



## **Exploring the Sourcing Strategies of Chicken-Based Dish Businesses in Pagadian City**

***Christine Axl Grace A. Sarda <sup>a</sup>, Jessa Mae O. Decierdo <sup>b</sup>, Princess Jaycel G. Manuel <sup>c</sup>, Mylene P. Alfanta <sup>d</sup>, and Ace Virgel T. Batingal <sup>e</sup>***

*<sup>a,b,c,d,e</sup> Saint Columban College, San Francisco Dist., Pagadian City, 7016, Philippines*

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the sourcing strategies of Chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City, with a focus on addressing challenges related to securing essential raw materials, such as Food Enhancer, Basic Coating Ingredients, and Key Ingredients. The research investigates how chicken-based dish businesses sourcing their raw materials. Using a qualitative approach, interviews were conducted with owners or assigned personnel of chicken-based businesses sourcing their raw materials by the Local, External, Community-based, Brand-specific, and Regional Ingredient Sourcing. The study revealed that businesses rely the transportation of raw materials from the suppliers by the Personal Vehicle, Direct Delivery of Raw Materials, and Direct Purchasing. However, they face challenges such as Customer Satisfaction Challenges, Flavor Consistency Challenges, Supply Sourcing Challenges, Market Competition Challenges, and Sales Challenges. To address these issues, many businesses have developed strong partnerships with suppliers and implemented inventory management practices. The findings highlight the importance of Resource Sharing, Outsourcing Strategies, Marketing Strategies, Management in Ingredient Sourcing, and Operational Preparedness Strategies. These insights are valuable for food business owners, suppliers, industry stakeholders, and future researchers looking to improve sourcing strategies and enhance operational efficiency in the food industry.

**Keywords:** Sourcing Strategies, Chicken-based Dishes, Food Enhancers, Supply Chain, Local Suppliers

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### **1. Introduction**

The food service industry has evolved significantly over the years, with chicken-based dish businesses becoming a dominant force due to the affordability and popularity of chicken (Boukid et al., 2022). Effective sourcing strategies are crucial for maintaining quality, sustainability, and cost efficiency, with businesses focusing on ingredient sourcing, supplier relationships, and logistical planning (Gumasing et al., 2023). Globalization has expanded sourcing options, allowing chicken dish businesses to access a variety of markets and ingredients, thereby enhancing their menu offerings (Bagley, 2023). However, the poultry industry faces challenges in balancing supply and demand, especially given traditional fixed supply models (Elmirzaev et al., 2022).

As consumer preferences shift towards healthier and culturally diverse food options, sourcing strategies have adapted to include organic, free-range, or halal-certified chicken to cater to dietary demands (Bosque et al., 2021). Additionally, rising awareness of ethical sourcing and sustainability has led many businesses to prioritize these practices, which can involve higher costs but also align with consumer values (Quaddus et al., 2021). The local chicken industry also plays a significant role in rural economies, and sourcing locally can enhance freshness, quality, and consumer trust (Das, 2024). However, overuse of antibiotics in chicken production has raised concerns, driving the shift towards antibiotic-free broiler meat production (Haque et al., 2020).

This study focused on the sourcing strategies of chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City, aiming to address the unique challenges and strategies involved in sourcing poultry products. The findings provide valuable insights into how businesses across different scales and regions source chicken to meet consumer expectations, regulatory requirements, and sustainability goals. By analyzing these practices, the study offers practical suggestions for enhancing procurement processes, managing supply chain risks, and improving sustainability in the food industry (Kurniawan et al., 2024).

#### **1.1 Literature Review**

Over the past few decades, the food service industry has undergone significant changes, influenced by shifts in consumer preferences and global supply chains. Among the various segments, chicken-based dish businesses have become dominant due to chicken's affordability and widespread popularity as a primary ingredient (Boukid et al., 2022). The sourcing of chicken products plays a vital role in maintaining quality, sustainability, and cost-efficiency. Factors such as ingredient sourcing, supplier relationships, and logistical planning are key to successful operations (Gumasing et al., 2023). Effective sourcing strategies can give businesses a competitive edge by improving supply chain efficiency and product quality, helping to meet customer demands (Zahran, 2024).

