

BUILDING THE CHICHARON INDUSTRY IN THE PROVINCE OF BULACAN: BASIS FOR STRATEGIC PLAN

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Paper Received: 22.12.2023 / **Paper Accepted:** 18.01.2024 / **Paper Published:** 19.01.2024

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Abstract

The province of Bulacan has long been praised for its traditional treats and is well-known for its rich culinary legacy. The delicious, crunchy snack known as chicharon made from deep-fried pork rinds is one of the most well-liked local goods. Bulacan's chicharon business has expanded dramatically over time, bolstering the region's economy and cultural identity. But even as the sector expands, there are a number of issues that need to be resolved to maintain its competitiveness and sustainability over the long run.

The purpose of this paper is to offer a thorough framework for creating a strategic plan to establish a viable chicharon sector in the province of Bulacan. The first section looks at the cultural and historical significance of chicharon in Bulacan, emphasizing its status as a culinary legacy and a cause for community pride. The study examines the chicharon industry's present situation by examining its supply chain, major players, and market dynamics. It also lists the opportunities and problems that chicharon producers must deal with, such as those pertaining to distribution, production, quality assurance, and market accessibility.

The chicharon industry in Bulacan stands to gain a lot from putting the suggested strategic plan into action, including better product quality and consistency, a wider consumer base, better living conditions for chicharon producers, and increased awareness of Bulacan's chicharon as a high-end regional delicacy. Additionally, developing a sustainable chicharon sector can support the province's general economic growth, generate job opportunities, and protect the rich cultural legacy connected to this well-known snack.

This study concludes by highlighting the significance of creating a strategic plan to establish a viable chicharon sector in the province of Bulacan. The chicharon industry may prosper and continue to be a point of pride for the neighborhood by resolving the difficulties and seizing the potential. Policymakers, industry stakeholders, and other pertinent actors can work together to advance the chicharon sector through the suggested strategic plan, which will ensure its long-term vitality and contribution to Bulacan's economic and cultural landscape.

Keywords: Chicharron Industry, Strategic Plan, Business.

Introduction

Food innovation refers to the development of existing products and processes or the creation of new products and processes in the food supply chain. While food innovation is undertaken mostly by food suppliers and manufacturers, it is also important to consumers and the overall food supply market. Adapting to new environments and markets allows for the agri-food sector to remain relevant and grow over time (Sylvain Charlebois 2022).

Over the last decade, the food sector has faced a constant increase in competition in a context of continuous and fast changes involving also people's

lifestyles and eating habits. Furthermore, it aimed at evidencing any peculiarities and emphasizing the innovation, which is an important key to competitive advantage in this sector, applying an efficient performance analysis (Simona Alfiero; Alessandro Banadonna et al., 2017). The food sector is important for the Global economy (USDA 2017), in particular the European economy (Food Drink Europe, 2016). In this sector, innovation is considered a strategic problem solving tool to meet targets and is divided into incremental and radical, where incremental is more popular because the customer tends to maintain set food habits (Arcese et al., 2015). Sometimes, tradition is combined to Innovation e.g. in the case of strategies on family

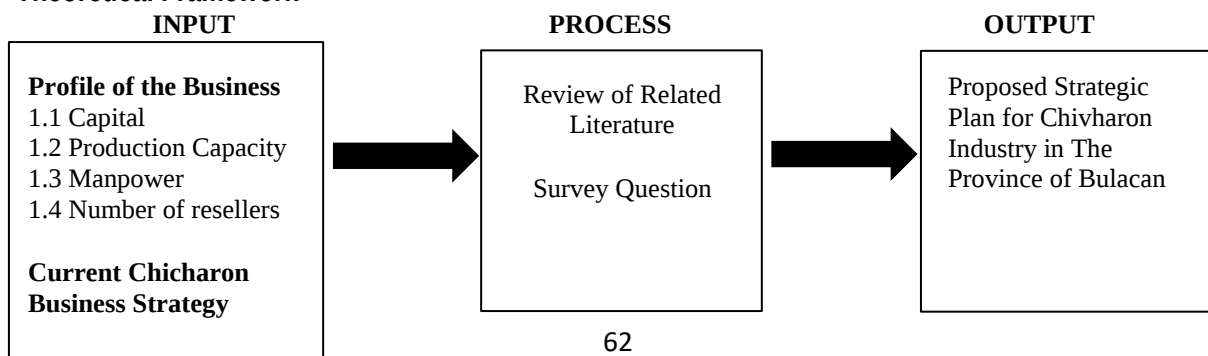
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businesses (Vrontis et al., 2016).

