

**Tasfia Azad**

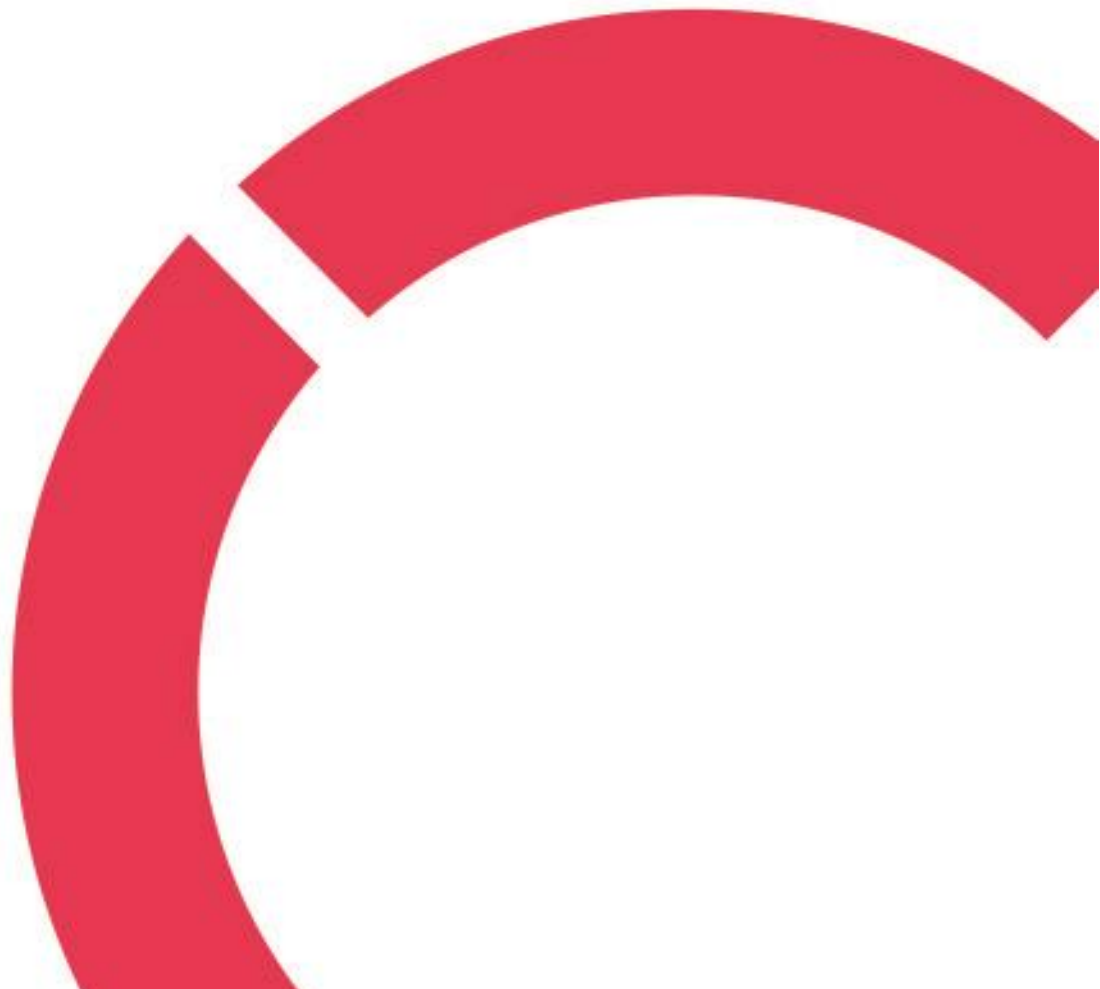
**A comparison of restaurant business in Finland and Bangladesh during the pandemic.**

**Thesis**

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**ABSTRACT**

<b>Centria University of Applied Sciences</b>	<b>Date</b> April 2023	<b>Author</b> Tasfia Azad
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<b>Name of thesis</b> A comparison of restaurant business in Finland and Bangladesh during the pandemic		
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<p>The purpose of the research was to conduct a comparison and find differences of the restaurant industries in Finland and Bangladesh. The purpose of this thesis was to take a more in-depth look at the restaurant industries in Bangladesh and Finland and compare their states during the Covid-19 pandemic. The second objective of the study was to determine the characteristics that set the two countries apart from one another. In the hospitality business, both countries had seen a great deal of competition and hardship. The researcher tried to gather data in order to get an understanding of the challenges that were faced by both countries and the strategies that were used to solve those challenges. The researcher gathered data and tried to figure out the reasons to the success of Finland's restaurant industry, which prevented it from going bankrupt. The researcher's goal was to conduct an analysis of this data in order to come up with solutions to problems that need to be fixed in order to raise the standard of the restaurant industry in Bangladesh, with the hope that Bangladeshi restaurants would eventually implement these tactics.</p>		

**CONTENTS**

<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1The Aim and Objective.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2 Background.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Methodology.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1. Research design.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.2 Data Collection.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.2.1 Data Collection Using Document Review and Literature.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.2.2 Data Collection by Interview.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3. Situation of Restaurant Business in Finland and Bangladesh during pandemic.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3.1 Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on restaurant industry in Bangladesh.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.1.1 Food delivery service.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.1.2 Hygiene.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3.2 Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on restaurant industry in Finland.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3.2.1 Government restriction and regulation.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.2.2 Food delivery.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.2.3 Hygiene.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.2.4 Food hygiene.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.2.5 Seating.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4. Comparative analysis and discussion on the difficulties that arose during the Pandemic.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.1 Economical sector.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4.2 Social sector.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.3 Technological sector.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4.4 Transportations.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4.5 Governmental sector.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>5. Research findings via Interview.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5.1 Research finding in Finland.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5.2 Research finding in Bangladesh.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>6. Factors which Bangladesh can adopt from Finland.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>6.1 Maintenance of hygiene.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>6.2 Upgrading technology.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>6.3 Government rules.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>7. Discussion and conclusion.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>8. References.....</b>	<b>29</b>

**APPENDICES**

**FIGURES**

**FIGURE 1:** Increased food delivery in Finland (Statista, 2022) .....16

**FIGURE 2:** Effect of Covid-19 on restaurant business.....19

## 1 Introduction

According to WHO COVID-19 is the official name for the coronavirus disease of 2019. Up until now (03.04.23), 760,360,956 people have been infected by covid 19 (WHO 2023). The coronavirus pandemic caused chaos on most of the food and beverage industry. One industry to be devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic was the restaurant industry (Jones 2020). Despite the crisis, some industries, such as pharmaceuticals, healthcare, grocery, delivery services, gaming, and netflix, were growing. On the other hand, tourism, airlines, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, and sports which were outdoor based faced additional challenges as a result of the pandemic (Dua et al. 2020). Businesses had to adopt new methods in order to connect with the customers as well as to reduce the risks of COVID-19 and keep businesses running.

Because of the complexities of the COVID-19 epidemic, several governments around the world, including Finland and Bangladesh, had implemented lockdowns and limited activities and services by decreasing the number of activities, seats, and individuals gathered in one location. This was an initiative to prohibit the coronavirus from easily transferring from individual to individual in a crowded environment. (McCloskey et al 2020). This, however, had a significant economic impact, especially on businesses that relied on customer service and engagement.

Restaurants were high-risk area for disease transmission since it could easily be spread among the interaction of big groups of individuals. It was easy to get infected by COVID disease being in a place filled with people even after wearing masks. As a result, several restaurants and bars had closed, while others were fighting to keep their doors open while customers had chosen to stay indoors out of fear of contracting the disease, in addition to regulatory limitations. (Klein 2020). As a result, the restaurant industry's growth had slowed, and restaurants were making safety plans in order to survive the pandemic.

Finland and Bangladesh, like other countries, had been impacted by the COVID situation, particularly in the restaurant industry. The restaurant industry is linked with a variety of other suppliers, depending on the type of food served, such as beverages, fresh vegetables and meats, napkins, and so on. It's not just food that's linked here; there's a lot more to it. During the pandemic, both Finland and Bangladesh faced difficulties. The author's goal with this research was to learn about the difficulties that were encountered and what can be learned from those difficulties in order to improve in the future.