Globalization has broadened sourcing opportunities, allowing businesses to access a variety of markets and culinary influences, thereby enriching their menu offerings with specialty chicken products from around the world (Bagley, 2023). However, traditional meat and poultry farms often rely on fixed supply quantities, leading to supply and demand imbalances and increased costs (Elmirzaev et al., 2022). Chicken-based dishes have become staples in many global cuisines, with chicken's adaptability to various cooking methods and perceived health benefits driving its popularity (Baby, 2022). Sourcing strategies, therefore, play a crucial role in the success and competitiveness of chicken dish businesses.

The poultry industry must carefully coordinate the supply chain, involving breeders, hatcheries, farms, slaughterhouses, wholesalers, and retailers (Blanco et al., 2023). Geographical factors, including different farming methods and market conditions, can influence how chicken-based businesses source their ingredients (Attia et al., 2020). Sourcing strategies vary based on business size and type. Chain restaurants typically focus on bulk purchases to save money, while smaller, independent establishments prioritize quality and local sourcing (Pour, 2023). As consumer awareness of ethical sourcing grows, businesses are increasingly adopting sustainable practices, such as offering free-range or organic chicken, even though these options may come at a higher cost (Quaddus et al., 2021).

In the dynamic food service industry, it is essential to regularly review and improve sourcing strategies to remain competitive. Analyzing competitors' approaches can provide valuable insights into effective sourcing methods (Tang, 2024). In countries like the Philippines, where chicken meat, eggs, and pork are staple foods, fluctuations in supply and prices can significantly impact buyers. Promoting fair competition is vital to protecting both consumers and producers (Curibot et al., 2019). Understanding how chicken-based businesses source their ingredients is crucial to assessing their operational efficiency and sustainability, especially in the face of changing consumer preferences (Attia et al., 2024).

Building strong relationships with suppliers is key to effective sourcing. These partnerships ensure consistent product availability, enable better pricing negotiations, and foster opportunities for mutual growth. Understanding these dynamics helps businesses build resilient supply chains and manage risks such as disruptions or quality issues (Lavelle, 2024). Consumer demand for healthier, culturally diverse food options has led businesses to diversify their sourcing strategies by offering organic, free-range, or halal-certified chicken. These options cater to specific dietary preferences and help attract customers while fostering brand loyalty (Bosque et al., 2021).

Local chicken industries significantly contribute to agricultural income and food security, especially in rural communities (Gunawan et al., 2020). The use of antibiotics in chicken production, while necessary for disease prevention and growth, has raised concerns about antibiotic resistance. As a result, antibiotic-free broiler meat production has gained popularity worldwide, though challenges related to food safety and animal welfare must be addressed (Haque et al., 2020). Competition in the food service industry continually drives businesses to refine their sourcing strategies. By forming partnerships with local farmers or adopting sustainable farming methods, businesses can differentiate themselves in the market (Babayev et al., 2023).

Local sourcing of chicken-based dishes can enhance freshness, quality, and sustainability while mitigating supply chain risks. It also supports regional economies and strengthens consumer trust through transparent food production practices (Das, 2024). The poultry industry plays a significant role in global food production, with chicken being a popular and affordable source of protein due to its versatility and health benefits (Yildiz, 2021). Case studies from various establishments, ranging from fast-food chains to farm-to-table restaurants, reveal diverse sourcing tactics influenced by regional preferences and market conditions (Bautista et al., 2024).

In Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, broiler chicken is a common protein source, with rising consumption of animal protein driving its popularity. Broiler chickens are bred for high meat yield and fast growth, making them a preferred choice (Dapanas et al., 2024). Studies have also focused on developing traceability systems for halal certification in the chicken meat supply chain, highlighting the growing importance of food safety and quality assurance (Kurniawan et al., 2024). These studies emphasize the need for businesses to address sourcing challenges and regulatory requirements effectively.

Given the factors outlined above, researchers identified the need to investigate the sourcing strategies of chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City. While the broader food service industry has been examined, little attention has been paid to the unique challenges and strategies involved in sourcing poultry for chicken-based dishes. This gap prompted the study of sourcing practices in Pagadian City, focusing on how businesses of different scales and regions strategically source poultry to meet consumer expectations and align with sustainability goals. Researchers aimed to provide insights into the operational strategies of chicken-based dish businesses in this area.

This research aimed to explore the sourcing strategies used by chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City, providing practical recommendations to enhance procurement processes, manage supply chain risks, and improve sustainability practices. By examining the sourcing strategies of these businesses, the study contributes valuable knowledge to the field of food industry supply chain management. The findings offer useful insights for academics, industry practitioners, and policymakers, with the goal of improving the efficiency of chicken-based dish businesses and advancing sustainability in the food service industry.

