain and taste delicacies by expanding the demand for selling out services to achieve the purpose of convenient life.

According to the survey, 47.42% of users occasionally use takeout services in normal times, 26.75% often use takeout services, 16.11% always use takeout services, and 90.28% of users have ordered takeout services. It can be seen that even in normal times, users are highly dependent on selling services; at the same time, users also depend on selling during the epidemic. According to the survey, users occasionally use takeout services, accounting for 46.2%. Users often use takeout services, accounting for 20.06%. Users always use takeout services, accounting for 9.42%. This shows that users have a certain habit and dependence on the service. During the epidemic period, users were affected by the epidemic, but their use and demand for takeout services were still high. In the attitude of users towards takeout during the epidemic period, 44.68% of users agreed with takeout services and believed that takeout services would bring convenience to life. It can be seen that users have a certain dependence on takeout services.

In order to further enhance the dependence of users on selling services and consolidate the dependence of existing users, businesses should also seize the pain points and needs of users. For example, optimize services, improve quality and give preferential treatment to the public, stabilize existing users while continuing to attract new users, and maximize the dependence of users on selling business.

2.5 During the epidemic period, the catering industry faced the pressure of transformation and upgrading, and the catering takeout business developed in high quality

During the epidemic, the catering industry faced many difficulties and pressure of transformation and upgrading. According to the survey, during the epidemic period, 65.96% of users had concerns about the safety of selling food, 69.6% of users believed that the safety of the catering industry was insufficient, 76.6% of users did not know the food environment of the merchants, 62.61% of users did not know the health of the merchants and riders, and the catering industry still had much room for improvement in strengthening the awareness of food safety prevention and control and healthy development. At the same time, 67.17% of the users in the survey believed that the problem faced by the development of the catering industry during the epidemic period was the sharp decline in customer consumption, 66.87% and 61.7% of the users believed that the restaurant rent and employee wages in the catering industry were difficult to bear, 54.71% of the users believed that there was material waste in the catering industry, and the catering industry had certain problems in meeting user consumption needs and methods and in store management systems, so it was urgent to carry out industrial transformation and upgrading. To help promote the high-quality development of catering takeout business.

Although the catering industry faces the above difficulties, the takeout business is still growing rapidly and the market is expanding. Food and beverage takeout business has become the key for catering enterprises to get through the difficult period quickly and become a new driving force for the development of the catering industry. Under the pressure of transformation and upgrading, the contactless delivery service is loved by the majority of users, providing a lot of convenience for people's lives. The takeout platform is also constantly updated, showing a standardized development trend. The takeout platform urges riders to go to medical institutions for health checks, and uploads health certificates to the platform for publicity, speeding up the standardization of catering takeout business. 66.87% of the users believed that the government was actively introducing relevant support policies to help enterprises cope with the adverse effects of the epidemic, provide new impetus for the development of the catering industry, and further promote the rapid development of the takeout business, the continuous expansion of the content and the continuous updating of the business mode.

During the epidemic, the catering delivery business showed the following main characteristics: diversified consumption scenarios, flexible consumption time, consumption upgrading and branding, and diversified consumption varieties. How to organically combine these features is a direction for the

transformation and upgrading of the catering industry, as well as a new trend for the development of catering takeout business. The correct understanding and application of these new trends and the promotion of industrial transformation and upgrading will help to promote the high-quality development of catering takeout business.

3. Thinking and Countermeasures

3.1 Improve and extend diversified services and create opportunities for catering takeout business

3.1.1 We should vigorously develop group meal takeout business

Catering businesses should provide group meal service on the takeout platform, actively contact units with demand, and increase the number of takeout orders in the store.

3.1.2 We should establish a monitoring mechanism for catering and delivery

The establishment of this monitoring mechanism can better solve customers' concerns about food safety and give customers the right to know the whole process, which can not only promote the increase of takeout orders, but also promote the sound development of takeout business.

