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Entrepreneurship in micro-business:

**Small food shops present business condition considering the pandemic in
Stockholm**

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Abstract

Topic: Entrepreneurship in micro-business: Small food shops present business condition considering the pandemic in Stockholm.

Aim/Purpose of the study: Our research aim/purpose is to analyze the entrepreneurship micro-business food shops present business conditions considering the pandemic situations in Stockholm area.

Methodology: We have conducted a qualitative research on the micro-business operations focusing on small food shops located in the Stockholm area. Primary data collected from different small food shops by conducting short personal interviews; and collected some secondary data from various relevant sources to understand the micro-business performance. Data collected from Korv & Ice-cream shops, Thai Wok shops, Sushi shops, Kebab shops, Indian food shops located in Stockholm area; and our research sample size was 25 shops in total.

Findings & Analysis: We get many useful opinion and insight from the owner/management of the food shops regarding there micro-business entrepreneurship considering the on-going COVID-19. We have analysed our findings with the relevant entrepreneur theories and literature to find the resemblance of the micro-business entrepreneurship in their operations.

Research limitations: Our research scope was limited on few types of micro-business food shops at Stockholm area due to our limited time and resources. Also for the present pandemic situation, it was difficult for us to expand our study further.

Research implications: Our research explains the present effect of the pandemic situations on micro-business entrepreneurship of small food industries. It also posits the future projections of this business sector. This research has contributed on the entrepreneurial theories reflections in the food micro-businesses. It also provides a present social impact of the pandemic in this business sector.

Future research: Our study focused on few types of entrepreneurship food micro-business and covered only a small parts of Stockholm area. So, it leaves to conduct future research on other types of entrepreneurship food micro-business along with other different areas. Future research could be executed at other areas of developed countries to show comparison; or conducted in developing countries and at the emerging market economy.

Keywords: Micro-business, Entrepreneur, pandemic situation, Entrepreneurship, Food shops.

Paper type: Research paper

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1.0 Introduction

This research proposes to a crisis management view of covid-19, an entrepreneurial understanding of micro-businesses focusing on the small food businesses to cope with the substantial change in individual's lifestyle, culture, and social interactions. Rapidly evolving medical technologies and new ways of handling the covid-19 crisis will ultimately lead to more entrepreneurship (Kuckertz et al. 2020). Therefore, small food entrepreneurs with their ability to respond to the crises by adapting the changes will be able to sustain and grab the opportunity arises (Liguori and Winkler 2020). This article posits that it is essential to adapt the changes quickly for the business sustainability to include entrepreneurial creativity and thinking into the present prevailing condition of covid-19 due to the general gap in the understanding about the effects of covid-19 on entrepreneurship. This is due to societal factors such as living and working conditions being fundamentally changed.

Moreover, cultural change has resulted in more need for entrepreneurship and additional ways of thinking to adapt to the new way of living. It is known that entrepreneurs are more risk-taking, innovative, and proactive than non-entrepreneurs due to their ability to respond to market needs. This means that entrepreneurs will have certain traits and abilities that enable them to respond to covid-19 needs.

Currently, there is a focus on how entrepreneurs are responding to the covid-19 crisis and what constitutes success in terms of entrepreneurship. Thus, we argue that an entrepreneurial work environment needs to be understood with respect to the covid-19 crisis as it provides unique ways to respond to challenges.

1.1 Background

Entrepreneur is a decision maker, coordinator, innovator, creative destructor, social leader, information synthesizer, and risk taker (Bhole, 2007, p. 58). The entrepreneur combines various inputs in an innovative manner to generate value to the customer with the hope that this value will exceed the cost of inputs. Entrepreneurs are considered to be the change agents in the socio-economic development of any country (Bhargava, 2007, p. 31). "An entrepreneur is neither a scientific innovator nor salaried manger, who is assumed to be an opportunity seeker", (Aryal,

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1994, p. 36). More recently, authors have examined entrepreneurs in terms of their activity from the perspective of new business creation (Bryson, Wood, and Keeble, 1993).

Since the 1980s, small business owners and entrepreneurs have been receiving greater recognition as drivers of economic growth. Recently, several studies (Forsman 2011; McKeever, Anderson, and Jack 2014) have reported that long-term economic growth and prosperity require participation from entrepreneurs. Both experts and governmental authorities opt for fostering entrepreneurship as ‘an appropriate mechanism to face the impacts of the economic crisis’ (GEM 2014, 100). Over the last two decades, extensive literature on the importance of small businesses in the economy has consistently shown that the creation of new businesses drives economic prosperity. As well as playing a crucial role in increasing the competition of emerging sectors, new small businesses are critical for economic growth and innovative capacity in many regions. Job creation, economic growth and poverty reduction are usually the main political interests in entrepreneurship (Battilana and Casciaro 2012; Willis 2011).

Micro-business refers to a business that operates on a very small scale and more than half the new enterprises are sole proprietorships or microbusinesses with usually two employees or just above as required. In our research, we have focused on the micro-business of different types of food shops operated by the entrepreneurs. There is a need to distinguish in-between micro, small, medium-sized, and large organizations. European SME defines large organization as an organization with more than 250 employees, and 250 or less equals a small or medium-sized organization (Van Looy & Van den Bergh, 2018). However, to be able to specify our research we have decided to use the definition suggested by the European Commission stating that small organizations have less than fifty employees and micro organizations less than ten employees (European Commission, 2003, p.38). In this study, we focused on micro businesses which have less than ten employees.

The novel coronavirus that causes the disease covid-19 appeared in early 2020 and has significantly changed global society (Parnell et al. 2020). At this curtail situation everyone has been advised to maintain certain physical and social distancing to helping minimum spread of the disease. In December 2019, individuals in Wuhan, China were found to be infected with a new coronavirus that was found to be highly contagious (Cortez and Johnston 2020). As a result, the Chinese government locked down Wuhan and prevented individuals living in the area from leaving their house unless for essential requirements or services. Over five million Wuhan

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residents fled the city on 23 January 2020 after the Chinese government announced they were closing the city (Alon, Farrell, and Li 2020). The effects of the virus have social and economic effects. Entrepreneurs are facing huge impact of these changes at their businesses by losing the opportunity to serve the general people like the previous normal times. Entrepreneurs often looked at in terms of fixing problems or providing benefits to society through their product or services. This changed situation merely provides them opportunity to gain; and as a result they need to react fast minimizing the losing opportunity to gain benefits in their business operations. Much of the social effects are the result of a change in the living and working conditions. This has led to socially distance from others and an increased dependency on digital forms of communication. The trend toward digitalization was accelerated in this situation of pandemic. Many countries healthcare systems collapsed due to this unknown new virus which yet to introduce any medical prevention.

As an effect, most of the business sectors of the economy are facing the crisis period. At the same time, a large numbers of individual's became unemployed facing the business crisis. There is a great fear of a severe economic recession or depression occurring in the global economy. In addition, industries are facing supply chain challenges due to the number of workers confined to their homes (Kraus et al. 2020). This has resulted in supply chain disruptions caused by the curtailing of certain industries. Businesses are seeing a downturn in their revenues and the financial commitments to suppliers, employees, lenders and investors are depleting liquidity buffers of the firms. The reversal of earnings expectations has significantly weakened the projected interest coverage and profitability ratios for these companies.

The covid-19 crisis is a new and on-going situation with an unknown time period (He and Harris, 2020). Unlike other crises that have a specific duration, there is much uncertainty associated with covid-19 (World Health Organisation 2020). This represents both an opportunity and danger to society depending on how businesses respond (Alon, Farrell, and Li, 2020). There is also a need for cooperation to deal with the covid-19 crisis particularly in terms of sharing knowledge (Kirk and Rifkin, 2020). Therefore, an entrepreneurial approach is required to alleviate and help end the covid-19 crisis. To do this, entrepreneurs need to share and analyse current business conditions in order to anticipate change. This can enable business to adapt quickly in order to focus on new trends. The agility in entrepreneurs makes them more able to adjust to new needs. This helps them to pivot or change direction based on market response.

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This study is organized as follows; first, the literature of entrepreneurship and its characteristics, Swedish government initiatives to support the micro-business at the pandemic situation, discussing three important factors of one popular theory of entrepreneurship process, entrepreneurial crisis adaptation at the present time business projection considering the pandemic situation. This process would help to understand the entrepreneur theory with the crisis adaptation process with its characteristics towards projecting the future business. This also would provide a better understanding of the “Food entrepreneurship micro-business entrepreneur at the pandemic situation”.

1.2 Aim/purpose of the study

Our research aim/purpose is to analyze the entrepreneurship micro-business food shops present business conditions considering the pandemic situations in Stockholm area.

1.3 Motivation of the Study and research questions

We have selected our research subject as we have observed that the pandemic situation have some direct impact on the micro-business entrepreneurship like the food business shops which operates mostly with the direct contact or communication with the customers who usually visit their business place to order & eat the food they offers. Due to the recent pandemic, movements of people have become much restricted than before which would directly have an impact on the food micro-business. Pandemic situation would have impacted directly or indirectly on their business revenue, operations, supply-chain and mostly the projections of growth for these businesses. We would like to find out some major issues of motivations of the entrepreneurs in micro-business, its present conditions considering the on-going pandemic situation.

Our research study will focus on the below research questions;

1. What are the important factors/motivators of entrepreneurs to conduct food micro-business?
2. What are the management aspects of business hindered due to recent pandemic?
3. How entrepreneurs are managing the present crisis conditions considering the prevailing pandemic situation?