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## 2. Research Methods

The research methodology for this study is presented in this chapter. It includes a discussion of the research design and research methods covering the research environment, research participants, research instrument, data gathering procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

## 2.1 Research Design

The researchers employed a qualitative approach, utilizing a single case study to explore the sourcing strategies of chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City. A case study is a detailed examination of a specific subject, providing in-depth insights into its complexities and context, often informing broader theories or practices. Merriam's (2015) qualitative research case study framework enabled the researchers to effectively gather, summarize, and interpret data. The study focused on business owners offering chicken-based dishes, ensuring participant privacy by informing them about the study's purpose, data usage, and potential risks. Personal identifiers were removed or secured to protect participants' confidentiality.

## 2.2 Research Settings and Participants

The study was conducted in Pagadian City, a lively urban area in Zamboanga del Sur, known for its rich food culture, particularly its popular chicken-based dishes. The research focused on businesses within this sector, including small family-run eateries and larger food stalls. These establishments play a key role in the local economy and food culture. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, providing a comprehensive view of how sourcing strategies are influenced by local conditions and how businesses manage cost-efficiency, quality, and customer satisfaction.

Eight business owners in Pagadian City participated in the study, selected through purposive sampling to ensure they met specific criteria relevant to the research. Each participant was interviewed individually about their experiences with sourcing chicken for their dishes. The participants, coded as P1 through P8, varied in experience, ranging from P1, a 35-year-old with 7 years in the business, to P8, a 32-year-old with 10 years of experience. The findings were validated using triangulation to ensure accuracy and effectiveness in the interview process.

## 2.3 Research Instruments

In this study, the researchers were the primary data collection instrument, using an interview guide to guide their semi-structured, person-to-person interviews. The research tools included the interview guide and an audio recorder to capture data. The interview guide consisted of structured questions, but the interviewer could ask open-ended questions based on participants' responses, allowing for a deeper exploration of the topic. This semi-structured format provided flexibility to delve into specific topics as they arose during the conversation. The questions were presented in simple, universal English, and translated into the participants' native language when needed. To ensure clarity and consistency, member checking and data triangulation were employed to validate the interview guide.

## 2.4 Data Gathering Technique

The data collection process was an essential component of the research, serving as the foundation for gathering, measuring, and analyzing information to provide valuable insights for decision-making. After obtaining approval from the research instructor and dean, the interview guide was validated by the research adviser and panel members. To ensure clarity and avoid misunderstandings, the interview guide, originally written in universal English, was translated into the participants' native language. Additionally, consent was obtained from participants for conducting person-to-person interviews and recording their responses.

In the research methodology, data was collected through a combination of interviews, observations, records, and documents, following Merriam's Categorical Aggregation approach. The case record, which contained all the relevant data, provided insights into various aspects of supply chain management, sourcing strategies, logistics, stock levels, and challenges within chicken-based dish businesses. The gathered data was then edited to remove redundant information and organized either chronologically or thematically for easier access. The final case study database, focusing on sourcing strategies in Pagadian City's chicken-based dish businesses, was systematically structured and analyzed using triangulation, coding, and reviewing field notes and interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2013).

## 3. Results and Discussion

This chapter transcribes, displays, and analyses the data gathered from the Chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City. The participants are owners and managers of various chicken-based dish establishments within the city. This study aims to explore and understand the sourcing strategies these businesses utilize to ensure a steady supply of raw materials. The study interviewed eight business owners or managers who were given anonymity for confidentiality and labeled as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, and P8.

The major categories that emerged from the study are the *Raw Materials Needed by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses*, *Sourcing of Raw Materials by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses*, *Transportation of Raw Materials from Suppliers*, *Determining Optimal Stock Levels for Chicken and Other Ingredients*, *Challenges Encountered in Sourcing Chicken and Other Raw Materials*, and *Coping Mechanisms Employed by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses to Overcome Sourcing Challenges*.

### Raw Materials Needed by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses

The participants' co-workers were interviewed about their observations, and their responses supported the participants' statements. They confirmed that the participants accurately described their use of raw ingredients in their chicken dishes, such as lemongrass to enhance aroma and flavor, a key ingredient in their cooking. Their business model was also validated, emphasizing local ingredient sourcing and the export of homemade products like honey and sauces. Co-workers affirmed that the use of sugar, soy sauce, and oyster sauce aligns with the participants' approach to flavoring their dishes. Furthermore, the practice of marinating chicken in the morning for freshness and avoiding preservatives aligns with their kitchen philosophy.