3.1.3 We should develop live broadcast delivery business

In the tide of live broadcast and delivery, the takeaway business of the catering industry should seize the opportunity to show the production process and interact with the audience while making meals, so that the audience can see the production process, attract attention, and convert the traffic into takeaway orders. You can also turn the back kitchen into a live broadcasting room by means of live broadcasting, teach you how to make meals, hang the link of semi-finished products in the live broadcasting room, guide the audience to place an order to buy semi-finished products, build this way into another economic benefit growth point of the take away business, and promote the development of the take away business of the catering industry and the improvement of the economic benefits of the catering industry from multiple angles with the help of live broadcasting[2].

3.2 Continuously improve the safety of takeaway food and increase the frequency of users' use of takeaway food

3.2.1 We should publicize the ingredients

In the post epidemic era, catering businesses should provide high-quality health services to ensure food hygiene and safety, publicize the food materials of the day on the platform to ensure the traceability of food raw materials, and actively publicize relevant information on the takeout platform or the business home page to let customers know the source of the raw materials of the food they order.

3.2.2 We should actively improve the kitchen environment

Businesses should take the initiative to improve the back kitchen environment, formulate standardized cooking procedures and strictly implement them. In the takeout business, it can open the real-time live broadcast of the back kitchen to show customers the dining environment, but also restrict the health status of the back kitchen, so that customers can consume at ease.

3.2.3 We should establish a complaint reporting port

Complaints and reports are provided on the third-party platform. When food hygiene and safety problems occur in the takeout of the restaurant, customers can safeguard their legitimate rights and interests with the help of the third party, and also urge the merchants to standardize their operations to ensure the hygiene and safety of the takeout food.

3.3 Promote the intelligent development of takeout business in the catering industry, improve user experience and enhance loyalty

In order to meet the needs of users for healthy diet and eliminate their concerns about food health, the catering industry needs to promote the digital construction of food health, and use big data and Internet of things technology to provide users with personalized food health matching in takeout services. While promoting healthy diet, it also improves user experience and user loyalty.

Due to the strong infectivity of novel coronavirus, the traditional distribution method has great risks,

so the contactless distribution service should be promoted to improve the degree of intelligence. Make full use of the support of modern science and technology, set up intelligent takeout cabinets, and put unmanned vehicles in small areas such as communities and campuses, so as to realize small-scale distribution services, establish an intelligent dispatching system, and improve distribution efficiency.

3.4 Build a complete industrial chain and ecological system for catering takeout business

3.4.1 The catering industry should form a complete enterprise chain

Financing can be used to raise funds, alleviate the shortage of funds, expand new businesses, achieve economies of scale, reduce costs, reduce takeout prices and attract consumption. At the same time, policy support from government departments can also play a key role. The government will increase security or subsidy measures to promote consumption development.

3.4.2 The catering industry needs to adjust the supply-demand relationship and form a large-scale supply-demand chain

Expand the online sales platform, increase the proportion of takeout, deeply understand customers' preferences and needs, and develop a complete point menu for users to choose from, so as to improve customers' sense of experience. Try to set it up simply and quickly, which is applicable to the delivery point single platform of all ages.

3.4.3 The catering industry should also form a value chain suitable for its own development

In order to increase profits and establish their own revenue model, catering enterprises need to reduce the service cost of takeout business. The plan of "sharing employees" should be implemented to reduce the labor cost, open up the vein that hinders the integrity of the industrial chain, and build a reasonable dynamic process of production and operation activities and value creation [3].

3.4.4 The spatial chain of the catering industry is also extremely important

In the future, the whole takeout industry can make consumers' choices more diversified and broaden the service scope of business through technological means and business model innovation. With the improvement of the distribution system and the application of new technologies, the service can be extended to a wider range and enrich consumers' choices.

4. Conclusion

Through systematic analysis in this paper, catering enterprises can improve from the following aspects: first, they should improve and extend the diversified services of catering takeout business; second, they should constantly improve the sanitary environment of the catering industry to ensure the safety of takeout food; finally, they should promote the catering takeout business to develop towards the digital and intelligent direction, create a complete industrial chain of catering takeout business, and improve the ecosystem.

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