Municipality of Sta. Maria in Bulacan is known as the Chicharon Capital of the Philippines, it started as early as 1900s and is still working up until now Sta. Maria even has a Chicharon Festival every month of February. Since up at that point more regions within the Philippines created their unique rendition of chicharon. Whether for appetizers, dishes or even as a component or ingredients, there are countless methods for Filipinos to consume chicharon (Roberto., 2022). Chicharon has transformed from its initial form to many sorts at different locations in the Philippines. Chicharon from Sta. Maria, Bulacan, is now available in a microwave-safe version. In Camiling, Tarlac, the Philippines, pig belly is used as the primary component while creating chicharon instead of pork rind. In addition to pig, additional meats that may be used to make chicharon include cattle, buffalo, frog, bug, chicken, and other farm animals. Additionally, the size of chicharon before the Spanish colonial administration was less than it is today due to its new percentages, which range from nibbles to around 3 feet long (Cosido, I. C. P., et al., 2015). Most frequently, deep fried pig belly or pork rinds are used to make chicharon, however, there are currently other varieties available, produced not only from fried pork parts but also from mutton, beef, and chicken. Even vegetarian options are available. Chicharon is a very popular snack in the Philippines. This crunchy snack is the best and one of the tastiest snacks out in the market today. Chicharon are usually dipped in spiced vinegar that compliments the snack and have a better experience. However not everyone can enjoy the usual Chicharon which was made with pork. Vegans and health conscious people are sceptical of consuming this kind of snack since it is a high calorie snack, this is why newly discovered flavors will be made available to the commercial market. But how can you create a great Business proposal in the field of chicharon industry?

In accordance with this, the goal of this study is to explore and discover Chicharon Industry and propose potential answers and solutions in developing business proposals. This study will significantly affect businesses as it serves as a reference in putting and developing a business plan.

Theoretical Framework



Hamel and Prahalad argue that Western companies focus on trimming their ambitions to match resources and, as a result, search only for advantages they can sustain. By contrast, Japanese corporations leverage resources by accelerating the pace of organizational learning and try to attain seemingly impossible goals. These firms foster the desire to succeed among their employees and maintain it by spreading the vision of global leadership. This is how Canon sought to “beat Xerox” and Komatsu set out to “encircle Caterpillar.” This strategic intent usually incorporates stretch targets, which force companies to compete in innovative ways. In this McKinsey Award-winning article, Hamel and Prahalad describe four techniques that Japanese companies use: building layers of advantage, searching for “loose bricks,” changing the terms of engagement, and competing through collaboration. Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad - The researchers linked strategic intent theory to the study because one of the three fundamental parts of the strategy formulation process is strategic intent. In the cognitive process from which strategies develop, strategic intent interacts with strategic assessment and strategic choice. Strategic intent is mainly concerned with the company's goal and thus the targets of strategies. Our study focuses on building the Chicharon industry in the province of bulacan for the foundation of a strategic plan. This theory helps the study to thoroughly understand and implement what should be done to help Chicharon industry foundation of strategic plan.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study was described using the input-process-output system (Input-Process-Output system) approach. The profile of the Chicharon business in Bulacan and its current business strategy are illustrated in Figure 1. In order to create the output-the suggested strategy plan for Chicharon Industry in Bulacan-the input will be gathered and examined using relevant literature, interviews, and survey questions. The provided information will be used as a starting point to evaluate the present state and obstacles facing the Chicharon industry in order to decide whether this might be used as a strategic plan. Surveys, interviews, and pertinent literature will be used to process the variables; the desired outcome will then be determined by analysis of the collected data

Statement of the Problem

The overall objective of this study is to explore and determine the business owner's strategy and consumers thoughts about promoting and innovating chicharon.