## 1.1 Background

The most important aspect of our way of life is nutrition. People all over the world have developed a taste for outdoor dining over time. (Walker, 2021). The first eatery was established in Paris in 1765 (Bednarz, 2015). Thus, the restaurant and food industry started to grow its way into the world economy. The question might come to mind: what is a restaurant, and how does it affect the economy? A restaurant is a place where cooked food and drinks are served to the customer. The restaurant industry has a significant impact on the local economy, resulting in financial flows between countries. It is impossible to ignore the importance of the food service industry in terms of employment when one considers the number of employees, from bartenders to dishwashers, who are essential to the operation of a full-service restaurant as well as the number of meals that are served each day. When more people work, the government earns more taxes, which are used to improve a country's standard of living as well as the citizens. It is essential to the survival of the regional economy to support neighbourhood restaurants, whether using carryout or delivery services or even eating in-person when it is possible and as customers grow more at ease with the experience. (O'Hara & Pirog, 2013).

Many restaurants contribute to the local economy. Restaurants contribute significantly to the local economy by paying rent, property taxes, and utility bills. Restaurants are utilizing local suppliers to create farm-to-table menus, resulting in more money flowing into the local community. Furthermore, restaurants often take advantage of the nearby grocery store for food and other supplies, and delivery vehicles stop at nearby convenience stores for gas. Also, a percent of the workers whom they recruit will be spending their earning inside the community, which will pump even more money into the economy of the community. Restaurants owners make deposits at local banks, which contributes to the continued expansion of the economy. It is beneficial to the local economy through the supplier and in the workplace to favour locally established and operated restaurants. (O'Hara & Pirog, 2013)

Every town often has a few restaurants that are known by everyone. They not only know the location, but they also know the people who work at or own it. Since it creates a culture of community, the restaurant is respected, on the same level of importance to the neighborhood residents as their own home's kitchens. A strong feeling of community is one of the factors that contributes to the widespread development of local and national businesses in some towns, which are known for their exceptional culinary offerings.

Food tourism has been becoming increasingly popular. People will go to great lengths, even planning journeys, in order to experience a certain restaurant's cuisine or dish. A city that has a strong restaurant culture has the possibility to become a destination for travelers just by itself. In this day and age, many bloggers are constantly on the lookout for good and unique food. In one night, a single review can make a restaurant famous. A good local restaurant can make an enormous difference in any town, especially when it comes to attracting visitors. Restaurants, in some ways, keep the economy afloat. During the pandemic all the restaurants were shut down to stop the covid from spreading. Restaurant is place for not only food but also socializing. Since Covid spreads though human contact restrictions were placed in order to control the spreading. During that time restaurants were shut down for some time during lock down which led to a huge loss and many owners had to permanently shut down.

## **1.2The Aim and Objective:**

The goal of this thesis is to identify the issues that both countries faced. As a developed country, Finland held on and managed to adapt to the situation and keep business running. Throughout this thesis, the author has expressed a desire for more assistance from Finland in identifying solutions to improve Bangladesh's restaurant industry. Future investor formation will be helpful to a successful business plan.

Research questions:

1. How was the restaurant business during COVID-19 in Bangladesh and Finland?
2. What difficulties arose to keep the restaurant business running during the pandemic in these two countries?
3. How did Finland manage to keep business running?
4. What can Bangladesh learn and adopt to improve the restaurant business?

To complete the aim of this research, the author has chosen one restaurant from each country and analyzed the situation.

The objectives of this research are:

1. Compare the problems that arose to keep businesses running during the pandemic and the strategies both countries implemented to keep businesses running.
2. Compare the government restrictions in two countries and how they may have impacted the restaurant industry.

### **Restaurant A**

This restaurant is in Jääkärintie 15, Helsinki called Restaurant Eira Plaza. There are two owners of this restaurant, both from different countries. It's a well-known pizzeria in the Jääkärintie area. There are a total of six people working in this restaurant, including the owners themselves. Their main food is pizza. This restaurant serves various kinds of pizza. The owners have a special pizza that is the signature of their restaurant. Along with the pizza, they sell different beverages. The restaurant is located in the middle of Helsinki. The restaurant is quite famous among the locals. The place is a bit small, but it used to be very crowded. They always had dine-in and takeout service. From the beginning, they have maintained the cleanliness and hygiene of the place and the food preparation. Most of the customers coming to this place are unmarried people and families having their lunch or dinner. Dinner time used to be the most rushed time for takeaway food. Through many difficulties, the owners managed to preserve their business very well.

### **Restaurant B**

This restaurant is situated in Mirpur, Dhaka. The name of the restaurant is Kath Badam restaurant. It's a family-owned restaurant. The restaurant was established in 2014. It's a very famous place for young people to hang out. They serve fast food like burgers, fries, cold drinks, coffees, set menu, different kinds of mini food platters etc. Over time, the restaurant has grown a lot. In the beginning, the owners used to work there, but now mainly the restaurant employees handle the workload. A total of 20 people work in this restaurant. The restaurant is located in the busiest place in Mirpur near the Dhaka cricket stadium. There are offices, a market, and schools nearby. They do not serve breakfast. Their opening time is at 11 a.m. The interior of the restaurant is suitable for hangouts and quick meals. One part of the restaurant is a smoking zone, and the other part has small tables so that a single person or a small group of people can quickly have their meal. Before covid their busiest times were at lunch and in the afternoon. Young people used to come there to hang out after school, and in the afternoon and during lunchtime, mostly office workers used to come here to grab food. They maintain hygiene and provide hand sanitizer to the customer when they enter the restaurant. In their washroom room, they usually keep hand wash as the customer could wash their hand before eating. During the Covid-19 situation they provided an alcohol pad, wet tissue, and sanitizer along with food. The owner also provided all the equipment to the workers of the restaurant. The selling percentage is reducing day by day.



The owners had lost a lot of money during the pandemic. If the situation continued for a little more time, then they would have gone bankrupt. Famous restaurants like theirs had managed to survive because they had other assets, but countless small businesses had to close their doors during the pandemic. They did not get any financial support from the government. They improve their online service. They also gave discounts and offered free home delivery sometimes. Most of the time covid effected people ordered food. But the delivery system was not smooth. Delivery man didn't want to go to effected area. Sometimes the area was restricted. Sometime customers complained about the food and the delivery system. But overall, it was helpful for customers, and they are satisfied about it.

## **2 METHODOLOGIES**

The approach employed in this study is highlighted in this section. Because the researcher's findings must be substantiated, it is critical for a study to explain the methodology used to generate the analysis. Furthermore, the researcher's suggestions will be informed by the analysis of the data or content that were utilized in the study, and disclosing the methodology used in the study might aid other professionals in critiquing the researcher's results. The additional advantage of describing the technique that was used that it enables other researchers who may think about performing identical research in other countries to repeat the same strategy and investigate whether the findings would be comparable, as well as the degree to which the results discovered by such studies vary from the results reported by this study. (Brannen, 2017). This would point to other research areas that future scholars may investigate if they wanted to compare the restaurant industry in other countries. This component of the dissertation begins with an overview of the research plan, followed by the technique utilized in finding literature and data for analysis and the researcher's approach to analysing the data collected.

### **2.1. Research design**

This section outlines the general approach for integrating the study's many components in a reasonable and logical manner in order to effectively address the research questions and challenges. This research aims to produce a comparative analysis of the restaurant business scenario in Bangladesh and Finland during the pandemic, with the goal of demonstrating how Bangladesh might benefit from Finland's experience. The research design is a plan that supplies the foundation from which the aspects of the re-

search develop with respect to the use of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The research design is offered in the study in the form of a plan. (Creswell & Creswell 2017). Both a remedy to the research issues that are being explored and a remedy to the proper methodological techniques to addressing those questions are the goals of research design. (Creswell & Creswell 2017) The study also logically incorporated all other components of research, such as equipment and assessment tools, data processing, and data collecting, in order to assist in properly confronting the research topic. This was done in order to aid. As a result, the selection of data collecting methods and data analysis methodologies is an essential part of the study design process in general.

For a thesis such as this one, having a study design is important since the authenticity of the thesis is dependent on the design that the researcher chooses to utilize. (Crick 2020). Having a study plan for a dissertation such as this one is vital since the originality of the dissertation is based on the design that the researcher decides to use for the dissertation (Brannen 2017).