These research questions would help us to collect empirical data from different micro-business entrepreneur food shops in Stockholm area; and then we could analyze them to understand the motives of our research to know & understand some certain aspects of these food micro-business entrepreneur business motivations, crisis managing technics of their business from the seller point of view considering the recurring pandemic situation.

1.4 Scope/area of the study

Our scope of the study is to collect some empirical data from some micro-business food shops located in selected parts of Stockholm area to find out their initial motives of business, present business conditions considering the present pandemic situations. There are many types of popular micro-businesses in food industries at the Stockholm area; we would like to select Korv & Ice-cream shops, Thai wok shops, Sushi shops, Kebab shops and Indian food shops for our empirical findings. These five types of food shops we found are quite popular along with other small food business at the Stockholm area which would provide us useful information for our research purpose. Our criteria of the area selection would be popular small food shops in the location where good amount of population passes through regularly. As selection of the popular shops, we hope to collect actual and sufficient information regarding our aim of the study.

1.5 Research gap identification

The novel pandemic has started at December, 2019 and still continuing at the present time. We have observed few research articles which have published on various issues relating the effect of pandemic; but there are not enough articles which discuss regarding the micro-business entrepreneurship. This sector has effected greatly along with other business sector across the world. To date, very little academic research has been done on what covid-19 means for food micro-business entrepreneurship and what it takes for entrepreneurs to sustain and develop new strategies in business. This study responds to the need to connect crisis adaptation and entrepreneurship literature in terms of the covid-19 crisis. Our research would contribute to understand some theoretical aspects of food micro-business entrepreneurship to some extent which would create scopes to future studies. This study would relate entrepreneurship theories and its factors with the discussion of the present distress situation the entrepreneur encounter for pandemic, how they are overcoming the crisis of the pandemic of these types of food micro-business at the on-going pandemic situations.

This indication would provide proper insight of knowledge to the existing entrepreneurs to face the challenges efficiently to identify the opportunity arises in the future to gain benefits. This is one of the prime criteria of the entrepreneurs that seek opportunity to gain benefits with their strong will and courage in the unknown challenges presented to them. Through achieving our research aim/purpose with the help of our research questions by collecting and analyzing the primary data and secondary data would help us to determine the analysis through our discussed theories and literature. And by doing so we would come to a conclusion to provide some useful implication of the study relating the food micro-business entrepreneurship at the pandemic situation.

So far, this pandemic condition worldwide is relatively new factor and continuing; and this sector of the food micro-business segment of entrepreneurship did not get much emphasize for research works. We found our research gap to study on this issue to find out our objective through empirical data for analyze and provide some theoretical and practical contribution to this food entrepreneurship micro-business industry that we believe would create some future scopes for further studies.

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1.6 Limitation

We have some limitations in our research study as we have focused on the food entrepreneurship micro-business segment of few types of shops; but there are many other popular food entrepreneurship micro-business segments which also are affected due to the pandemic situation. So, these other popular food shop segments like the coffee shops, Italian & pizza shops, sports bars, different ethnic food shops etc. are not been brought to study. Moreover, our selected segment of food business would not emphasize the other type of food business at this pandemic situation; and their crisis handling style could be different than our sample type segment. We understand that only this type of small business would not draw the whole picture of the food micro-business entrepreneurship of Stockholm.

Also, we have selected our scope of the study only to some selected popular areas of Stockholm for our empirical data collection; and the selected area and sample size are not sufficient to compare the whole picture of the small food business shops in Stockholm area.

Lastly, we have selected few popular areas of the developed country like Sweden; and this research leaves a lot of scopes to find out the possibility to conduct this research on the other major area located in Sweden; and also this research could be conduct in the emerging market country or other developing countries which would be more interesting as it would impacted much more on the development of employment and economic growth in this pandemic situation.

Due to our limited time frame of study works; and also this pandemic situation did not allow us to conduct our research in vast areas with larger sample sizes with ample amount of time to conducting our research further. This creates the options of future studies considering our limitations of the research.

Chapter 2.0 Literature Review

In this chapter, we are constructing an appropriate theoretical framework for the research study which would help us analyse the empirical data collected from different food micro-business entrepreneurship. The theoretical chapter includes the topics that the authors consider relevant for the outline of the paper and to respond to the asked research questions. This chapter contains the topics: Entrepreneurship, Framework of defining entrepreneurship, Motivational factors of entrepreneurship, Swedish Government initiatives to support the entrepreneurship micro-business, Timmons Model of the entrepreneurial process.

2.1 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a way of thinking; reasoning and acting that is fixated on an opportunity and is driven by great leaders. While inventors create something new, an entrepreneur assembles and then integrates all the resources needed to transform the invention into a viable business. Entrepreneurship results in the development and deployment of value, not just for owners but for all customers and stakeholders. The entrepreneurial process involves all the functions, activities, and actions associated with perceiving opportunities and creating organisations to pursue them. The crucial ingredients for entrepreneurial success are: an outstanding entrepreneur with efficient management team, useful resources and an excellent market opportunity. Entrepreneurs are recognized for their posture of innovativeness, experimentation and pro-active pioneering of new markets (Zhang, Groen & Belousova, 2018). Entrepreneurship is thus a driving force within the economy, particularly because of entrepreneurs' innovative nature (Fuellhart and Glasmeier, 2003; Maxwell and Stone 2004). The entrepreneur comes up with new ideas and possesses strong mental attitude to face any challenges to overcome crises arise to business so that they could achieve the opportunity lies ahead to gain benefits.

2.2 Framework of defining entrepreneurship

Bolton and Thompson (2003) offers a framework for defining the entrepreneur, based on six characters themes which are:

Focus

Successful entrepreneurs pursue the very best opportunities and they avoid chasing after every option. Most successful entrepreneurs limit the number of projects they pursue.

Advantage

People with an entrepreneurial mind-set execute. They also pursue opportunities with enormous discipline.

Creativity

Creativity is the source of ideas and opportunities. Entrepreneurs passionately seek out new opportunities. They always are looking for the opportunity to profit from change.

Ego

Ego has six components, split into our inner ego and our outer ego. The inner ego embraces motivation (typically a desire to achieve, to make a difference and maybe to 'leave footprints'), self-assurance and dedication. The outer ego is the entrepreneur's internal locus of control, a desire to be in-charge of his or her own destiny.

Team

An entrepreneur should be able to find and select the right people and build these people into an effective entrepreneur team. According to Bagchi (2006) an 'A' team will be technically competent, have complementary skills, possess the ability to multi-task, have a shared vision,

enjoy personal integrity and mutual trust and be able to question each other and disagree, be resilient, and possess a sense of humour.

Social

Social influences depend on the nature of the business or initiative, affecting the extent to which it has a community or environmental outlook. The social dimension also affects the culture and style of the organisation and the way employees are treated.

2.3 Motivational factors of entrepreneurship

“According to the Chinese saying, people are ‘rather being the leader of chickens than the follower of an ox’. In other words, although chickens are small, one can still take the command. On the other hand, an ox is big. This saying implies that one should be a boss, no matter how small the business may be, rather than working for the other person in a big company.” This was stated in the article Strategic Entrepreneurship in Taiwan’s Food and Catering Industries: The Case of 85°C Café Shop by the authors Fu-Lai Tony Yu and Ming-Wen Hu, 2015, Sage publication. This is an important and perfect motivational factor who considers being an entrepreneur. Along with other character, independence is one of the prime factors which influence a person to become an entrepreneur.

Another motivational factor of entrepreneur is creativity that they bring out new ideas or changes in the business to search for new opportunity for grab the targeted gain.

Family network or influence transforms a person to become an entrepreneur. This business network satisfies economies of scale and flexibility, as well as the reduction of transaction costs due to the trust among family members (Shieh, 1992, pp. 111–112).

Sometimes friends and association also could act as motivations for becoming an entrepreneur. After completion of study or working on other jobs to gain experience, one person could be

easily motivated through their friends and peers to start a new business and become entrepreneurs.

Some entrepreneurs get their motivations through developing skills through working with other organization and learning the trade secrets properly; then they could become an entrepreneur in that trade with their prior experiences. The job provides them with the knowledge of where they find customers, buy materials, contact businesses, etc. Most importantly, the workers learn to be the middlemen whom they will exploit profit opportunities in future (Shieh, 1992, p. 109).

Also, the risk and challenges are another motivational factor of entrepreneurship as higher the risk would yield higher return or profit. Attaining benefit or profit is one of the important criteria of the entrepreneur.

Some characteristics also help motive a person to become entrepreneurs like the dare to venture, willingness to learn, drilling down the problem to find solution, strong will power and determination, and strive to success. These characteristics are very important to inherit to become successful entrepreneurs.

2.4 Swedish government initiatives to support the medium, small and micro-business sector

“The Swedish Government is now presenting additional measures to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. To particularly alleviate the impact for small and medium-sized enterprises, a crisis package is now being presented for Swedish entrepreneurs.

A central government loan guarantee has been proposed to make it easier for companies to access financing. The proposal means that the central government will guarantee 70 per cent of new loans banks provide to companies that are experiencing financial difficulty due to the COVID-19 virus but that are otherwise robust. The guarantee will be issued to banks, which in turn will provide guaranteed loans to companies. The loan guarantee primarily targets small and medium-sized enterprises. However, there is no formal limit on company size to take part in the programme. The Government expects that the guaranteed loans will not be used for bonuses or

variable remuneration to senior officers of the company or for profit withdrawals other than what is comparable to a regular salary withdrawal.