It seeks to answer the following questions;

1. How may the profile of business be described in terms of
 - 1.1. Capital
 - 1.2. Production Capacity
 - 1.3. Manpower
 - 1.4. Number of Resellers
2. What are the current business strategies of chicharon makers in the province of Bulacan in terms of
 - 2.1. Product
 - 2.2. Price
 - 2.3. Promotion
 - 2.4. Place
 - 2.5. People
 - 2.6. Process
 - 2.7. Physical Evidence
3. What inferences can be drawn from the findings of the study?

Scope and Limitations

The research was centered on comprehending Chicharon industry along with developing a strategic plan. Marketing chicharon successfully and developing business. Also, to learn more about chicharon's history, production technique, and the finest ways to consume it. The target number of respondents was thirty (29) who live in Bulacan. The researchers were then reviewed the data provided, which served as the foundation for constructing and proposing a business plan for the chicharon industry.

Methodology

Methods and Techniques of the Study

To gather and carefully examine the study's findings, the researchers used mixed-methods research methodology. When conducting mixed-methods research, two study designs are used: a qualitative design that contains descriptive data and a quantitative design that includes numerical data. In contrast, a qualitative design was used to determine the differences between different Chicharon businesses in terms of capital, production capacity, manpower, and number of resellers by conducting interviews with selected participants. Quantitative design was used to gauge respondents' opinions about the current business strategies of chicharon makers in the province of Bulacan in terms of product, price, promotion, place, people, process and physical evidence. We'll use prescriptive analysis to examine and understand these descriptive data. By using a variety of data collection techniques, the researchers were able to

use mixed methods, which improved the study's findings.

Population and Sample of the Study

The researchers employed the Chicharon Makers of Bulacan to obtain the required information. Purposive sampling procedures were used to select the respondents for this study in a non-probability convenient manner because it only includes one random selection and requires little prior population knowledge, the purposive sampling approach was also used in this investigation. It is the most suitable sampling for the research of all the non probability sampling methods.

Research Instrument

Three-part questionnaires were employed by the researchers to collect the required information. In the first section, Chicharon makers' profiles were requested, in terms of capital, production capacity, manpower, and number of resellers were all entered into a tool profile that the researchers constructed. The respondents' current business strategies of Chicharon were ascertained in Part II. The respondents' perspectives, however, will assist the researchers in gathering data that will be pertinent for the researcher and the chicharon industry in formulating strategic plan.

To acquire pertinent information for Part III, semi-structured interviews with the tiny Chicharon enterprises were necessary. Additionally, the interview concentrated on recommending a formed company plan with the backing of the information obtained from Parts I and II.

Validation of Instrument

To further guarantee that the complete set of questions is reliable and objective enough to be used as a tool for data gathering, the researchers also seek approval from experts in hospitality management and research. Each validator received a copy of the problem statement and the questionnaire, and they used the content validity ratio approach to determine which questions are necessary, useful, and not vital. The questions were checked throughout the validation process to remove excessive and irrelevant ones that wouldn't help answer the study questions.

Data Gathering Procedure and Data Processing

To assess and analyze the respondents' views and perceptions in-depth, the researchers conducted a mixed method study. The information required for the study was gathered using a survey, questionnaire, and interviews. Small Chicharon enterprises were asked to participate in the interview, and a total of 30 respondents responded to the survey. The questions in the used questionnaires have been approved by consultants in

hospitality and research to guarantee that they are pertinent and correlate with the study. The interview was conducted physically, while the survey was carried out online via Google Forms. The letter of approval was provided to the respondents simultaneously with the questionnaire since the data collection was carried out online. After gathering the necessary information, it was summed up, tabulated, and analyzed by the researchers with assistance from a statistician. Ideally, the findings would address the study questions and support the put out proposed theories.

Statistical Treatment

The researchers and statistician employed following statistical procedure to assess and analyze the data gathered:

Frequency and Percentage Distribution - The frequency count or percentage of the respondent's profile was ascertained using this statistical analysis. This is also used to determine the proportion of participants who have heard of and are familiar with Chicharon. The process of producing a percentage frequency distribution begins with assessing the total number of findings that will be represented, and is carried out by counting the total number of observations within each point of data or set of data points, and followed by dividing by the total number of observations. each data point's sum of all percentages related to the initiative.