In this research, the researcher relied on secondary research, primarily because it was difficult to conduct primary research. The researcher interviewed six people, including restaurant owners from both Finland and Bangladesh, in order to collect data. Four people, including restaurant owners, were interviewed during September–October 2021 in Bangladesh for the research purpose. There were 2 others, including the restaurant owner from Helsinki, who were interviewed in January 2022. The previous studies that had been conducted on the restaurant industries in Finland and Bangladesh would serve as the foundation for this research. Due to the focus on secondary research, this form of study is defined as qualitative. Qualitative research may be separated by its use of secondary sources. (Crick 2020). When designing studies, relying on secondary research means utilizing content and data from other sources, such as articles in journals and newspapers, as well as information from other research topics that had been subjected to peer review, such as the research topic that this research tried to find out. Other than the health restrictions that were necessary because of the health pandemic, another reason why this research preferred secondary research is due to the availability of sufficient data from a variety of institutions and journal articles that have examined the problem of restaurant business services in both Finland and Bangladesh. This research was conducted in Finland and Bangladesh. When a researcher chooses to do primary research, it would be possible to look at aspects or factors that provide comparable data. This might be done more than once (Brannen 2017). Another advantage of depending on secondary research in this paper is that it requires a shorter amount of time to complete than primary research does. This contrasts with the amount of time required to perform primary research. (Neuman & Robson 2020). If the researcher had intended to carry out primary research, they

would have needed to schedule enough time to create questionnaires or survey questions when appropriate, distribute those questions to respondents who had been chosen at random, determine which individuals would be participating in the study, and get approval from the appropriate authorities before working with specific entities. (Crick 2020). These procedures would need a large amount of time, which the researcher did not have at the time since it was not feasible. As compared to primary research, the use of secondary research results in much reduced expenses for the researcher (Crick 2020). This is only one of the many reasons why this is the case. The researcher chose to do primary research, they would be needed to pay for a selecting frame, set aside financial funds for planning and executing the generated survey, carry out fieldwork, collect and analyse data, and pay for the sampling frame. (Brannen 2017). The researcher lacks sufficient funds to do the research topic that compares restaurant business situations in two countries. Secondary research saves time since there is enough literature and data to analyse the areas the researcher chose as crucial to meeting the study goals.

## **2.2 Data Collection**

An in-depth assessment of the relevant literature was one of the strategies used, along with interviews and a review of the relevant papers that were already in existence. Research papers on the restaurant industry in Finland and Bangladesh, journals, magazines, and any other relevant sources such as websites and published theses were searched through to acquire the information that was required. This was done by researching and analysing the documents and material that was readily accessible. Any material that is relevant will be helpful in addressing the goals that have been specified. The purpose of the thesis, which is discussed in further detail in the first chapter, is to analyse how restaurant businesses were keeping up with the pandemic situation in Finland and Bangladesh and how the differences that exist contribute to enhancing restaurant business development in Bangladesh. Therefore, it was realized that each research method had a link to the objectives. The first objective of this study was to find out what the state of the business sector was, and the second objective was to analyse the challenges that were faced by businesses in both Finland and Bangladesh in order to ensure that they remained operational. The third inquiry was to discover how Finland overcame the difficulties and managed to keep company operations going. The last question was connected to the second and third questions, and its purpose was to discover strategies that may be used to enhance the standard of the restaurant industry in Bangladesh.

### **2.2.1 Data Collection Using Document Review and Literature**

Using internet resources detailing the pandemic's impact on the restaurant business in Finland and Bangladesh, the study questions were answered through the use of data collected from academic journals, papers, and other scientific and popular business media in Finland and Bangladesh.

### **2.2.2 Data Collection by Interview**

Interviews are frequently used as a means of collecting information. It's the standard for gathering trustworthy data for use in answering research inquiries. Structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (sometimes known as in-depth interviews) are all possible forms of interviews; the one chosen should be appropriate for the research's goals and methodology. This thesis will use a semi structured interview format.

Since there was a dearth of information concerning the epidemic in Bangladesh, interviews were split into two groups to acquire a more complete picture of the country's predicament. Since this study required accurate data, interviews were conducted. On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 the first interview was conducted in Bangladesh with the owner of Kathbadam as well as with the manager and one other staff. The second interview was conducted on December 12 in Helsinki with the owners of Eira plaza as well as one other staff member. The author conducted those interviews with all the interviewees by mutual agreement.

## **3 SITUATIONS OF RESTAURANT BUSINESS IN FINLAND AND BANGLADESH DURING PANDEMIC**

The significance of doing a comparative examination of restaurant business in Bangladesh and Finland during the coronavirus outbreak has been stated. To achieve this objective, adequate background information on the current COVID-19 disease was necessary. Consequently, this part will provide an overview of the course of the COVID-19 epidemic in Bangladesh and Finland, as well as its influence on the restaurant industry, including examples of regulatory limitations.

### **3.1 Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on restaurant industry in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh is a small country with high density of population. In 57,320 sq. mi, 162 million people are living in Bangladesh (Embassy of People's Republic of Bangladesh). On top of that Bangladesh is a developing country. Among these people many are illiterate. So, when the pandemic began many people did not understand the concept of COVID-19. Proper hygiene was not maintained, and the government was unable to formulate proper guideline as a result COVID started to spread fast and situation got out of hand.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on worker's economic security, including earning assurance, professional assurance, labour assurance, hiring assurance, and representation assurance, as well as uncertainty in the labour market and in the reproduction of competency. The coronavirus was an extraordinary crisis in all aspects of life. The development process may be minor compared to the budgetary crisis that the world experienced in 2008. Businesses with the ability, proficiency, and the community need income to manage and mitigate the effects of the public health and economic issues and this epidemic shed light on the nature and intent of business. (Vu, 2020).

During the outbreak, the restaurant and hotel businesses encountered tremendous challenges including layoffs, temporary store closures, protecting employees from COVID-19 infection at work, maintaining financial stability, and assuring family nourishment. Extremely unfavourable consequences were foreseen for the restaurant industry. (Bass et al, 2020). Over a million of workers, for example, chefs, waiters, kitchen assistants, helpers, dishwashers etc. were engaged in the hotel and restaurant industry. The risk of being out of work for all hotel and restaurant workers due to Covid-19 was unbearable. (Islam, 2020). There are more than 30,000 hotels and restaurants in Bangladesh, more than 10,000 of them are in the capital of Dhaka. According to Riaz Ahmed Khan, president of the Bangladesh restaurant owners' association, it was not possible to recoup such a huge amount of loss without any government incentives (Islam, S., 2020). Recreation and cultural expression are just two aspects of the restaurant business. This industry encompasses more people than just cooks, waiters, and chefs alone. In addition to this, it is intertwined with a huge network of distributors, including farmers, butchers, grocers, fishermen, cleaners, and a multitude of other professionals participating in the distribution chain. The central ecosystem was the center of attention for a wide variety of organizations. Every one of them was going through challenges of a size that nobody could have predicted. (Haider & Chowdhury, 2020). The epidemic caused by COVID-19 shed light on the uncertainty that has been affecting all parties involved, including business owners, staff, and, to a lesser degree, consumers. As a result of the

deterioration of the situation, the majority of the employees had been terminated, many had been allowed to take time off without pay, many have been placed on unpaid furlough, some had been compensated, and some were in the process of being rehired to facilitate the delivery of takeout orders. There were around 60000 restaurants all over the country amongst which 8000 situated in the capital area. Around 2.8 million people depended on these restaurants for their earning source. According to Imran Hassan, general secretary of BROA, 50% of the ownerships were transferred since the original proprietors could not survive and about 25-30% of the restaurants closed permanently after the initial wave (Hosain, 2021). During the first wave of COVID restaurants started to shut down. Lock down was established, people were scared to go out, supply chain got broken, there were no profits coming but utility bills were piling up, loans were made then eventually some businessmen had to let go of their staff. Also, some lost their business.

During the lock down supply of fresh food also got effected. There was shortage of fresh food supply as well as prices of raw ingredients increased a lot. All those sudden changes along with scared customers with no dine in service made survival very tough for all the restaurants owners. Even the most well-known restaurant owners got scared that they might have to shut down their business (Xames, Tasnim, Mim & Kiron, 2022).

### **3.1.1 Food delivery service**

Restaurant owners were required to pay commissions of between 35 and 40 percent to food delivery services such as FoodPanda, Pathao, and HungryNaki.

The firms were responsible for setting their own commission rates, even though they were only meant to charge for the delivery of the goods. According to the business standard companies needed to be placed under the authority of a centralized 10% commission. The association's leaders have submitted a request to the government requesting that it develop regulations for the rapidly growing meal delivery industry. (The Business Standard, 2021).

Imran Hasan had said to the newspaper that the association would request that food supply be halted to the firms if the commission is not adjusted at a rate that is rational and is determined by the standards.