The Swedish National Debt Office will administer the guarantee and it is proposed that each company be allowed to loan up to SEK 75 million, although exceptions can be made. The banks will pay a guarantee fee to the Swedish National Debt Office for guarantees that are issued. The fee will be determined on the basis of the borrower's actual risk class, which is set by the credit institution. The risk assessment will be carried out in accordance with the credit institution's credit assessment process. If a credit guarantee has to be redeemed, the central government will pay the guaranteed loan amount, which will impair the central government budget balance and net lending. The guarantee fees that will be charged mean that the central government budget balance and net lending will be slightly improved. It is very difficult to assess the situation, but overall the guarantee system is expected to be self-financed in the long term. The loan guarantees should be provided as soon as possible; this is why the Government is preparing the proposal for prompt consideration. The European Commission is also prepared for rapid consideration and approval.

Enterprises can apply for a loan with a government credit guarantee by contacting a bank. A temporary reduction of employers' social security contributions will be proposed for the period 1 March to 30 June 2020 so that only the old age pension contribution is paid. It is proposed that this reduction should apply to up to 30 employees and on that portion of the employee's wage that does not exceed SEK 25 000 per month. This entails tax relief of up to SEK 5 300 per employee and month. To provide equivalent relief to sole traders, a reduction of individual contributions is also proposed. The proposal's costs to public finances are estimated to SEK 33 billion. To reduce costs for companies with considerable difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 virus – in sectors such as durable consumer goods, hotels, restaurants and certain other activities – the Government proposes providing support that aims to facilitate and speed up renegotiation of rents. The approach is that central government will cover 50 per cent of the rental reduction up to 50 per cent of the fixed rent. The support can be applied for after the fact and will apply for the period 1 April until 30 June 2020. SEK 5 billion is being allocated for this.

A future proposal is that the rules for tax allocation reserves will be temporarily changed so that sole proprietors severely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak will receive tax cuts. The new rules mean that 100 per cent of the taxable profits for 2019, up to SEK 1 million, can be set aside in the tax allocation reserve, which can then be set off against possible future losses. This means that many people can get back the preliminary tax they paid in 2019. This proposal concerns sole traders and natural persons who are partners in Swedish partnerships. The proposal is expected to result in a maximum liquidity reinforcement of more than SEK 13 SEK billion. Moreover, the previously presented proposal on new opportunities to defer tax payments will be expanded. This means that value added tax reported annually from 27 December 2019 until 17 January 2021 will also be covered by the proposal. In this way, many sole proprietors can defer their VAT payments that otherwise should be paid during the spring, such as on 12 May. Depending on how the situation develops, the proposal can encompass more than SEK 7 billion if the entire liquidity reinforcement is used. Companies that are made dormant in the case of unemployment are exempted in 2020 from the rule that a company can only be made dormant once during a five-year period.” according to the press release from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Finance, Sweden; and collected through online information <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2020/03/crisis-package-for-small-enterprises-in-sweden/>.

2.5 Timmons Entrepreneurial Process

Successful high-performance entrepreneurship does not happen by accident. It is designed that way. The Timmons Model of the entrepreneurial process is a good way of explaining how this process occurs. Timmons (1989) who proposed Timmons Model of the Entrepreneurial Process; and the factors of this model are the entrepreneur, the founding team, the opportunity, and the resources. Simply, Timmons model is normative. The key ingredient is the entrepreneur; however the model recognizes the fact that the activity of entrepreneurship is too diverse to be performed by one man and states that three different characteristics required are: the thought man, the man of action and the front man. Further if the entrepreneur has the right team members, then he or she will deliberately search for opportunities and upon finding the right opportunity the entrepreneur seeks the resources to make this opportunity a commercial success. Research Topic: Entrepreneurship in micro-business; Small food shops present business condition considering the pandemic in Stockholm

This model is integrated and holistic focuses on the fit and balance among the forces of entrepreneurial success in the individual context of entrepreneurship as well as environment context. Nevertheless, the environment context is not incorporated comprehensively as the local cultural and network factor are not included.

Jeffery Timmons of Babson College in Massachusetts developed the Timmons Model of Entrepreneurship as his doctorate thesis at Harvard University (Timmons, Zacharakis & Spinelli, 2004). Based on this noble work, more interests were spurred among the researchers in the field of entrepreneurial process. Many research and case studies were written to enhance his model, as a guide for entrepreneur to increase the likelihood of success in business. As shown in Figure -1, the Timmons Model of Entrepreneurship Process considers opportunities, teams and resources as the three critical factors available to an entrepreneur and concludes that success depends on the ability of the entrepreneur to balance these critical factors.

According to Timmons, Zacharakis and Spinelli (2004), the key factors to entrepreneurial success lies with the entrepreneur, the founding team, the opportunity, and the resources that are mustered to start the new organization. In another words, Timmons model takes a normative approach. Timmons et al. (2004) affirm that the key ingredient is the entrepreneur. If the entrepreneur is equipped with the right skills and knowledge, he or she will be able to pull the right people together (founding team), search for relevant and ample resources (resources) to tackle the opportunity he/she sees in the market, shapes it well and turns it into potential business venture.

Significantly, Timmons et al. (2004) proposed an integrated model, offering holistic balance and juggling act to how we should comprehend the entrepreneurial process and getting the odds in owns favour. Here, we could find the relative matching of these small businesses of food shops sustaining in business with their strong entrepreneurial motivation, adjusting with the crisis situations after the pandemic break out and making the necessary changes in their business operations to use resources more efficiently with the proper team work activity to achieve a better future condition at the business taking consideration of the opportunity.

The integrated model of the Timmons model expressed that the three factors of opportunity, team and resources need to be assessed to find out the right opportunity and keeping the right

balance of these factors to ensure sustainable condition for the business. Though, Timmons theory did not emphasize on the possibilities of external factors like the pandemic situations or other natural calamities conditions which are external unpredictable factors.

This theory discussed regarding the controllable components of the entrepreneurial process which can be assessed, influenced, moulded and altered; and thereby allowing entrepreneurs to change the risk-to-reward equation into a positive and favourable manner.

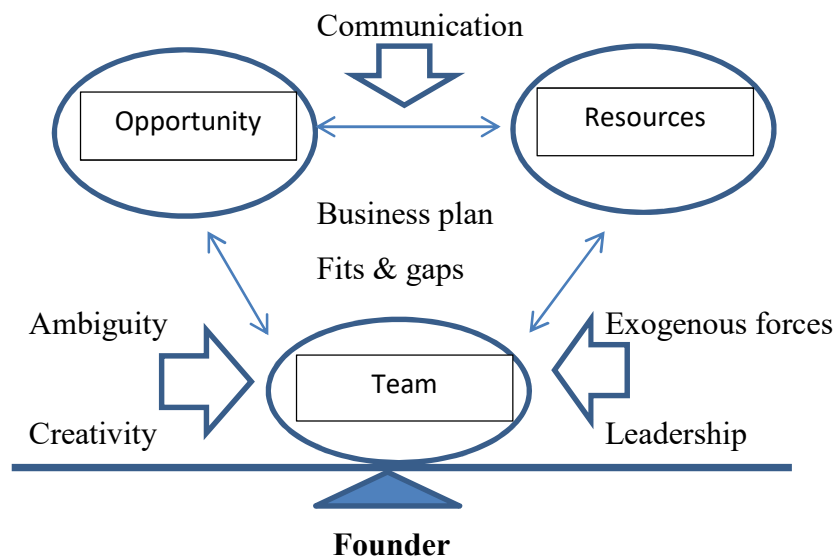


Figure-1: The Timmons Model of the Entrepreneurial Process

2.5.0 Three critical factors: Opportunity, resources and team

Three important factors in the Timmons model which influence to create the perfect balance of the business by the entrepreneur.

2.5.1 Opportunity

Timmons model dictates that the entrepreneurial process does not start with business plan, money, strategy, networks or team. The Timmons model believes strongly that entrepreneurship is nothing but opportunity driven. Opportunities are more essential than the talent or competence

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of lead entrepreneur and the team because a right opportunity identified ensures long-term success of the business. The lead entrepreneur and team should play roles in juggling all the key elements well in a constantly changing and dynamic environment. A good idea does not necessarily bring about a great business because market demand determines the potential of the idea. An excellent idea is found when the product or service could be positioned to create or add values to consumers, remains attractive, durable and timely.

2.5.2 Resources

According to Timmons Model, one of the misconceptions among inexperienced entrepreneurs is that you must first have all the resources in place, especially money, in order to succeed in a venture. Surprisingly and ridiculously as it may sound, thinking about money first is a big mistake and paralyses the entrepreneurial moves. The Timmons model discounts the popular notion that extensive resources reduce the risk of starting a venture and encourages bootstrapping or starting with the bare minimal requirements as a way to attain competitive advantages. The advantages of bootstrapping includes :

- Driving down market cost
- Instilling discipline and leanness in the organization
- Encouraging creative resources to achieve more with the limited amount of money and other resources available

The entrepreneur works to “minimize and control” rather than “maximize and own.” The role of the entrepreneur in managing the resources include building a good resource base to draw from when required and drawing up a business plan through a “fit and balance” method that balances the available resource with the opportunity and the potential of the team.