Formula: $\% = f/N \times 100$

Table 1: Frequency Distribution Table of the Capital of the Respondents

Capital (in pesos)	Frequency	Percentage
1,000 – 10,000	3	11.1
11,000 – 20,000	5	18.5
21,000 – 30,000	6	22.2
31,000 – 40,000	4	14.8
41,000 – 50,000	6	22.2
60,000	1	3.7
85,000	1	3.7
100,00	1	3.7
5 million and above	1	3.7
Total	29	100

Note. Table 1 in the Frequency Distribution Table of the Capital of the Respondents. Based on the result, most of the respondents were having 21, 000 to 30, 000 and 41, 000 to 50, 000 pesos capital with the percentage of 22.2 followed by the capital of 11,000 - 20,000 with a percent of 18.5.

Where: % Percent
f = Frequency
N = Number of Cases

In contrast, the mean was applied to determine the respondents' perspectives on creating a business strategy for the chicharon industry.

Formula: $X = \Sigma x/N$
Where: X = Mean
 Σx = Sum of all scores
N = Number of cases

Ethical Considerations

During the survey and interview, researchers will keep the respondents' personal information, such as their names, ages, and other details, confidential in accordance with identity and data privacy. Each respondent will receive a letter of motive from the researchers outlining how all data will be used exclusively to conduct educational research and for no other use. Additionally, researchers are not allowed to support any participant's personal viewpoint. Only the data's information and findings will be collected.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of Business

This provides an overview of the company in order to ascertain the background knowledge that is required which are, capital, production capacity, manpower, number of resellers.

Capital and cash are not one and the same. Capital can be stronger than cash because you can use it to produce something and generate revenue and income (e.g., investments). But because you can use capital to make money, it is considered an asset in your books, something that adds value to your business. Amanda Cameron (2021)

Table 2: Frequency Distribution Table of the Production Capacity of the Respondents

Production Capacity	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 50 packs	6	20.7

51 – 100 packs	4	13.8
101 – 150 packs	4	13.8
151 – 200 packs	3	10.3
201 – 250 packs	4	13.8
251 – 300 packs	4	13.8
300 – 500 packs	1	3.4
400 – 500 packs	1	3.4
5,000	1	3.4
10,000	1	3.4
Total	29	100.0

Note. Table 2 shows the Frequency Distribution Table of the Production Capacity of the Respondents. Based on the result, most of the respondents were having a production of 1-50 packs with a percent of 20.7% followed by 51 to 100, 101 to 150, 201 to 250 and 251 to 300 packs with the same percentage of 13.8%.

Traders are people who work by buying an item which is then resold at a higher price so that they

benefit from the item. Along with the advancement and sophistication of technology, individuals experience major changes in terms of telecommunications and transactions. Most of the people choose to use electronic means and internet media as a medium for their activities. The use of cellular phones is also increasingly widespread, not only limited to communication via telephone but also used for communication via the internet. Wijaya, S. A., Hanum, S., & Khaddafi, M. (2021)

Table 3: Frequency Distribution Table of the Manpower of the Respondents

Manpower	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5 staffs	8	27.6
6 – 10 staffs	7	24.1
11 – 15 staffs	6	20.7
16 – 20 staffs	6	20.7
21 – 25 staffs	2	6.9
Total	29	100.0

Note. Table 3 shows the Frequency Distribution Table of the Manpower of the Respondents. Based on the result, most of the respondents were having a manpower of 1-5 or 27.6% followed by 6-10 staff with a percent 24.7% while the lowest is 21-25 staff or 6.9%.

The return on dollars invested in such efforts. Sweet, J. (214) In the present era of globalization, strategic manpower management is the most critical factor for attaining competitive advantage, which among others involves handling several strategic themes. Diversity management (DM) has been recognized as one of the key themes in the contemporary discourse on strategic human resource management (HRM) Saini, D. (2017) Improved organizational productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, are major organizational objectives any organization must pursue to survive in today's highly competitive corporate environment. This, however, depends

mostly on the quality of employees who must transform available inputs into needed outputs in order to achieve stated objectives of the organization. To do this, operational employees must possess the necessary skills, Knowledge, abilities and competencies. The need to have well qualified, flexible and proactive employees who will help organizations to meet their ever growing challenges of competitiveness, technological advancement, market globalization and improved productivity has made manpower training and development a very vital human resources practice which no manager can ignore in the present scenario of our business world. Today, manpower training and development are at the heart of employee utilization, commitment, improved productivity, motivation and growth, and very essential for improved organizational productivity. Nwaeke, L. I., & Obiekwe, O. (2017).