Based on the restaurant owners' organization, there were around 60,000 restaurants located across the nation, with 8,000 of them restaurants being located in Dhaka. According to the findings of the organization, the proportion of restaurants that were offering online delivery services did not exceed 10 percent of the total number of eateries. (The Business Standard, November 2021).

During lockdown food delivery was permitted. But due to increased prices by the food delivery companies many restaurant owners could not afford that. Not all the restaurants had enough funds to start their own delivery services. So, it was difficult for those owners to make profit during the pandemic.

### **3.1.2 Hygiene**

Bangladesh is populated with many illiterate people. Most lower-class people did not care about basic hygiene. Many restaurants did not provide good hygiene at the beginning of the pandemic. There was no maintenance of cleaning or restriction on the gathering of people. (Bari & Sultana, 2021). In May 2020, during the lockdown, there was a news video on TV about an outbreak gathering in restaurants. The common people as well as the restaurant owners did not care about restrictions and distance maintenance. As a result, COVID spread like wildfire after that. Every day, thousands of people died after getting infected by COVID. (Bari & Sultana, 2021). Following the pandemic, the government decided to shut down everything and declare a state of emergency. Due to a complete lockdown, restaurant owners were forced to shut down their businesses. Due to lack of hygiene maintaining Covid-19 was spreading fast at that time. Restaurant owners did not strictly maintain the hygiene. Customers prefer good hygiene and quality over anything. Many restaurants failed to provide that as a result they lost customers which then lead to permanently shutting down the place.

### **3.2 Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on restaurant industry in Finland**

Since the population density in Finland is just 18 people per square kilometres the pandemic threat in Finland is not as great as it was in China or Italy (Worldmeters, 2020). In spite of this, Finland proceeded to put certain reforms into effect, although slowly. For instance, when there were already many confirmed cases, the Helsinki and Uusimaa Hospital District (HUS) decided that it was not necessary to test people who returned to Finland for COVID-19 (HUS, 2020). This was even though, according to THL, Finland had become close to the epidemic.

In March 2020, the government of Finland made the choice to act, which led to the issue of an order for the enforcement of the Emergency Power Act. This order was the outcome of the government's decision to act. It entailed carrying out the activities listed below: Shutting down schools, preventing outsiders from accessing healthcare institutions and hospitals, and capping the number of persons who may take part in public gatherings at no more than ten people each are some of the measures that have been taken by initiating preparations for the shutting of borders and the imposition of a two-week quarantine on anybody entering Finland from outside the country. As well as putting an end to the operation of establishments like nightclubs and restaurants, which are examples of venues in which it is difficult to preserve social distance. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2020).

The Finnish government decided to loosen certain restrictions when it became clear that the number of newly reported cases was beginning to fall. The number of individuals who may participate in a gathering was expanded to a maximum of fifty on June 1, 2020, and public spaces within buildings were made available. (THL, 2020). But, once the restrictions were loosened just a little bit, there was a return to the previous pattern of rising numbers of new cases. The Government of Finland then released an app which collected information on newly reported incidents. The program for mobile devices is designed to notify users if they have come into touch with someone who is afflicted with the disease. (THL, 2020). When the number of new cases continued to rise during the month of October, the Finnish government made the decision to impose further restrictions on businesses such as restaurants and pubs. The limits targeted opening hours as well as hours during which alcohol might be sold. (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2020). Finland understood that the impact of COVID-19 on business activity was considerable. Enterprise Finland's Talousapu counselling service offered help and advised to businesses with financial issues.

The epidemic of the coronavirus poses an unprecedented threat to the hospitality industry. Community lockdowns, social isolation, take-away restaurants, and other strategies were used to combat it. Temporary or permanent restrictions had emerged from grocery orders, travel, and mobility constraints. Many hospitality firms had closed, resulting in a huge drop in demand for enterprises that were allowed to stay in business. Almost every restaurant in Europe and many other countries was ordered to limit their operations to only take-out orders by April 2020. (Gorsoy and Chi, 2020.) Following that, restaurant operations differed depending on the number of COVID-19 instances documented in each country. Several restrictions were eased during the reopening process in Finland, although other limitations persisted, such as limited customer capacity and limited opening hours due to stringent social distance rules.



Restaurants and other catering establishments in Finland were subjected to two lockdowns during the period this thesis was being prepared. On April 19, 2021, eating and drinking businesses reopened. The second restaurant shutdown (8.3–29.3.2021) was a continuation of the first three-week closure (8.3–29.3.2021), and it took place in provinces where it was essential owing to the serious pandemic scenario. (Finnish Government, 2021)

Hotels, restaurants, taverns, theme parks, and amusement parks are among the services provided by Finland's hospitality business. Finland's hotel business contributes 2.6 percent of the country's GDP (MARA, 2020). Lunch is usually served between 11 a.m. and 13 p.m. at most restaurants. Dinner is provided starting at 6 p.m. Concerts and theatrical shows often start at 7 p.m., and some audience members will leave for restaurants at about 10 p.m. Foods unfamiliar to western tourists are seldom found on restaurant menus or in home cooking. Ethnic restaurants, such as Nepali, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Indian, and Japanese restaurants, as well as African and other continental eateries, had added to the growing number of options. In the evenings, beer and wine are served with restaurant fare. (Alho, 2010). The auditing of food control at the national level is coordinated by the Finnish Food Authority (Finnish Food Authority, 2020). Additional agencies include Valvira and Regional State Administrative Agencies, which are the regional state administrative agencies of Finland for welfare and health, respectively (Kuljus Consulting, 2020). Permits to serve alcoholic drinks, licenses for extended serving hours, and alcoholic beverage retail licenses are all issued by regional state administrative bodies in Finland. Valvira is a centralized national regulatory authority in Finland that reports to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. It is responsible for regulating issues pertaining to social welfare, healthcare, alcohol, the environment, and tobacco control. (Valvira, 2020). Anyone who wishes to operate a restaurant must collaborate closely with these three agencies as well as other Finnish authorities, depending on the task at hand.

### **3.2.1 Government restriction and regulation**

Considering the fact that the restaurant industry is one of several that has had severe challenges and difficulties as a consequence of the coronavirus disease, many businesses prefer to continue operations owing to the nature of their job, which likely increases the chance of transmission. As a result, the Finnish government enforced different limitations and regulations on restaurant businesses throughout multiple stages of the epidemic. From 2020 until 2022, depending on the COVID situation, the government changed the restrictions many times in order to keep the spread under control.

As soon as the state of emergency was declared, the administration sent a proposal to Parliament for a new act that would amend the Act on Accommodation and Catering Activities temporarily in accordance with Section 23 of the Constitution of Finland. Under the idea, customers would be prohibited

from entering restaurants and other companies that provide services related to food and beverages for a period of three weeks. The legislation would enter into force on March 8, 2021, and remain in effect until March 28 of the following year.

At that time period, customers could still buy meals to take out or delivered to their homes. In areas where the COVID-19 outbreak was in the acceleration or community transmission phase, restaurants and other establishments that provide food and beverages would be required to close. Restaurants that were only accessible to employees, as well as those that were not available to the general public, would be excluded from the shutdown. By decree from the government, distinct regulations regarding the scope of the applicable territories would be enacted. (Finnish Government 2021).

On April 9, the government published a draft plan on the timetable for lifting the restrictions (Finnish Government 21.04.2021). Starting on Tuesday, December 28, alcohol will not be served after 17.00, and businesses that primarily serve alcoholic beverages will be required to close at 18.00. Restaurants will also be required to stop serving alcohol at 17.00 but opening hours for customers with a COVID-19 passport could be extended to 18.00–20.00.

Customer seats in restaurants that primarily serve alcoholic beverages will be restricted to 50 percent and in restaurants serving food to 75 percent of their normal number of customer seats. All restaurants in Finland will be entitled to require customers to present a COVID-19 passport at all hours. ( [Finnish Government](#), 21.12.2021) "These restrictions will be in effect beginning March 1, 2022."The government has repealed the decree that restricts the activities of restaurants due to the COVID-19 epidemic. This indicates that limits on restaurants' opening and serving hours for alcoholic beverages, as well as restrictions on the number of guests and seats available to those customers, had been relaxed.

Limitations placed on restaurants would need reevaluation in the event that there was a shift in the epidemiological environment and a related increase in the amount of work done by hospitals. These restrictions were put in place to reduce the spread of COVID. The more people who are affected, the more money the government will lose, and the country's economy will suffer. In a way, these restrictions and regulations helped businesses keep running.