2.5.3 Team

A highly effective lead entrepreneur should be able to put the best talents together after identifying the opportunity and gathering required resources. The size and the background of the

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team are contingent upon the size and nature of opportunity. According to Timmons model, a good team can lead to great success and a badly formed team can waste great idea which is a disaster to any form of business. Among all resources, only a good team can unlock a higher potential with any opportunity and manage the pressures related to growth. The two major roles of the team, relative to the other critical factors are:

- Eliminating the ambiguity and uncertainty of the opportunity by applying creativity;
- Providing leadership to manage the available resources in the most effective manner by interacting with exogenous forces and the capital market context that keeps changing.

2.5.4 Seeking the fit-and-balance

Entrepreneurs try to have all resources in place before starting a new venture. The Timmons model of entrepreneurship discounts this notion and holds only three factors, a market driven opportunity, availability of a good team and adequate resources as critical requirements before starting the venture. Maintaining the model of the above-mentioned three driving forces is the concept of fit and balance. Literally, Figure-1 depicts the important role of the lead entrepreneur or founder entrepreneur who needs to balance the three balls over his head, without toppling off. Such imagery is particularly helpful for one to acknowledge the urgency to retain the balancing act while getting all the elements matched.

The three critical factors of entrepreneurship remain interlinked, with any change in one factor having an impact on the other two. The reality is that opportunity, team, and resources seldom match and the Timmons model considers the major role of the entrepreneur to effect a match of the three critical factors of entrepreneurship at the correct time. Success of the business venture depends on the ability of the entrepreneur to ensure balance by applying creativity, leadership, and maintaining effective communications.

After collecting the primary data we would compile the outcomes and analyze with the link of these theories and literature. The above mentioned theories and literature would be used to analyze our empirical findings to find the resemblance with the theories and draw the conclusion of the study. We would like to establish a theoretical framework for our study considering our

aim of the research and our research questions to relate with our discussed theories. The theoretical framework is shown below:

Theoretical Framework of the research

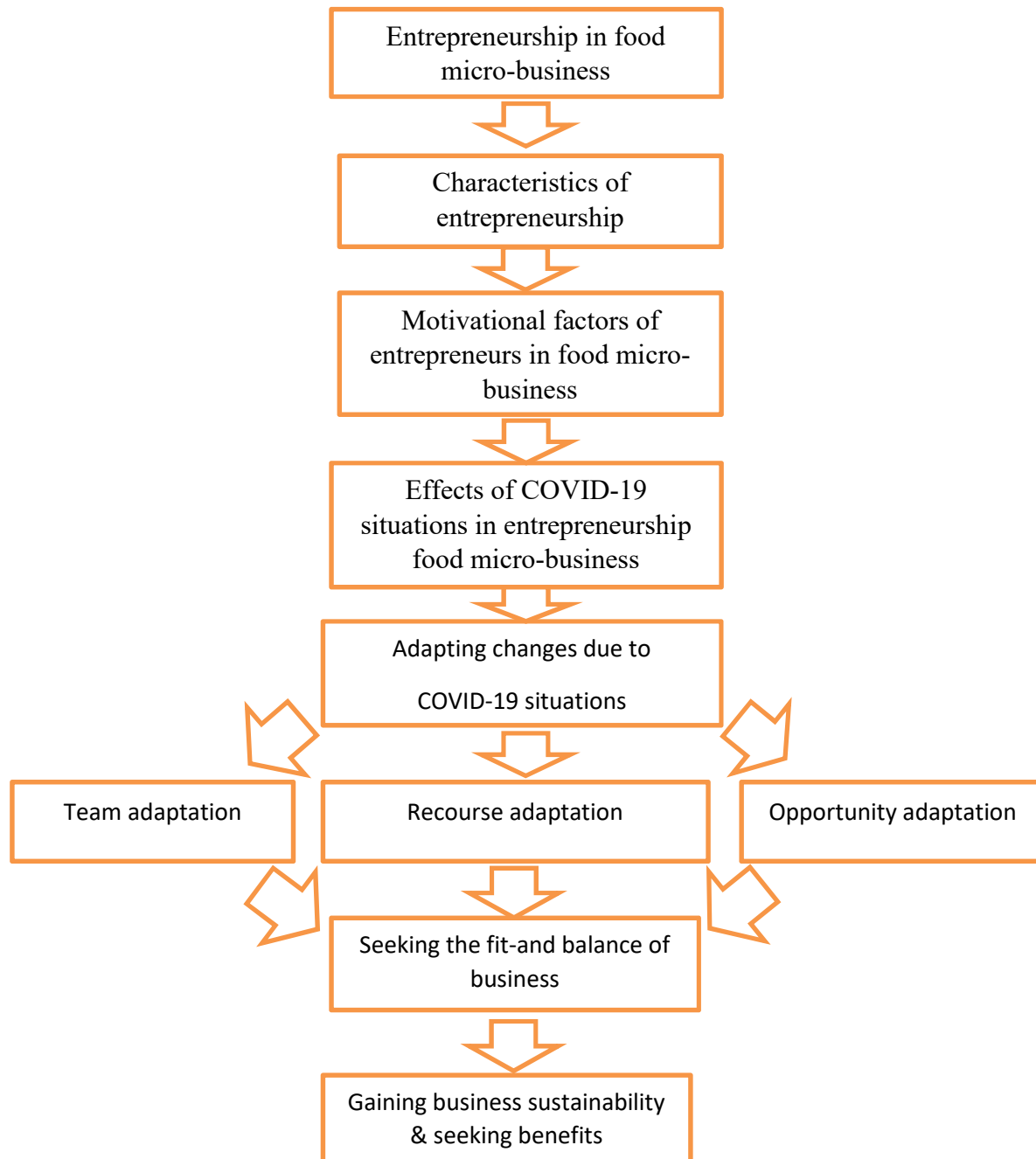


Figure-2: Theoretical framework of the research

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3.0 Methodology

We have collected the primary data through few questions from different types of food micro-business entrepreneurship concern located at Stockholm. We have performed a qualitative research study with the primary data collection and used some relevant secondary data for our analysis. We have used inductive method in our study as we found it suitable for our qualitative research. Qualitative research is inductive in nature, and the researcher generally explores meanings and insights in a given situation (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). It refers to a range of data collection and analysis techniques that use purposive sampling and semi-structured, open-ended interviews (Dudwick et al., 2006). Researchers take an inductive approach to start with a set of observations and then they move from those particular experiences to a more general set of propositions about those experiences (Decarlo, 2018).

3.1 Data Collection Procedure and Limitations

Our sample size of the data collection was 25 numbers of shops from five different types of food micro-business entrepreneurs. We have conducted semi structured interviews with few entrepreneurship micro-business food shops individuals located in Stockholm, Sweden. The interview flow was controlled in order to keep the main subject to gather certain information and find answers for it. The questions were open-ended (allowing for unique replies) and somewhat pre-determined. We have chosen this data collection as we want to gather new information from the participants and we want to understand the topic in a new way. We want to gain insight in the issues from the participant's point of view and we believe this method allows us to do that.

We understand the limitations of interviewing few participants only, considering in mind that our research scope of five types of micro-business food shops and we use the information gained with this in mind. We have chosen the food shops according their popularity and acceptance of the interview with us; as many shop management were not interested to help us with their precious time of work and with their internal information.

3.2 List of the interviewee

We have selected five types of food micro-business shops to get our primary data. We have collected five number of each type of shops like the Korv & ice-cream shops, Sushi shops, Thai Wok shops, Kebab shops and Indian food shops. So, total of 25 shops owner/management we have interviewed and collected our primary data. We have chosen the popular shops in the frequently visited places of Stockholm to collect the data so that we could find useful and important information from the respondents regarding their business conditions. Most of the respondents didn't want to disclose their names and their business revenues figures in the interview and requested us to keep their name confidential. The list of the shops with the names, types of food services, location and addresses given below in the chart:

Sl.	Names of the shop	Types of food services	Location (Stockholm)	Address
1.	Korv-Ingvar's	Korv & ice-cream	Solna	Hotellgatan, Solna
2.	Huvudsta Grillen	Korv & ice-cream	Huvudsta	Huvudsta torg 1, Huvudsta
3.	Norrviken's Grill	Korv & ice-cream	Kista	Kistavagen 2A, Kista
4.	Grill ringen	Korv & ice-cream	Soder	Ringvagen 141, Soder
5.	Hogdal's Grillen	Korv & ice-cream	Hogsdals-gangen	Hogsdalsgangen
6.	Sushi King	Sushi	Sundbyberg	Sturegatan 24, Sundbyberg
7.	Asahi	Sushi	Sundbyberg	Sturegatan 30, Sundbyberg
8.	Shiro Sushi	Sushi	Sundbyberg	Sundbyberg torg 1,

9.	Nonni	Sushi	Sundbyberg	Sturegatan 11, Sundbyberg
10.	Sushi Natu	Sushi	Sundbyberg	Landsvagen 15a,Sundbyberg
11.	Thai Dinner	Thai food	Sundbyberg	Landsvagen 33, Sundbyberg
12.	Thai Amari	Thai food	Sundbyberg	Jarnvagsgatan 46,Sundbyberg
13.	Mae Thai Wok	Thai food	Soder	Gotgatan 85B, Soder
14.	Thai food express	Thai food	Soder	Gotgatan 82, Soder
15.	Mae Thai Express	Thai food	Solna	Prostvagen 1, Solna
16.	Stockholm Kebab House	Kebab & Pizza	Stockholm	Kungsgatan 68, Stockholm
17.	Pizza & Kebab Bar	Kebab & Pizza	Stockholm	Kungsgatan 4, Stockholm
18.	Pizza Hornan	Kebab & Pizza	Tensta	Tensta Alle, Sponga
19.	Haider's Kebab Kungen	Kebab	Tensta	Tensta gangen, Sponga
20.	Gott Grillen	Kebab	Tensta	Tensta Gangen, Sponga
21.	Kohinoor Tandoori	Indian food	Solna	Ostervagen 11, Solna
22.	Agra Tandoori	Indian food	Sundbyberg	Jarnvasgatan 36, Sundbyberg
23.	Tandoori King	Indian food	Sundbyberg	Gotgatan 3, Sundbyberg
24.	Lagan	Indian food	Sundbyberg	Sturegatan 34, Sundbyberg
25.	Zaiqa	Indian food	Sundbyberg	Sturegatan 30, Sundbyberg

List-1: Interviewee list of the micro-business entrepreneurs

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3.3 Interviews

We have submitted our questions paper to our selected shops at the beginning of our survey after getting permission from the shop management so that they could provide some time to reply on our questions; and some of the shops were chosen through personal connections. After few days' time, according to the shop management allocated time we went to the shop for brief interviews.