Table 4: Frequency Distribution Table of the Number of Resellers of the Respondents

Number of Resellers	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 15	14	48.3
16 – 30	7	24.1
31 – 45	1	3.4
46 – 60	2	6.9
61 – 75	1	3.4
n/a	4	13.8
Total	29	100.0

Note. Table 4 in the Frequency Distribution Table of the Number of Resellers of the Respondents. Based on the result, most of the respondents were having a reseller of 1 - 15 with a percentage of 48.3% while the lowest of them got 3.4% or 61-75.

As a reseller, the platform generates profit from sales of a supplier's product to customers, serving as an indirect channel for the supplier; as a marketplace, the platform shares its customer access

and facilities with the supplier, and also charges a usage fee to receive a fraction of the supplier's profit. The paradigmatic example may be Amazon.com, which acts as a platform retailer (Amazon Basics), and also as a platform for suppliers. Playing the role of marketplace, and not itself holding inventory, a platform retailer like Best Buy can significantly increase its assortment of new product categories with very low risk. Wang, L., & Song, H. (2021).

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in Terms of Product

Product	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Our business launches a new product as a strategic decision to continue growing and expanding.	4.00	0.85	Agree
The business product are safe and reliable	4.24	0.79	Strongly Agree
Product has a big gap to the competitors.	4.21	0.62	Strongly Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Product. Based on the computed result, the respondents

“strongly agree” that “the business products are safe and reliable” and “Product has a big gap to the competitors”.

Price	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The company provides quality products at reasonable prices.	4.55	0.57	Strongly Agree
Frequently asked the quality to meet the price	3.83	1.14	Agree
Consumers' willingness to buy the product, without considering the price	3.62	1.24	Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Price.

Based on the computed result, the respondents “strongly agree” that “the company provides quality products at reasonable prices”.

Promotion	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Utilizing social media platforms effectively to engage with the target audience?	4.45	0.57	Strongly Agree
sales promotion such as gifts and discounts?	3.83	1.14	Agree
“Buy one, get one free” (also called BOGOF), is known by my loyal customers	3.62	1.24	Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Promotion. Based on the computed result, the

respondents “strongly agree” that “Utilizing social media platforms effectively to engage with the target audience”.

Place	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The establishment is easily located.	4.17	0.80	Agree
Raise a branch where places are mostly visited by tourists	4.28	0.65	Strongly Agree
Establishment is where the target market is.	4.45	0.57	Strongly Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Place. Based on the computed result, the respondents

“strongly agree” that “Raise a branch where places are mostly visited by tourists” and “Establishment is where the target market is”.

People	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The employees of the company are kind and respectful.	4.66	0.55	Strongly Agree
Have an attentive staff that assists customers' needs	4.48	0.63	Strongly Agree
Have trustworthy staff in the business	4.28	0.80	Strongly Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of People. Based on the computed result, the respondents

“strongly agree” that “The employees of the company are kind and respectful”, “Have attentive staff that assists customers' needs” and “Have trustworthy staff in the business”.

Process	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The company offers speed delivery and services.	4.34	0.57	Strongly Agree
Errors in the process can be rarely seen.	4.25	1.14	Strongly Agree
The store operates at convenient hours.	4.23	0.70	Strongly Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Process. Based on the computed result, the respondents

“strongly agree” that “The company offers speed delivery and services”, “Errors in the process can be rarely seen” and “The store operates at convenient hours”.

Physical Evidence	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Business objectives are driven primarily by customer satisfaction?	4.76	0.44	Strongly Agree
Have a comfortable physical store?	4.79	0.41	Strongly Agree
A clean establishment/kitchen to provide the consumer a safe product	4.59	0.50	Strongly Agree

Note. The table above shows the Mean and Standard Deviation Distribution of the Current Business Strategies of Chicharon Makers in terms of Physical Evidence. Based on the computed result, the respondents “strongly agree” that “Business objectives are driven primarily by customer satisfaction?”, “Have a comfortable physical store?” and “A clean establishment/kitchen to provide the consumer a safe product”.