### **3.2.2 Food delivery**

Before Covid pandemic online food delivery services had already begun in Finland. As lifestyle was being changed people getting busy with their work. Getting food delivery at home was a blessing for

some customers. Customers were eager to pay greater rates than the standard costs in order to receive these unique delivery services, and they did so with little hesitation. (Gavilan et al, 2021). Throughout the course of this research, the innovations are appraised and dissected in order to understand the pattern and significance of innovations. During pandemic due to restrictions is impossible to eat at the restaurant. As a result of the needs during COVID-19, there had been a rise in the number of innovations in online meal delivery. Due to the restrictions placed on people's ability to physically move about, a great number of restaurants had been compelled to launch their own online platforms and make use of these platforms. Consumers were gravitating toward purchasing their food over the internet rather than going to the store itself. They did not have any concerns about the internet meal delivery. The worry about foodborne illness brought on by COVID-19 had been a significant factor in the growth of online food sales. Before pandemic food delivery was available to a limited area. But since pandemic hit food delivery companies started to extend their chains in every city.

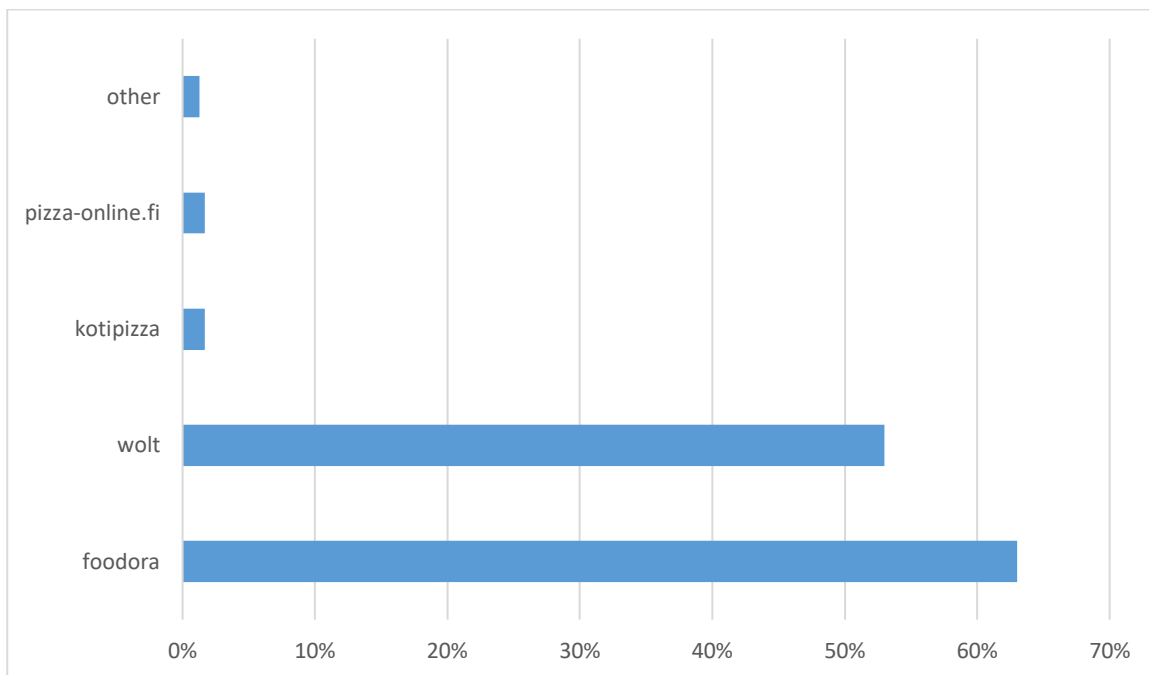


FIGURE1: Increased food delivery in Finland (adapted from Statista 2022)

This graph shows the result of the increase in food delivery. Delivery companies like Foodora managed to grow their businesses as well as their revenues throughout the pandemic. Restaurants were allowed to keep their shops open for takeout, and with the help of delivery companies, restaurant owners were able to keep their businesses running. Some restaurant owners even started their own delivery service with a little extra charge.

### **3.2.3 Hygiene**

It seemed unlikely that COVID-19 would spread via food or food packaging, as stated in the initial guideline on COVID-19 and Food Safety: Advice for Food Companies published by the World Health Organization (WHO 2020). Coronaviruses require a living animal or human host in order to replicate. However, COVID-19-infected droplets may adhere to and remain on surfaces, including cardboard and plastic. Recent studies have shown that the virus may live on plastic and stainless steel for up to 72 hours, on copper for up to four hours, and on cardboard for up to 24 hours, as cited by WHO (World Health Organization,2020).

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that the food sector strictly enforce hygiene and sanitation rules across the board, from production to distribution. Staff members who are ill or showing signs of COVID-19 should stay home from work to prevent the transmission of the virus to the food they handle, as per the regulations. A significant measure in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 is the maintenance of physical distance between members of the restaurant crew. The World Health Organization recommends that all restaurants keep a minimum of 1 meter between their servers and customers (World Health Organization,2020).

### **3.2.4 Food hygiene**

In light of the epidemic, the Finnish Food Authority (2020) had issued a directive on many food temperature exceptions. However, much caution is still required to guarantee that food is safe to eat. The personnel in a restaurant should always use clean and healthy hands while dealing with food, cooking tools, and dishes. If gloves are worn for protection, they must be clean. As the pandemic may caused a shortage of the typical disposable glove, businesses may need to provide their employees with alternative gloves. These gloves should be safe for use when handling food, especially when they are oily or

hot. The World Health Organization has issued a statement permitting the use of disposable gloves, with the caveat that they be replaced often. Cleaning one's hands in between glove changes is essential. Staff members are required to change their gloves after handling non-food items, such as doorknobs and trash cans. Gloves are used to keep dirt and germs from contaminating food. Therefore, the World Health Organization (WHO) advised that it not be utilized as a replacement for handwashing in the food business. Covid-19 is just as efficient on gloves as it is on any other surface. World Health Organization recommendations for safe food handling state that gloves should not be used in food service. It should not be forgotten that the use of gloves promotes the growth of germs on the hands, making frequent hand washing immediately after removing gloves all the more vital.

### **3.2.5 Seating**

Seating capacity restrictions were outlined in detail in the permit for selling alcohol in a restaurant. There was no quota placed on the number of people who may sit on the terrace. Diners in a restaurant needed space to move around easily. According to the Finnish National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), a minimum of 1 to 2 meters was suggested. Each diner at a restaurant must have their own table. It was acceptable to sit at the bar counter. However, establishments serving food must always keep in mind the need to keep a safe distance between themselves and their consumers. The law required this. Restaurants need to get their buildings and furnishings in order to contain the sickness. To reduce wait times and boost human interaction, eateries must also choose their customer service strategies. There's a maximum of 23 table distances that may be used with screens or Plexiglas. Table service or numbered queues at the counter are two ways that restaurants manage customer wait times. Crowding was to be avoided if at all possible. This is also true for the total number of diners there at the same time. When it starts to rain outside, the terrace seating at a restaurant must be removed from the equation (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland,2016).

## **4. Comparative analysis and discussion the difficulties that arose during the pandemic**

This part endeavoured to provide a discussion based on the information gathered by the researcher through interviews and available literature. In addition, the researcher consulted existing literature to

support the arguments made here. The section's goal is to highlight the key parallels and contrasts between Bangladesh and Finland. The difficulties that both countries went through had been divided into 5 sectors in order to get better understandings.