The interview was semi-structured with open-ended questions and took around 20-30 minutes. All the respondents have shared their experienced thoughts regarding their business conditions, especially the motivations to become an entrepreneur, effects of Covid-19 at their business, their crisis overcome policies like how they are coping with this pandemic impact and some strategic changes they have to implement to sustain with their business in this recurring pandemic situation.

3.4 Interview Questions

The interview questions have been designed with the aim of obtaining answers that can help us find out the effect of Covid-19 and how they are managing this situation for their business sustainability. After collecting the answers of our questions and some practical experiences shared by the respondents, we have compiled these questions answers towards our aim of the research.

The questions we have provided to the respondents are as follows:

1. What are some important factors/motivators of setting your food business?
2. What do you consider important in your food business?
3. How was your business conditions compared to the present Covid-19 situation?
4. What are the factors that affected your business due to pandemic situation?
5. Do you have to maintain certain rules and guidelines for the pandemic situation?
6. Did you know about any support offerings for your micro-business from the government?

7. What are the changes you have implemented after the pandemic at your business?
8. Do you use any food delivery services in your micro-business?
9. Do you use any marketing activities to promote your business?
10. What steps have you taken to sustain your business due to the pandemic situation?
11. What are the factors does the present pandemic situation affect your business?
12. Are you using any promotional activity to increase your business after the pandemic?
13. What steps have you taken to improve your business condition after the pandemic?
14. What is your future projection of your business considering the on-going pandemic?
15. What would be your suggestions to the new comers in this type of food business?

3.5 Validity and Reliability

When conducting our research report we want to highlight the importance of validity and reliability of our research and interviews. In terms of validity, it is important that we conduct our research in the way that we are supposed to and to make sure that we are doing accurate measurements. Can we generalize results for external viability to be able to measure it in other settings? Is our interviewee likely to change answers at another day or time as this will affect the degree of internal validity. If we are not measuring and concluding our research in relations to what the base of the research is, it would be considered low validity (Adams, J. 2007 p. 237). We believe that our research is based on the problems presented and that the answers presented are unlikely to change for the interviewee as they present their current actual situation.

It is also important to test the reliability of the research report, which highlights to what degree the research can be conducted again with the same results. If we make the same measurements over time, will it create the same outcome? (Adams, J. 2007, p. 235).

We believe that a higher degree of reliability can be sustained as the interviewees is presenting us with their personal current conditions and experiences and that reality is presented which will not change.

4.0 Empirical findings

We collected the primary data's from the provided questions-answers sheet and the short interviews with the respondents, about 20-30 minutes per interviews conducted. After that we have compiled the responses to collect our related information to find out our research questions objectives. This would help us towards proceed to our aim or purpose of the study. Here we will present the combined findings of the responses for our related research questions and objectives.

4.1 Important factors or motivators influencing to be an entrepreneur

We got one common answer from most of the respondents that business profit encourages them to set their food business. They explained that the food business is one of the profitable businesses if the sales revenue remains on the higher side on regular basis. This is due to the production cost usually low from the selling price. Though one of the Korv & Ice-cream shop respondents expresses that,

“Quality food with faster delivery along with proper service to the customer is very important to create and maintain business growth as our business is almost like fast food business.”

Another respondent from the same type of Korv business expresses that,

”Location of the business is very important factor with good food offering; otherwise the customers will not be loyal to your shop.”

Few other respondents from the Sushi shop explained that,

“We offer clean, healthy and aesthetic food with proper environment; and we have experienced in the skills of this sushi business to offer the customer with unique taste.”

Some of the Indian shops respondents told us that,

“We have started this food business as we are in this business sector for a long period of time due to it was our family business; and people here enjoys our spicy Indian food.”

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One Kebab shop owner responded that,

“We provide ‘Halal’ food to our customers and we have lots of Muslim religion people reside near our shop who are almost regular customers of us.”

One Thai shop respondent reply that,

“They serve authentic Thai food to their customers with reasonable prices and provide good environment; as the customers are knowledgeable on Thai food and their food hospitality & culture”.

Another respondent from Thai shop reply to us that,

“Their shop working team are very experienced and they have their freedom to implement their creativity at the work, maintaining the core value of business; as the owner enjoys freedom at business and provide same to the employee’s team.”

4.2 Effects of the COVID-19 situation on their micro-business

Most of the respondents expressed their uncomfortable situation due to the pandemic situation as people movements become restrained to visit their shop less frequently unlike the before pandemic times. All respondents expressed that they could not achieve their usual forecasted target of sales due to this pandemic outbreak. One of the respondents from the Indian shop expressed that,

“We have lost a great deal of business during this pandemic time, especially in the summer times when usually we expected larger sales revenues.”

Almost same reply came from other type of food micro-businesses respondents. People have become more concerned regarding their health issues due to the unknown medical remedies of the pandemic; and as a result they maintain social distancing with all other restrictions to visits the public places for their food intake.

4.3 Business operations hindered due to the pandemic situation

Korv & ice-cream shops and Kebab shops explained that their regular operational activities affected less considering the other types of food micro-business entrepreneurs. These other four types of business management expressed their serious concern on their daily operations of business. Mainly, their sales have come down very sharply to maintain their cost level to overcome the losses. Also, some of the employees become sick for a longer period and everybody need to take precautions to prevent the pandemic disease which causes the normal operations to suffer. As well as they all need to implement many safety measures guidelines for the pandemic situation which incur cost involvement to run the business at the present scenario. One of the respondents from the Sushi shop explained that,

“At the beginning of the pandemic, people were not sure how the disease spreads around the world; and they have their misconceptions regarding our food as it’s usually served as uncooked. We had to face lot of difficulties during that period to notify and make awareness among the people that our food is safe and healthy.”

Another Indian shops respondent expressed that,

“Our tasty food was ignored by the customers at the starting of pandemic as usually our food contains lots of spices; and the unknown knowledge regarding the disease provoked people to avoid our spicy food which they normally enjoy. We had to install all the required advised regulations at our shop to run the business in this harsh pandemic situation; and it has increased the cost of our operations where our sales have gone down immensely. Still, we are positive about our business skills and our food services to take all the initiatives to overcome this situation and strongly believe that soon our customers would return to our shop to enjoy their food. People awareness is increasing as the day’s passes and the vaccination program would bring the normal situation hopefully as early as possible.”

Thai shop respondents also similarly express their concern over the low revenue earnings due to the pandemic; including the sudden leave of their employees due to ill health condition circumstances. These issues have greatly hindered their daily operations.

4.4 Government support knowledge on the micro-business

Most of the respondents have prior knowledge regarding the government support extended to micro-business. Every respondent have applied at the government support program at the beginning of the business support program when it was initiated. They all addressed that these support program are helping their business through these pandemic situation. Moreover, most shop owners appreciated the support program for these micro-businesses sector and other business sector. They were also happy that the government did not implement the lockdown program in this country, and they were able to open and conduct their businesses by maintaining the guidelines of the pandemic situation. Though, some of them have expressed their deep concern regarding the recent second wave situation of the pandemic which could bring out the lockdown situation if the high rate of disease spreading of the current time not comes in control.

4.5 Measures taken to prevent the crisis situations due to pandemic

Lower sales have great effect on these food micro-business entrepreneurs. While most of them could not overcome the low sales situations, they need to consider cost cutting measures at their business to minimize their cost. As a result, few of these business entrepreneurs had to take some harsh decision to lower their employee's for the business sustainability. These employees were trained and possess good working skills at their business. One of the Thai food shop respondent expressed that,

“We had to shorten few of our skilled employees who were working quite long at our business; but strange times require these decisions for the greater concern of sustain in the business. We have to check all the possibilities to cut down our cost level to lower the losses for the business. Even we have to cut down our regular menu's which requires some costly and less available items. We have taken every measure to uphold the business condition which was quite well before the pandemic started. We have implemented some new ideas at our food offerings to encourage the sales like discounts on our A la carte menu and our online delivery offerings. It was great that the government have some initiatives to support our small food business sectors from the beginning of the pandemic. We hope some more appropriate steps would be taken to make us sustain in our business.”

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One of the Kebab shop respondents expressed that,

“We have implemented some discounts and introduced new items to encourage our sales. Also, we have started few personal promotional activities which we didn’t need to implement before the pandemic times. We have initiated the food delivery services which were not that important as we usually used to get our customers visiting our shop for the food. We strongly believe that this pandemic situation would come under control in near future and we would enjoy our business as before pandemic times.”