First, it is an important tool used to enable one to see that the marketing manager’s job is, in a large part, a matter of trading off the benefits of one’s competitive strengths in the marketing mix against the benefits of others. The second benefit of the marketing mix is that it helps to reveal another dimension of the marketing manager’s job. All managers have to allocate available resources among various demands, and the marketing manager will in turn allocate these available resources among the various competitive devices of the marketing mix. In doing so, this will help to instill the marketing philosophy in the organization. The marketing mix is a powerful concept because it makes marketing appear simple, provides for the separation of marketing from other company operations and the delegation of marketing work to specialists; and - the components of the marketing mix can influence a company’s competitive position. (Jain, 2013) Marketing mix is the most fundamental concept of marketing which is a set of controllable marketing tools that a company uses to create a desired response in the targeted market. American Marketing Association presidential address coined the term, “marketing mix”, in 1953. Marketing Mix’ is also referred to and known as the Four P’s i.e. product, price, place of distribution, and promotion. These are the primary ingredients of a marketing strategy, and as a means of translating marketing planning into practice. McCarthy (1960) was first to suggest the four P’s. Muala & Qurneh (2012) revealed that later on researchers by adding three more elements have explained seven elements which are their 7Ps i.e. product, price, place, promotion, Personnel, Process and. Physical

Evidence. This study explains these 7Ps, which are the elements of Marketing Mix. Khan, M. T. (2014).

Conclusion

In conclusion, handling these issues with a planned and strategic approach is essential to developing a sustainable chicharon sector. This essay offers a strategic plan with concrete steps to improve the chicharon industry’s sustainability and competitiveness in Bulacan. These programs include putting in place certification procedures and quality standards, helping small-scale producers of chicharon by providing resources and training, promoting and bolstering market connections, and encouraging creativity in product creation and advertising tactics. In addition, the strategic plan highlights how crucial it is for academic institutions, industry groups, government agencies, and other stakeholders to work together to develop an environment that supports the chicharon sector.

The chicharon industry in Bulacan stands to gain a lot from putting the suggested strategic plan into action, including better product quality and consistency, a wider consumer base, better living conditions for chicharon producers, and increased awareness of Bulacan’s chicharon as a high-end regional delicacy. Additionally, developing a sustainable chicharon sector can support the province’s general economic growth, generate job opportunities, and protect the rich cultural legacy connected to this well-known snack.

This study concludes by highlighting the significance of creating a strategic plan to establish a viable chicharon sector in the province of Bulacan. The chicharon industry may prosper and continue to be a point of pride for the neighborhood by resolving the difficulties and seizing the potential. Policymakers, industry stakeholders, and other pertinent actors can work together to advance the chicharon sector through the suggested strategic plan, which will ensure its long-term vitality and contribution to Bulacan’s economic and cultural landscape.

Recommendations

The based on the study resulting in contributed to the development of the following recommendations:

1. Considering the difficulties in the chicharon industry, I advise you to do an in-depth study of your present capital, production capacity, and manpower. Analyze the quantity of resellers and look for ways to grow this network. Analyze the quality of your products and think about improving or diversifying. Examine your price plan to make sure it's competitive. Promote more effectively by focusing your marketing efforts. By carefully choosing locations, you may maximize the dissemination of your goods and reach a larger audience. Make an investment in employee training to improve customer service. Simplify procedures to boost productivity. In order to draw in and keep clients, lastly concentrate on enhancing the tangible representation of your brand, such as its presentation and packaging.
2. Investigate local financial institutions and government assistance programs in Bulacan for potential capital infusions, and consider collaborations with local investors interested in supporting regional businesses.
3. Future researchers could broaden the study, as it currently solely focuses only to Bulacan. by adding more study-relevant elements to expand the notion and observe its capacities in order to produce more.
4. Expanding the sample size and range of participants could facilitate a replication of the study. Given that convenience and quantitative research were used in the study's construction sampling strategy, which other researchers might employ to further collect and compile pertinent responses that will enable them to produce a more accurate findings presentation.
5. In order to gauge and broaden the concepts and data and provide more important results, researchers intend to enhance the study by adding more questions for data collecting. It is also feasible that in the future, a research study that is better or more accurate might be created by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to extend gratitude to the University for the support us in their research work.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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