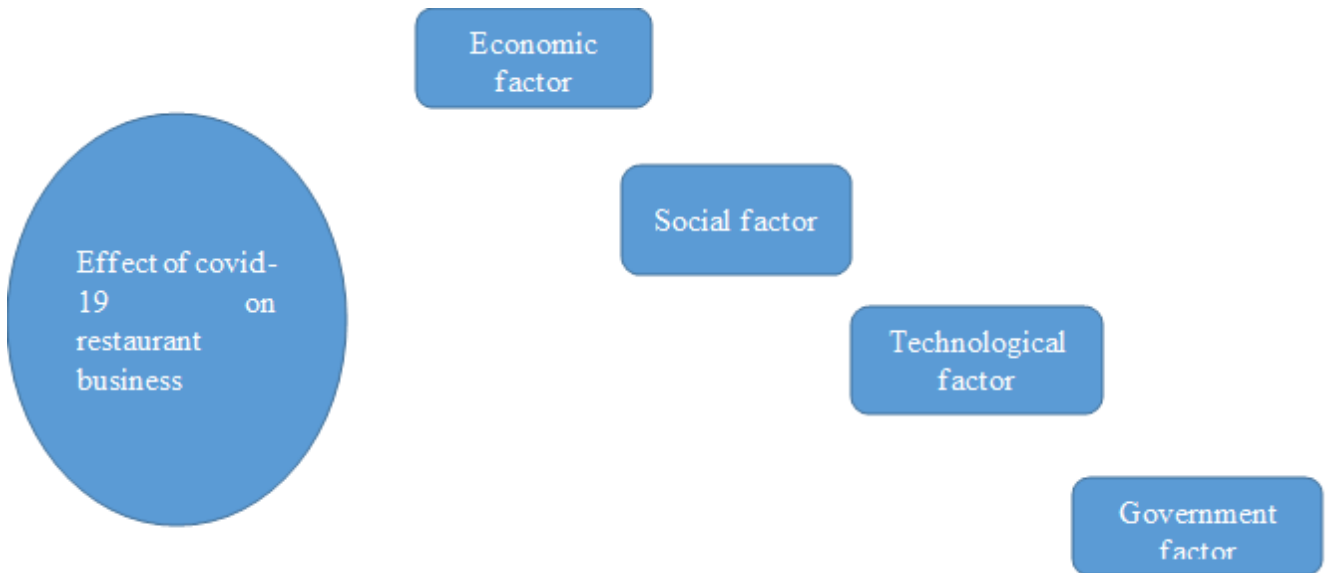


FIGURE 2: Effect of Covid-19 on restaurant business

#### 4.1 Economical sector

As a result of the recession, a significant number of employees lost their jobs in both nations. Some local businesses went out of business for good. People were not aware of this situation; in point of fact, as people got more stressed, there was a decline in the demand for food served in restaurants.

Costs skyrocketed in Bangladesh as a result of a lack of government regulation over the market price of ingredients, which had a negative impact on the restaurant industry there. In contrast, Finland's government instituted stringent policies to maintain uniform pricing in order to avoid price fluctuations.

The significant portion of Finland's fresh food comes from other parts of Europe, China, and India.

During the first wave, there was a considerable rise in the costs of exporting goods.

While Bangladesh has availability to a wide variety of fresh foods, the vast bulk of the country's other commodities are brought in from India. The Indian government maintained a closed border for a sig-

nificant period of time, which had a significant and negative effect on the economy of Bangladesh, notably the hospitality business. The doors were permanently locked at a great number of little restaurants. Since so many restaurant owners were forced to shut their establishments, banks stopped providing loans to individual customers. It resulted in a rise in Bangladesh's unemployment rate, a problem that has persisted to the current day.

## **4.2 Social sector**

In addition to being a place to eat, a restaurant provides an excellent setting for mingling with a variety of people. In today's day and age, throwing a party or getting together with friends at a restaurant is easy. It is far more convenient to meet people in a restaurant rather than to have them come to your house to spend time with you. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the illness was most often spread from person to person during social events. As a consequence of this, social events were discontinued, which had an effect on the company. The eateries were closed for the night. If there are no clients, there cannot be a successful company. Even though the restaurants were open for business, dine-in seating was limited throughout the lockdown. The vast majority of people were hesitant about going out to dine. More time and money had to be invested in order for restaurant owners to maintain the required level of cleanliness, which was important for both their personal safety and the protection of their customers.

Even before Covid-19 spread, restaurants in Finland, which is a sophisticated nation, have always adhered to a certain quality level. The level of cleanliness that the process required could be readily maintained in this location at the time. On the other hand, Bangladesh, which is still expanding, does not yet have healthy hygiene practices. Tiny restaurants with cheap costs and catering to people with lesser means maintained only the most minimal standards of sanitation, which led to a dangerous environment at the time. As a direct consequence of this, fewer people went to such sites. Many avoided going out to restaurants as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak because there is not a widespread understanding of the need of maintaining proper cleanliness in Bangladesh. Work done in offices and education received online also had a huge influence on the economy. Customers who work in offices and students make up the bulk of a restaurant's clientele most of the time. These two types of customers were responsible for the majority of the company's revenue. These customers had left by the time the school and office had shut their doors. Without customers like them, a restaurant would not be able to turn a profit.

## **4.3 Technological sector**

The idea behind a restaurant is to simply go there, sit down, and eat. Getting takeaway is an additional option. Prior to COVID, food delivery services were not all that common. The delivery method was implemented prior to COVID, but it wasn't common across most of the nation. Delivery was accessible not too far away. Although several restaurants had websites or social media accounts, not all of them were frequently updated. During the conference, there was a sharp surge in online orders. Everywhere had the cashless payment system set up. Online ordering and meal delivery businesses based on apps saw a rise in popularity throughout the outbreak. At addition, the government promoted home delivery overeating in restaurants.

Most restaurants in Finland only offered take-out services; delivery services were rare. Both meal delivery services Foodora and Wolt were established in 2014. Prior to COVID, only these businesses used a smartphone app to deliver food. Not everyone wanted to spend more money to have food delivered to their home. People typically went to a restaurant and ordered food on their own. Additionally, not every restaurant had a partnership with these businesses. Food deliveries significantly increased during COVID. Together with them, all the restaurants teamed up. Some eateries, like Koti Pizza, even launched their own delivery services. Online payment systems were set up, and social media marketing increased. People received food delivery because they were unable to go out.

In Bangladesh, the situation was a little challenging. Well-known meal delivery applications include Pathao, foodpanda, and Uber Eats. People were using these applications to get meal delivery before businesses could offer takeout service. However, these businesses began to profit more from the eateries. Many restaurants were unable to associate with them because they could not afford to do so. The majority of clients did not have the option of using cashless payment because most people in Bangladesh do not have bank cards or mobile money. However, in order to save money, several restaurants started to accept phone orders or orders through Facebook sites, and many also created their own local delivery services. During this time, social media marketing grew more than previously.

#### **4.4 Transportations**

The efficiency of Finland's public transportation system is particularly impressive in the country's urban areas. Throughout the outbreak, public transportation options like buses, trams, the metro, and commuter trains were all accessible. There was not even a single point where traffic was backed up. Even traveling by vehicle was not a difficult endeavour. Because of the reliable public transportation in this area, there were never any problems with food delivery. There were no problems with the delivery being made by any method, whether it be bicycle, a vehicle, or public transit. Because of the effectiveness of the transportation, there were no problems with the customer's order being delivered on



time. In light of what had transpired, timing was of the utmost significance. When a customer places an order for food, they expect that it will be brought to their doorstep as quickly as possible and that it will still be warm and fresh when it arrives. If the transportation system is unable to fulfil all these requirements, then it will get poor ratings. Throughout the epidemic, transportation was an essential component.

Restaurants in Bangladesh regularly make use of bicycles as a mode of transportation for the delivery of meals. Motorcycles are sometimes provided for customers by restaurants and delivery businesses. Infrequently, one or two food delivery pick-up vehicles might be seen passing through. Just a small percentage of individuals in Bangladesh possess vehicles. The country of Bangladesh suffers from an underdeveloped public transportation infrastructure. In addition to this, the roads are in terrible condition and there is frequent congestion. As a result of this, riding a motorbike or a bicycle is the means of transportation that is the most convenient. Since delivery by motorcycle was rapid and simple during the pandemic, while delivery via bicycle took much longer, food had a greater chance of becoming cold. In addition to this, the eateries were required to accept orders within a certain price range. If the consumer lived considerably outside of such zone, there was not always the possibility of receiving food delivery.

#### **4.5 Governmental sector**

During a COVID epidemic in Bangladesh, operators in every sector needed to be prepared for action from the government. Many countries throughout the world have come up with a variety of proposals, legislation, and ordinances in an attempt to slow the growth of the virus. Unfortunately, owing to a lack of sufficient monitoring and decisions being made in a timely manner, such interventions are not always carried out effectively. This indicates that it is no longer of any use. A significant number of responders expressed worry that the disorganized closure of the government had a role in the fast spread of the virus. Because of this, there has been a prolonged lockdown, and during that time, restaurants have been forced to shut. As a direct result of this some restaurants went out of business totally. The owners of the restaurants complained that the government does not pay attention to them due to their small population and instead places a higher priority on the requirements of affluent businesspeople. The only thing that was needed of the local authority was to rigorously respect the health standards. In addition to this, they highlighted the need of maintaining personal hygiene and leaving enough distance between one another. Yet, owners almost never get financial assistance from the government during a pandemic.