Another Sushi shop respondent explained that,

“We have focused more on the delivery services in this pandemic period to increase our sales and it is working well for us. Also, we have implemented some new menu with attractive prices to attract the customers. We are at the present time getting worried due to the second wave of the pandemic situation; though the vaccination program has started in Sweden which we hope will restore the normal situation. We are optimistic regarding our business as it’s a very popular food to all segments of customers.”

One of the Korv & ice-cream shop answered that,

“We are missing our customers greatly as fewer movements and people gathering become less in this winter time, also this pandemic situation make the social distancing and other restrictions for the health issues. Our foods are less popular in the food delivery services as the customers usually grab their foods on the go as served fresh & hot. Still we are managing our business with this slower sales condition considering the situation would come around soon by fighting this pandemic crisis. At least we got some initial support and other measures have been taken by the Swedish government to support our small business concerns.”

4.6 Encounter the present business situations

Most of the respondents replied positively regarding handling the present crisis of their food micro-business. They reacted positively at their interviews and reply on our questions concerning the on-going pandemic situation. One of the Korv & ice-cream shop respondent expressed that,

“We were very much concern about the prevailing pandemic situation and maintaining the health guideline awareness and steps to stop spreading the disease; and also fortunate that here in Sweden we didn’t go through the terrible lockdown situation to fight the pandemic. Otherwise, our business conditions would be very worse that could not imagine. Especially our customers are walking customers who buy their required food while travelling through our shop, delivery of our food is less popular. We are afraid that the new transformation of the pandemic would bring the lockdown situation for us. But we are also hopeful that we would overcome the crisis like we have faced during the recent past pandemic period. Moreover, the vaccination program has been started which would bring better situation in my understanding. Hopefully, business conditions would come around as well.”

Most of the Thai shop respondent also expressed a similar kind of expression regarding the pandemic situation. They have their high hopes for overcoming their business situation along with overcoming the pandemic.

One of the Indian food shop respondent expressed that,

“We have the knowledge and skills to run our business, though this pandemic situation has quite bad impact on our business. We want to forecast positive business condition for our business as we have learned to pass the initial crisis period by taking many different activities of our business. We expect to see a better and prosperous future of our business battling the pandemic condition. This crisis condition may have caused few other similar shops very badly, though I believe that it would create new opportunity in the coming future for our business sector.”

5.0 Analysis of the findings

After collecting our primary data, we have separated different answers gathered through our interviews. Then we have segmented those interviewed data according to our research questions along with some more relevant information and insights shared with us at the interviews. Later, according to our theoretical framework we have tried to connect the retrieved answers with our earlier discussed literature and theories. Analysing the primary data through qualitative research and inductive method use we have tried to look at the broad perspective of our findings. Then we have tried to co-relate the compiled findings according our research questions and with our earlier discussed literature to find out the resemblance.

We have come up with the following analysis:

5.1 Important factors/motivators of setting up food businesses

We could observe that many important reasons influenced the food micro-business entrepreneurs to start their business in this food sector business. Some of the important factors stated by the respondents were location, profit margin, family business, ethnic values, independence of work, creativity implementation, prior experience or skills, popular business etc. Business motivations intrigued by these important factors to run business in this small food shop business under fare competitive market; and most of the owners were encouraged by the possibilities of growth in this business with their unique ideas and tasty & healthy food offerings with proper customer services to achieve reasonable higher profit margins.

Entrepreneurship is thus a driving force within the economy, particularly because of entrepreneurs' innovative nature (Fuellhart and Glasmeier, 2003; Maxwell and Stone 2004).

We could associate with good business scopes or possibilities considering all other important factors that referred by the respondents including the external business factors like the present pandemic.

Our earlier discussed literature stated that entrepreneurship is a way of thinking; reasoning and acting that is fixated on an opportunity and is driven by great leaders. The independent choice of the entrepreneur responses reflect on the old Chinese saying of “rather being the leader of chickens than the follower of an ox” which refers to the condition of being the boss of the

business even it is small than working under someone or other bigger organization. This independent condition would provide the creativity of the entrepreneur to implement necessary changes in the business to gain profit. The independence also would provide to react to the situation and act faster for the business improvements.

Also, one of the prior characteristic of entrepreneur is to search for the opportunity to gain benefits which in this case would be the profit which most respondents addressed to be an important motivator or factor. Entrepreneurs are recognized for their posture of innovativeness, experimentation and pro-active pioneering of new markets (Zhang, Groen & Belousova, 2018). This literature reflects the motivational responses from the respondents.

As well as, we could observe that family network or influence also encourages becoming entrepreneur which we found on the empirical responses. Family network or influence transforms a person to become an entrepreneur. This business network satisfies economies of scale and flexibility, as well as the reduction of transaction costs due to the trust among family members (Shieh, 1992, p. 111–112).

Other issues like the experience and skills also motivate to become entrepreneurs which have similarities with the responses of the food micro-business respondents. The workers learn to be the middlemen whom they will exploit profit opportunities in future (Shieh, 1992, p. 109). This literature reflects the experience and skills motivations of the respondent to become entrepreneurs.

The framework of defining the character of the entrepreneur addressed by Bolton and Thompson (2003) shows the focus, advantage, creativity, ego, team and social aspects which we could observe from the collected responses.

Focus refers to seeking the right opportunity and avoids chasing every other option. From the respondent response on facing the crisis condition of the pandemic situation would not let them withdraw from their business. They would remain strong in the present pandemic situation which they hope would be overcome in the future.

The ego characteristic explains the mentally strong attitude with positive reactions to initiate the changes for the improvement of business also reflects the characteristics of the entrepreneur which we have followed in the responses from the shops owners. Referring to these similarities of character we could find out through the second research questions where the respondents held them mentally strong to observe the sudden outbreak of the pandemic situations with its impact on their business. As a result, they need to implement the necessary regulations and maintain the guidelines implemented due to the pandemic situation.

The above scenario of being strong to execute the changes even in this pandemic crisis conditions refers to the advantages of keeping the right mind-set to pursue opportunity with strict discipline.

Creativity refers to the new ideas implementation by the entrepreneurs to initiate changes in the business to check opportunity to gain benefits. At this hard time of business with the on-going pandemic situation reflects the creativity character of the entrepreneur respondents.

Team character implicate that the entrepreneur would select the right person with skills and experience when it is required or not. We could observe from the respondents that they have to implement downsizing steps at the shops to cut down the cost due to low revenue earnings. This situation refers to the team character of the respondents to understand and assembles the right team for the work. At this present crisis situation they need to rearrange their operational team to a minimum to serve the present requirement.

Social influences depend on the nature of the business or initiative, affecting the extent to which it has a community or environmental outlook. This character could be related to one of the responses of respondents that they want their employees to work independently considering the benefit of the organization; as the owner prefers to be independent.

5.2 Present business condition considering COVID-19

Every respondent expressed their serious consideration over the pandemic situation where there expected revenue of the business became much lower than expected. Due to that most of them went through some difficult periods; and slowly adopting some changes considering the

compulsory instructions and business sustainability situation. They need to implement various business strategies to create some changes in the business operations to function more efficiently in this hard period of the pandemic. According to the Timmons model of entrepreneur process which explained three important factors that are team, resources and opportunity. These three factors need to balance uniquely to find out the right opportunity to gain the right benefits.

5.3 Reacting fast to adopt the changes for sustainability

Majority of the respondents stated that they need to initiate some immediate changes in their business operations addressing the business sustainability; they need to react fast on the uncertain early pandemic situation which was creating lot of ambiguity everywhere. Due to the sudden slow business condition arrived, many of them considered to lower the incurring cost of the shop; and in this connection few shops has taken initiatives to cut down their employees to a minimum level required. Though, many respondents expressed their kind sympathy for their employees but they had to consider the harsh situations prevailing due to the pandemic.

Also, most of them appreciate the government's considerations and help offered for the small business owners to overcome the current crisis situation. All of them have applied to their required help offered by the government to sustain in their business. They have taken steps to make proper awareness for the people to maintain a safer distance and implemented other issues to prevent the spread of pandemic situations according to the government guidelines. These initiatives helped them to obtained almost normal situations among the people like the time before pandemic. Also, they expressed that the supply chain system of their business were not affected much due to the pandemic situation; though few of them have expressed that some items availability issues and some small price raise due to lower supply conditions but it has less impact on them.

Again, we could associate the important three factors of team, resources and opportunity in this situation and find an appropriate fit-and-balance situation for this scenario for the present business situation. This balance of business would provide better opportunity in the future time which would offer gain for the business for the entrepreneur. As the entrepreneurs have the ability to react fast and adopt the changes immediately and manage the perfect balance of team,

resources and opportunity according to the situation. This characteristic would help them to achieve the gain from the present business condition.

5.4 Observation and react to situation

From our findings we could see that the entrepreneurs usually don't spend much on marketing activities. Majority of them believe that their best marketing would be their tasty & healthy food with proper customer services; which eventually would create the best marketing process. Also, being small in the business, their target is to attract the passing customers and specific area targeted customers along with the food delivery services. So, they all preferred to engage in the personal and social media marketing process to create awareness among the people. At the present time of pandemic, they have implemented few promotional activities to encourage their business growth like small flyers with newspaper and postal service delivery; social media advertising, launch time special package offerings, gift voucher implementation etc. which appears to be quite effective in their business.