Yet, the situation is rather different in Finland. The government came up with a variety of solutions and enforced a variety of laws, regulations, and guidelines in an effort to maintain control of the situation. The monitoring system for upholding the stringent restrictions was set up in the correct manner so that they could respond appropriately to the situation and prevent the virus from spreading immediately. These kinds of treatments may be carried out correctly with the use of appropriate monitoring and current decision-making. Respondents emphasized how important it was for the government to carry out the lockdown in an appropriate manner, which successfully halts the fast propagation of the virus. As a result, the time of the lockdown was not prolonged. In this scenario, restaurants were neither required to close down nor were they given the instruction to do so. They operate both their online and physical businesses in an efficient manner. The owners of businesses are another group that the government takes into consideration on a regular basis. In order for them to continue operating their company while dealing with the COVID problem, the government and the local administration required them to follow all of the hygiene and health procedures and provided them with financial help. The proprietor of the restaurant received a significant amount of financial assistance from the government.

## **5. Research findings via Interview**

For this research, the researchers interviewed total six people, including restaurant owners and staff members from each country to collect data for the research. For a better understanding of the paper, the researcher chose one restaurant from each country to compare the overall situation. The owners had clear idea of what difficulties they had gone through in order to keep the business running. The staff members were on the field dealing with customers and practical situations. Each person had individual role running restaurants which is why the author decided to collect data on their experiences.

### **5.1 Research findings in Finland**

Restaurant A is situated in a busy area of Helsinki. It's a pizzeria, and the main item on the menu is pizza, along with some drinks. There are two owners and four other people working in the shop. They have many regular customers, and their pizza is quite popular in that area. During the pandemic period, the owner faced numerous challenges. The restaurant, like all the other places, was temporarily closed at the start of the pandemic. But over time, they started to get back into business by following all the government restrictions. During this initial wave phase, a number of precautionary steps have been implemented in order to reduce the dangers posed by COVID-19. They include:

- Throughout their shifts, personnel should be required to wear face masks or other protective gear.
- Sanitizers for the hands should be placed around the eatery.
- Have a regular cleaning schedule for all surfaces that are exposed to consumers or delivery drivers.
- As customers are waiting for their orders to be picked up, the restaurant should have a sign up that indicates social separation.

Following the first wave, government restrictions varied depending on the circumstances. The owners strictly followed all the rules. Restaurant A had their own delivery system for their local customers as well as for collecting orders from Foodora and Wolt. They cooked their food and packaged it in a way that would keep it warm and easy to transport. The owner mentioned food packaging was the key to their steady business plan. Delivering the food while it was hot and not messy was the biggest problem they faced in the beginning. Their business was running very smoothly after that problem was resolved. The owner also mentioned that all the government rules helped all the restaurant owners keep their businesses running. They received government assistance and were able to keep their business running as a result. One of the owners mentioned "Compared to other countries in Europe, the situation in Finland was much better." We were receiving financial aid, and all the restrictions were maintained very well, which helped keep the spreading under control; therefore, we did not have to stay in strict lockdown for a very long time like Italy. "Yes, we did not have profits like before, but at least we survived the pandemic."

## **5.2 Research finding in Bangladesh.**

This restaurant is situated in Mirpur, Dhaka. This restaurant employs a total of 20 people in various shifts. Later, the first wave of COVID hit Bangladesh, followed by other countries around the world. But when it started spreading it had a bad impact. During the lockdown, everything was shut down. The restaurants were not given permission to reopen when the government did so for other companies. As a result, they suffered a loss of financial stability and were unable to make loan payments or pay employee salaries.

The technology has advanced during the Covid-19 pandemic, despite a few drawbacks. The pandemic encourages managers to employ robotics and artificial intelligence in their company operations (Zeng, 2020). The study's interviewee stated that the epidemic increased the popularity of online ordering

and app-based food delivery services. Additionally, the government promoted home delivery over dining in establishments. Restaurant proprietors are under pressure to create novel strategies and expand on product development. Respondent to the interview indicated that before the pandemic, he was the person in charge of meal service at his restaurant. Despite this, he was able to make use of the food delivery services during the epidemic that were made available via the applications Food Panda. His company was managed entirely via the usage of several programs.

Government intervention is the typical situation for all sectors in the COVID-19 pandemic. To stop the spread of the virus, governments established various laws, rules, and directives. But occasionally, these interventions are not carried out correctly due to a lack of competent oversight and timely decisions, which contradicts their effectiveness. Respondents emphasized that the government's improper implementation of the lockdown led to a further spread of the virus. As a result, the fallout led to a longer period of lockdown, during which eateries were compelled to close, completely ruining the industry. The restaurant B owner stated that:

They were simply required by the local government to properly follow the hygiene, social distance, and health guidelines. However, during the pandemic, the restaurants owners rarely receive financial assistance from the government.

## **6. Factors which Bangladesh can adopt from Finland**

In Bangladesh and Finland, the study discovered numerous problems in the restaurant industry during the pandemic. By concentrating on Bangladeshi eateries, it is clear that the owners received no financial assistance from the government. The cost of food ingredients was high at the time. It was extremely challenging and expensive for them to carry on with their business throughout the epidemic because they didn't even receive any financial assistance. Because of this, managing their restaurant business was challenging. Another additional cost was the delivery method. The owners of the restaurants were rendered impotent for all these reasons. Additionally, the general public's financial condition was dire, which prevented eateries from receiving as many orders as they had before the pandemic. They had less earnings. They were unable to pay the staff properly or offer adequate amenities. They were forced to lay off several workers as a result. Many people lost their jobs. The result was a significant obstacle to economic growth.

However, the government in Finland gave the restaurant owners their complete backing. As a result, Finnish restaurant owners successfully maintained operating their establishments. They were forced to lay off some workers simply to preserve social distance. However, they were few in number, and Kela

at the time paid their unemployment compensation. Residents of Finland got government assistance even in the absence of employment. Depending on the circumstance, the government also maintained rigorous laws and regulations. As a result, the Finnish government was in charge during the pandemic. At the same time, the delivery of the food was very seamless because of good technology and a robust transportation infrastructure. It was admirable how the Finnish government assisted the operators and staff of the restaurants.

Workers from Bangladeshi restaurants were required to seek for employment outside during the lockdown, after they were fired from their workplaces during the crisis. They had fought so hard to keep themselves alive. They were not capable of living up to the tough criteria within the given conditions. The authorities mishandled the implementation of the lockdown, which resulted in the virus being able to more quickly and extensively propagate. As a direct consequence of this, the country has been under lockdown for a long period of time and eating places have been forced to shut. The event had a significant negative impact on the company's finances.

### **6.1 Maintenance of hygiene**

Food is not the only thing that attracts customers, a good environment, good hygiene and quality is to be considered too. Hygiene is an important fact in restaurant business. Nobody will spend their money in a place where quality and hygiene are not maintained. Good practice of hygiene is important for each individual because diseases spread from unhygienic places which can latter cause pandemic like covid.

Finnish government has always been strict about hygiene sector even before the pandemic which help the country to maintain a balance. By maintaining hygiene in the food sector restaurants were able to keep their place open for delivery.

The government of Bangladesh needs to implement proper sanitation procedures in every restaurant. The government of Bangladesh ought to make restaurant proprietors aware of proper hygiene practices and encourage them to educate their employees on the subject, for those proprietors to be able to deal with a situation like the one involving covid if it occurs in the foreseeable future. The government should be more conscious of the need of training people to be clean. The proprietors of restaurants are responsible for providing their staff with training on how to maintain cleanliness like regular inspection, sanitizing cooking tools and maintaining personal hygiene of the employees. These points need to be properly maintained in every restaurant in Bangladesh. Also, government should make rules for everyone to maintain cleanliness.

## **6.2 Upgrading technology**

Online delivery has seen a rise in popularity all over the world since the covid epidemic first started spreading. That saves both time and effort and is handy. After a hard day of work, many people would rather have their food delivered to their homes than go out to a restaurant. The role that technology plays in all of this seems significant. Food delivery was one of the most critical aspects to consider while the epidemic was going on. Restaurant owners in Finland were able to keep their businesses afloat with the assistance of modern technology by implementing online ordering and delivery services for their customers. Even after the outbreak, people are still ordering meal delivery, which is now seeing an increase in demand.