So, all these times required decisions of changes helps to sustain in the business and carrying through the hard times after the pandemic situations. The entrepreneur would consider the three major factors of Timmons model which are the team, resources and opportunity to find the perfect match in this situation to provide the right solution for the business. Also, the strong mental character position would help the entrepreneurs to endure this difficult period of pandemic to find the better opportunity situation in the future time for gaining the benefit. The six characteristics of entrepreneur discussed in the literature as the focus, advantage, creativity, ego, team, social would relate in this situation. These qualities would also help the entrepreneur to achieve the right opportunity to gain from the business. Ability of being independent would help to act fast to the situation to implement the changes required for the present sustainability; and the observation and knowledge would help to reach to the future time for the perfect opportunity for the desired gain accomplishment.

6.0 Conclusion

At the conclusion, we could observe that the objectives of our study were obtained through the empirical findings leading to the qualitative analysis with our research questions which relates with our discussed literature and theory. We found that our research aim or purpose was answered through our research questions with the qualitative analysis discussions. We could observed that most of the respondents have acted upon the impact from the very begging of the pandemic situations; and try to manage their business operations through required changes to adopt in this present pandemic situations to sustain in the business and to wait for the right opportunity for the growth of the business. Throughout their changes and implementations of the adaptation makes them to earn the sustainable business condition in the present harsh period of business. Three important factors which are team, resources and opportunity was associated and analysed with our findings along with other characteristics and influencing factors of the entrepreneurs. Thus, justify our research purpose by obtaining our objectives to understand the present business conditions of the micro-entrepreneurship business of food shops.

Considering the challenges an entrepreneur would go through to establish a new business in this type of food business sector would not be that encouraging at the present time of pandemic. Still, there would be suggestions to considering the important factors of entrepreneurship and venture new business to implement the creative ideas to attain the opportunities of business in this food sector. Some special qualities of the entrepreneur would play important role like strong personality, desire to accomplishment, prior knowledge and experienced team work would provide advantages to achieve new opportunities.

Our study has some practical contribution and theoretical implication on the entrepreneurship micro- business operates in the small food industry which provides some insights of present business conditions. Through our research we found that these segments of food entrepreneurship micro-business possess good potential even in the pandemic conditions. This business offers benefits for the entrepreneurs and creates opportunity at the present times by obtaining the right balance with the three crucial factors of entrepreneurship like team, resources and opportunity. This would bring economic growth through entrepreneurship as well as would

create some employment opportunity. Also, through our findings and relations with the discussed theories we could prove that the theories discussed regarding the entrepreneurship were appropriate and justified for the food micro-business scenario at the pandemic situations.

We have some limitations in our research which we mentioned earlier that we have selected only one region, Stockholm area, located in the developed country of Sweden. These limitations would create the opportunity for the future research conducting in the research gaps. Other types of entrepreneurship micro-business of food could be explored for future studies. Also, future research gap could establish a comparative study among different type of food micro-business entrepreneurship.

Moreover, this research was conducted in the small selected part of the developed country Sweden, Stockholm area; so other research could be conducted in other areas of Stockholm or other cities of Sweden to show comparison.

Also, this research could be operated in the developing country and could be used to make a comparison between develop and developing countries outcomes of this sector of business.

It would be also important to conduct research study on the customers that would provide much more insight of these food micro-entrepreneurial businesses in this pandemic situation.

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Appendix

The questions we have provided to the respondents are as follows:

1. What are some important factors/motivators of setting your food business?
2. What do you consider important in your food business?
3. How was your business conditions compared to the present Covid-19 situation?
4. What are the factors that affected your business due to pandemic situation?
5. Do you have to maintain certain rules and guidelines for the pandemic situation?
6. Did you know about any support offerings for your micro-business from the government?
7. What are the changes you have implemented after the pandemic at your business?
8. Do you use any food delivery services in your micro-business?
9. Do you use any marketing activities to promote your business?
10. What steps have you taken to sustain your business due to the pandemic situation?
11. What are the factors does the present pandemic situation affect your business?
12. Are you using any promotional activity to increase your business after the pandemic?
13. What steps have you taken to improve your business condition after the pandemic?
14. What is your future projection of your business considering the on-going pandemic?
15. What would be your suggestions to the new comers in this type of food business?

The combined answers of the questions collected from the respondents through our short interviews are presented below:

1. What are some important factors/motivators of setting your food business?

Answers: Most of the respondent's answers that especially prior knowledge and skilled workforce are very important factor for this small food shop business; as this business is one kind of fast food business and need swift delivery to the customers are one of the important factors along with the good healthy and tasty food. A respondent from Indian food shop expressed that location is one of the prime important issue of this business; as this will help in the revenue generation due to good location to bring many customer. Another respondent

from the same type of food shop expressed that they have started their business as they

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perform this type of business from many years and it's a family business. Some respondents of Kebab shop and Korv shop also express that they are operating on their family business. One respondent from sushi shop explained that the aesthetic value of the food is one of the prime important things along with fresh and quality food. Another respondent from Thai food shop also express the importance of aesthetic value along with the authentic taste of the Thai food, as these are one of the great attributes to attract the customers. From the korv and kebab food respondent also mentioned that the shop location and customer service are equally important aspect of this business along with other attributes; as more the people are passing by or located in the busy or commercial area, the more chance to get the passing customers through good service and quality food. Another important factor was come up from most of the respondents that reasonable price also help attract the customers along with the cleanliness aspects of the shop. People are quite health concern in this developed country and they appreciate to consume healthy food from decent & clean shop environment. Few respondents also mention that in this business one could enjoy freedom or be independent at their work; which is another important aspect of this business that one could make improvement at their work independently.

2. What do you consider important in your food business?

Answers: Most of the respondents express one similar point as important in their business that the quality of the food that the customer enjoy and come back again to their shop. The satisfied customer would bring more customers through sharing their good experience of food. Few respondents from the Korv and Kebab shops expressed that their location of the shop plays important role as their customers are usually the passing customers near to their shops. Kebab shops respondents said that the local community of the people also plays important role in their business as they offers “Halal” foods; in their locality majority of Muslim people resides. This creates good impact on them to get the Halal food as being Muslim. Few Sushi and Thai shops respondents expressed that their authenticity of food and the aesthetic beauty with rich flavour of the food plays important role in their business. Indian food shops respondents explain that their popular spicy food is quite famous among the customers and their tasty food plays important role in their business.

3. How was your business conditions compared to the present Covid-19 situation?

Answers: Most of the respondents expressed that before pandemic business conditions were comparably better as the people movement was normal; but after the pandemic started the people movements get restricted which did affected their business. In the normal times, people use to gather more frequently and also sometimes in large groups to visit our shops for their food which is now at the pandemic times absent as most of the people take precautions in their movements. Specially, in the summer times and other festivals times they used to visit the food shops quite often to celebrate the enchanting weather and festivals with their family members, friends and large groups which they have missed in the last summer along with the festivals. As an effect of this situation the shops sales and revenue got lower than expectations.

4. What are the factors that affected your business due to pandemic situation?

Answers: Most of the respondents expressed that mainly their sales revenue dropped severely due to the pandemic situation. Apparently this has affected their whole business health. The restrictions to preventing the pandemic imposes lot of movements barriers to the people which eventually affected in the food business. Other than that, sometimes shortage of employee's at work was common due to the longer sick leave to prevent spreading the disease at work. Few respondents expressed that their supply got affected at the starting of pandemic crisis due to the unavailable stock position but gradually this problem has been sorted out carefully. The operational system of the shop sometimes got affected due to installation and maintaining proper guidelines of the pandemic. Due to the lower sales and customer availability, most of the shop owners required some changes at their operational system of the shops. Majority of the respondents expressed that they needed to lower the employees of the shop due to the lower sales generation and cut down the cost of the business as much as possible to lower the loss for sustaining in business. Though, they express their sorrows to let go some trained employees who were working there for considerable amount of time but the situation didn't permit them considering the higher cost of operation and less revenues. Some of the shop owners said that they need to involve them in the shop operations to help out to lower the cost. Some shop owners said that they need to revise their operation hours due to the lower presence of the customers; but before the pandemic those late hours also bring good amount of sales & revenues. Some of the shop

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owners explained that they need to lower their material stocks due to the dullness of the sales and avoid creditor's payment pressure.

5. Do you have to maintain certain rules and guidelines for the pandemic situation?

Answers: All the respondents expressed that they have to maintain the rules and regulations of the pandemic situation given by the government agencies to help preventing the spread of the disease. For this reason they have to implement few changes and make awareness among the customers through different signs and symbols. Also, regular inspection occurs from the government agencies to check the condition of the shops maintenance for prevention of the pandemic situation.

6. Did you know about any support offerings for your micro-business from the government?

Answers: Most of the respondents express that they have lost considerable business due to the pandemic situation as this situation is prevailing the entire year without any sign of possible solution. Throughout this year, their business revenues are quite lower than expected which was quite higher before the pandemic started; especially in the summer times and the festivals times of the year. Lack of people gathering due to the pandemic situation has slow down the customer outcome at the food shops. Though, few respondents expressed that the government has taken good initiatives for the small business to provide subsidies and maintain huge public awareness programs rather than imposing complete lockdown like other EU countries; these initiatives helped them to overcome the initial impact of the pandemic and they could re-organize their business strategies slowly to outrun the early panic situation of the pandemic. General population movements became stable slowly with the public awareness programs and business conditions were able to cope up with current situations and they pledge their gratitude to the government support. Also, the supply chain distribution were managed carefully to maintain the business operations. Though, the sales & revenue expectations were not achieved specially at the first half of the year; and they need to take initiatives at their shop operations to cut down their cost to lower the losses. Later half of the year showing good progress in the business sales & revenue due to the customer normal movements and some careful implementations of the business operations; but again the threat of pandemic still yet to overcome as there is still no complete solutions came out to prevent this situation.

7. What are the changes you have implemented after the pandemic at your business?

Answers: Most of the respondents told that they need to implement some changes according to the government instructions at the pandemic situations. They need to comply the social distancing system that each customer has to maintain at least around 1.5-2 meters distance while coming to the shop or standing in the line to order their food. They need to implement hand sanitizers for the customers to sanitize their hands; they need to use sanitizers or other type of similar materials to clean the cash counters & other counters where they serve or keep food as well as they have to maintain the shop cleaning process more to avoid the pandemic spreading conditions. They need to install the awareness signs at the shops for the customers to avoid pandemic contamination and address verbally to the customers to maintain these rules implied by the government agencies. Moreover, they have to implement the maximum crowd gathering up to maximum 50 person as per the imposed instructions by the government; and which has now become even less for the restaurant business, though it's not applicable for these small food shop business. Also, some of the shop owner said that they need to implement the safety conditions for their shop employees by implementing plastic hand gloves, mask and hand sanitizers for operation at the shop. Few shop owners express that due to the down trend of sales and lower demand at the current pandemic situation they need to lower the staffs which they feel uncomfortable; but they didn't had other choices to save the business losses.

8. Do you use any food delivery services in your micro-business?

Answers: Most of the respondents expressed that they use the food delivery services in their business. But two respondents from the Kebab shops explain that they don't use the food delivery services yet as they focus on the local community as their target customer. They expressed that they have taken initiatives to install the food delivery service in the upcoming year to boost up their sales. Also, few Kebab shops expressed that they don't use the food delivery system as their customers are walking customers and they prefer their food at the shop or while walking through the shop while the food is still warm. They also said that they are thinking about the food delivery service installation in their shops.

9. Do you use any marketing activities to promote your business?

Answers: Most of the shop owners expressed that they don't use much marketing activity in the media; though they use social media to communicate and create awareness to the people regarding their food services and this process also helps them promote their business. Few respondents explain that they create trust among the customers with their quality food, quick and proper customer service, regularly open in the week as in being with the customer always; and these positive attributes make the trust stronger to create good & strong personal networks with their customers and near ones to make awareness of the food services which actually helps in their marketing process to reach more customers and maintain good customer services to sustain the existing customers along with creating new interested customers. One of the Kebab shop respondent expressed that they use "Halal" food materials at their shop to prepare the final food serving which has quite good impact on the majority Muslim population around their area; and it creates good trust among the Muslim customers in the surrounding area which makes the customers to visit more frequently due to they find their comfort & reliabilities on the shop food services. Thai shop and Sushi shop respondents expressed that their food service with its authentic taste & aesthetic value creates good trust on their customers along with good customer services; and they believe that this gained trust usually helps them to maintain healthy networks with their customers both in face-to-face communication and in the social media platform with the customer's valuable responses. Positive experiences also create within these activities through the customers who share their good experiences with their peer groups to visit & experience the food services. Another respondent of the Korv shop expressed that due to their busy location of the shop, quick food delivery with quality food helps to gain the trust of the customers along with the long service history enables them to win the trust of the customers; as they are in this business for quite long period to create a long list of positive customers who tend to visit their shops quite frequently.

Also, most of them use Food delivery services which also help them in the marketing processes. Other than that, few of them use small flyers with the newspaper or postal delivery for their food services to cover certain areas of customers. Majority of the respondents expressed that they offer special offers at the launch period to attract more customers with

their special prices & food offerings to attract customers. One customer of the Kebab shop expressed that they have plan to introduce gift coupons of different prices to advertise and attract more customers. In this pandemic period, the food delivery services became very popular mode of shopping among the customers to get their food; few Korv and Kebab shops did not installed these service yet but the explained that they will introduce it shortly due to the extended reach of these services. Most of the respondents expressed that the location of the shop is very important factor along with quality food in affordable price and good customer services issues; that's why major marketing activities are less effective than the personal network uses issues. So, that's one of the reasons that they didn't undertake much marketing activities to attract large sections of customers.

10. What steps have you taken to sustain your business due to the pandemic situation?

Answers: Most of the respondents addressed that they have to take many necessary steps for the businesses. Firstly, the installation of hand sanitization system for the employees and the customers along with the awareness of the minimum physical distance maintenance, more cleanliness of the food serving & preparing area to avoid any type of contaminations were prime importance issues. Some of the Korv and Kebab shops yet to install the food delivery systems in their business which they have planned to implement shortly as the food delivery services become quite popular in this pandemic situation.

Others expressed that they have tried to cut down the operating cost to a minimum level to avoid higher losses as most of them were facing lower sales revenue due to less customer's outcome than expected throughout this year; some of them have to cut down few employees to lower the cost in this uncomfortable business conditions. Few respondents express that they have to lower their inventory levels due to lower sales condition and to avoid pressure of payments of the suppliers. Most of the respondents emphasize to enhance the personal and social networks to promote their business services maintaining good trust among the customers. They are less interested to mass marketing process in this pandemic situation which they feel less affective at the moment. Though, they encourage the food delivery services as the most effective services to encourage sales in this pandemic situation.

11. What are the factors does the present pandemic situation affect your business?

Answers: Most of the respondents expressed that mainly the less presence of the customers have affected their business at the pandemic situation. People are maintaining social

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distancing and other preventive measures to mitigate the outbreak of the pandemic. Other than that, sometimes operations of the shops fall under problem due to the sick leave of the employees. Also, in this present time we cannot encourage the sick employees to come at work to prevent spreading the pandemic situation. Few other respondents from different type of shops explains that the supply gets affected at the beginning of the pandemic as there were less stock available due to the unforeseen crisis of the pandemic. This present condition of pandemic also effects the customer's perceptions to change for their health.

12. Are you using any promotional activity to increase your business after the pandemic?

Answers: Three respondents from Indian food shops expressed that they are offering discounts in their food offerings at their a la cart menu, which are the food they offers in their shops. They prepare food for the people for lunch and dinner time which the customers will take by themselves from the shop table as much they could eat. The same offerings were expressed by another two Thai shops respondents. Apart from these, they offer discounts on the delivery menu which is order by online services through food delivery services.

Other respondents from Kebab, Thai, and Sushi shop expressed that they offers discounts on the delivery menus.

The Korv shops and few Kebab shops expressed that they are using promotional leaf lets through newspaper delivery services and offerings some discounts with those leaflets.

Most of the respondents expressed that they are using the online services and social media promotional advertising to make notify the customers about their food services.

13. What steps have you taken to improve your business condition after the pandemic?

Answers: Most of the respondents expressed that they have taken the cost minimization policy at their business to lower the losses. Apart from that, they have focused more on the delivery services which has become quite popular at the time of pandemic as people are prefers using the delivery services for their food purchase. Also, all of them expressed that they have to install and maintain the new guidelines of the pandemic at their shop as it is very important and mandatory to operate their business. This process has made them to some cost involvement but they also believe that these systems are quite necessary for the customers and employees safety. They have focused to make the people awareness with some notification symbols at their shops for the customers to follow some general instruction for the pandemic situation.

14. What is your future projection of your business considering the on-going pandemic?

Answers: Most of the shops respondents have expressed that they project better future for their business. Though, they have gone through a tough time in the present pandemic situation, but slowly they are managing to learn to improve their business. Also, they have appreciated the food delivery services which are helping them to increase the sales in this difficult time of COVID-19. Also, they mention that the government support from many different initiatives to support their business was helpful to sustain in the business. These initiatives from the governments have lowered the usual tax regulations on them, their rent policy and the financial support issues help them in this crisis period of pandemic. Most of them are quite optimistic that they would make better business in the upcoming future as the vaccination program has already started which will make the overall situation of the pandemic under control. Also, they expressed that the government did not impose the lockdown condition like other European countries which help them to sustain in their business. Though, few of the respondents have expressed their concern on the present spreading of the pandemic situation and worried that it may lead to further restrictions on the general people and could lead to lockdown situation in Sweden.

15. What would be your suggestions to the new comers in this type of food business?

Answers: Most of the respondents didn't want to express their thoughts in welcoming new comers in this food business at this pandemic situation; as they have explained their feelings of under achieving their business targets at the present conditions. Though some of them expressed their positive attitude to welcome others to enter the food business as the demand of this business will always sustain and hope to grow along with the growing people needs & wants; but they have also advised that one should have proper knowledge and prior experience to enter into this food business as they need to follow many criteria to operate the food business, specially some basic criteria of the government agencies.

Moreover, they have advised that the location of this type of food business is prime important to attract customers with their quality food servings along with decent price. Few respondents suggested that the newcomer of this business would wait for a while to observe the present pandemic condition to reach to a safer zone. At present time, there have been possibilities to escalate the pandemic situations due to newly arrived pandemic symptoms which are creating

higher infection spreading and mortality rate rise. Though, they are optimistic regarding the recent activation of the vaccination programmes which are hoped to bring some positive changes in this pandemic situation. Still, there need to be some specific observations required to get a positive outcomes of these vaccination effects; but most of the respondents were quite optimistic that they would have a positive business in the coming year as things would become normal as their business have been in the last pandemic year time.