Another one of Bangladesh's most popular services is the delivery of meals. Nevertheless, due to the fact that Bangladesh is such a densely populated nation, the apps that are used to place orders need to undergo more development in order for the company to achieve its goal of attracting more customers from all regions of the country. It is inevitable that a restaurant will fall behind the competition if it depends only on its own delivery system. Consumers may place orders regardless of how far away they are from the business since apps provide them access to a broad array of options from which to choose and allow them to submit those orders. In Bangladesh, where there is a very high population density, there is a bigger diversity of options to improve one's financial gain. This is because of the large number of people in the nation. The greater the population of a place, the greater the number of potential customers. If the technology in Bangladesh can be brought up to date, there is a strong likelihood that restaurants will be able to grow their earnings, which would, in turn, allow the economy of Bangladesh to develop.

## **6.3 Government rules.**

The government is the institution that is responsible for the most important influence to an economy. During the epidemic, the government of Finland moved extremely quickly to make policies that would stop the disease from spreading without closing down the country's business. According to the regulations and guidelines that were issued by the authorities, everything was operating without a hitch. These guidelines were the single most crucial factor in the company's success. The government was successful in containing the covid population and maintaining business as usual. The government even

provided cash assistance to those who were in need of it. Because to the actions of the Finnish government, there was not a significant amount of money made, but there was also no catastrophic loss of money.

When confronted with challenging circumstances, the government of Bangladesh might develop the practice of keeping to strict regulations. Even after the epidemic is over, the government should continue to enforce some common regulations and limits in order to assist business owners in operating their companies efficiently and to offer direction for the growth of the economy.

## **7 Discussion and conclusion**

In this part, the author will describe the most important discoveries from this investigation. There were 4 research questions for the entire thesis. How was the restaurant business during COVID-19 in Bangladesh and Finland? What difficulties arose to keep the restaurant business running during the pandemic in these two countries? How did Finland manage to keep business running? What can Bangladesh learn and adopt to improve the restaurant business? The objectives of this research were: Compare the problems that arose to keep businesses running during the pandemic and the strategies both countries implemented to keep businesses running and compare the government restrictions in these two countries and how they may have impacted the restaurant industry.

To complete the aim of this research, the author studied available literature, books, articles, and journals as well as chose to conduct interviews with 2 restaurants from both countries to get better understanding of the situation and collect data.

In this study, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the restaurant industry were investigated. The research's findings illustrate the real-world experiences of restaurant operators in Bangladesh and Finland. As a result, it is discovered that restaurant enterprises were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in four ways, with the economic impact being the most severe. These five areas are the economic, social, technological, transportation, and government. Additionally, it was discovered that the restaurant industry underwent significant upheaval, including the growth of online delivery services and social estrangement. They were managing and adapting to all the changes while still having to run their enterprises.

As a developed country Finnish government took proper measurements to prevent COVID spreading by maintaining strict restrictions. Finnish government also provided financial aid to everybody. Finnish government observed situation and took proper actions depending on that. The idea was to keep the virus spreading in control in order to keep business running.

Bangladesh faced a lot of problems during the pandemic but as a developing country, they managed quite well to recover from the covid effect. The country is still recovering. If the government provides strict guidelines and keeps maintaining those rules in the future maintains those rules in the future, Bangladesh can survive better if there is any disaster to come. Bangladesh can learn a lot from Finland on this matter.

The researcher hopes that this paper will help developing countries like Bangladesh to identify their problems regarding the restaurant industry and will be able to make their own strategies to improve their economy.

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## APPENDIX 1

### **Semi-structured interview questions**

Date: 21.09.2021

Interviewer: Tasfia Azad

Interviewee: Owner of Restaurant B

1. Could you please describe your restaurant briefly?

The name of my restaurant is Kath Badam restaurant. It's in Mirpur. Me and my family own the restaurant. We do not serve breakfast. The opening time is at 11 a.m. lunch and afternoon time used to be our busiest time. Most of our customers are office workers and students. We intended to target that type of customer as it is ideal for our location. We have interior the place accordingly so that our customers will find our place comfortable.

2. When did you establish your restaurant?

It was established in 2014.

3. How many employees do you have?

We are total 20 workers but currently only 12 of them are working.

4. How did you maintain safety in your restaurant?

We provide hand sanitizer to the customers when they come. We put hand wash in the washroom for the customers always. For the pandemic we are also giving alcohol pads, wet tissues for every services.

5. Are you aware of your legal responsibility to protect your employees' health and safety?

We are providing all the sanitary equipment to the workers.

6. What is your opinion about the ongoing pandemic?

Not good. People are dying every day. Personally, I am worried.

7. How did COVID affect your business?

Business was affected badly. During the first wave we had to keep our place shut. Then when the lockdown was lifted customers came less and less. Some stopped coming because they were scared, some because of financial reasons.

8. Did you receive any financial aid?

Unfortunately, I didn't. My family and I took care of the finance.

9. How did the government restrictions help you?

Not so much in my opinion. When the covid first came to our country there were no restrictions. We saw news about it, but nobody cared. Although schools were off, but people didn't care, nor government was strict as a result it spread so fast and killed so many. When the situation got out of control the government decided to put lockdown. If they had been strict from the beginning, I think things would have been better.

10. Did you improve your online service?

Yes, we are working to make it even better.

11. Did online orders increase?

Now online services are very famous. Since people are scared to go out, they are ordering online instead.

12. How did you manage your food delivery system?

In the near part of the restaurant area, we are making deliveries ourselves and for long distance orders we are getting help from the food panda app.

13. Did you install cashless payment?

We have both cash on delivery and Bcash system. Most of our customers are not so used to the cashless payment system.

14. Did you take advantage of social media for marketing?

Yes, we are trying to take full advantage of social media. Specially now social media is a great marketing source.

15. What were the limitations for your business plan during COVID?

Mainly planning the finance was our biggest problem. We had to send some of our employees on unpaid leave because we couldn't afford it anymore. Also, we lack the practice of good hygiene in our country. I think we need to be more aware of our personal hygiene. It's not just restaurants that should maintain cleanliness, customers should practice that too.

16. Did you take proper measurements for food hygiene?

Yes, we did. We always maintain our quality.

17. Was the food delivery system smooth?

There were some obstacles in the beginning like charges of the food delivery companies were high, so it was getting costly for us. Then we started to deliver our own to the nearest parts. Local people had our numbers so when they wanted our food, they would give us a call.

18. Were the customers satisfied with your service?

most of them were satisfied with our service. But sometime when order came from far often food would get cold due to long travel time. That was the main dissatisfaction. But we are trying our best to solve that problem.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Semi-structured interview questions**

Date: 12.12.2021

Interviewer: Tasfia Azad

Interviewee: Owner of Restaurant A

1. How did you maintain safety in your restaurant?

We follow the guideline by the Finnish ministry of welfare. We must follow the rules otherwise our restaurant will be shut down.

2. Are you aware of your legal responsibility to protect your employees' health and safety?

Of course. We were given proper instructions on that. Even before the pandemic we were maintaining that. In Finland hygiene is taken very seriously. I must take care of my employee's health and safety otherwise I will be fined and even lose my restaurant.

3. What is your opinion about the ongoing pandemic?

The situation is very uncertain. Things here is not like US or Italy but still it's a pandemic. I hope everything will go back to normal soon.

4. How did COVID affect your business?

Because of the restriction we had less people coming here to eat but our business wasn't that much affected. We have orders coming.

5. Did you receive any financial aid?

Yes, the government has ensured that we receive financial help in case we need it.

6. How did the government restrictions help you?

It helped our safety. Due to restrictions, we were able to keep our business running as well as keep ourselves from the infection.

7. Did you improve your online service?

Yes, we had to. Our business is running now because of the online service.

8. Did online orders increase?

Since most of our customers are working from home, they are now ordering food online. We had online services before the pandemic but after the pandemic online services have become very popular.

9. How did you manage your food delivery system?

Our online deliveries are mostly done via foodora and wolt. But we have our own delivery services even before pandemic. Our regular customers get their food delivered by calling the restaurant.

10. Did you take advantage of social media for marketing?

Social media like Facebook is not famous here. But we have our social media page. Foodora and wolt do the work for marketing.

11. Did you take proper measurements for food hygiene?

We always maintain our food hygiene according to the Finnish ministry of welfare guidelines.

13. Was the food delivery system smooth?

Thanks to foodora and wolt delivery service was very smooth.

14. Were the customers satisfied with your service?

Yes, our customers are very happy with our service and food.