The participants' co-workers provided additional details about their flavoring practices. One participant highlighted the use of lemongrass for aroma, while another mentioned sourcing ingredients from Taiwan and making sauces in-house. Another participant identified sugar, soy sauce, and oyster sauce as key ingredients, though they were hesitant to share full recipe details. One participant emphasized the use of simple kitchen ingredients and marinating chicken on the same day it is sold for optimal freshness. They also prefer using a mixture of oyster sauce and Sprite to enhance flavor, reflecting their commitment to straightforward, effective ingredients.

Sauces play a crucial role in enhancing chicken dishes by providing moisture and flavor. Fresh ingredients in sauces can transform a dish, offering both taste and nutritional benefits. Marinades, particularly those containing acids like lemon juice or vinegar, oil, and spices, are vital for improving chicken's tenderness and flavor. The acid in marinades helps break down proteins, making the meat more tender and flavorful, which is consistent with the participants' practices in enhancing their dishes.

So, our ingredients are exported through Taiwan, and they are homemade because we use honey. We also export two sauces—wantai and sweet and sour—but the rest we make ourselves. -P2

We add lemongrass so it smells good. We don't marinate with injection; it's already marinated, and after injecting, it's ready to cook. -P1

In cooking, the coating for the chicken involves using basic ingredients such as crispy fry mix, salt, pepper, and eggs. The sauce is added later, depending on the flavor. For example, to make buffalo sauce, you would use butter, hot sauce, and sugar. -P4

As of now, I've been getting a lot; they have many ingredients. The main ones for them are Del Monte the Dole pineapples... That's it, but they have a lot of ingredients; I don't know the others. -P1

Our specific ingredient is lemongrass because when it arrives here, it's already marinated and prepared by the company. They advised us to just add lemongrass, and it's already injected.. -P8

The participants' co-workers also validated their claims regarding the coating ingredients used in their chicken dishes. The basic coating includes ingredients like crispy fry mix, salt, pepper, eggs, cornstarch, and flour, which align with the company's approach to consistency and quality. The participants also incorporate their own proprietary blend of secret ingredients and use a "dry wheat process" to achieve the desired texture and flavor. This approach supports the use of both dry and wet coatings, which influence the final texture and taste of the dish, including the use of healthier alternatives like air frying or oven-baking.

### **Sourcing of Raw Materials by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses**

The participants' co-workers were asked about their observations, and their responses confirmed the findings about local sourcing. A co-worker mentioned that the participants' descriptions of sourcing their chicken and other raw materials were consistent with their operational practices. For example, one participant explained that chickens are sourced from a farm in Kaniangan, then transported to Balintawak in Pagadian for slaughtering, cleaning, and injection, which aligns with the company's standard processes. Another participant noted that the primary source of raw materials is from Aurora, delivered directly by panel truck. This reliance on local sources, coupled with efficient preparation and transportation processes, reflects the participants' commitment to freshness and maintaining high-quality chicken-based dishes.

The participants provided further details about sourcing and processing their chicken and ingredients. One explained that chickens are sourced from Kaniangan, transported to Balintawak for necessary processing, with the company providing the required materials. Another participant mentioned Aurora as their main supplier, with the products delivered via truck. These sourcing practices suggest a well-organized system where local resources are carefully managed to ensure the quality and freshness of the dishes.

Ma'am, our chickens come from our farm in Kaniangan. They deliver them to Balintawak in Pagadian, where they are slaughtered, cleaned, and injected. The materials for this process are already provided by the company we source our chickens from.. -P1

Local sourcing can help businesses save costs by reducing transportation and logistical expenses. For small and medium enterprises with limited budgets, sourcing from local suppliers is particularly beneficial (Deller et al., 2009). By fostering relationships with local vendors, businesses can enjoy better terms, increased trust, and a more reliable supply chain. Local suppliers tend to be more responsive to business needs, offering flexibility and adaptability (Allen et al., 2010).

Yes, ma'am, we also have specific suppliers for our ingredients, which include two items from outside—specifically, Wantai and sweet and sour sauce from Taiwan. The others are sourced locally, like those from Aurora. -P2

The participants' co-workers also validated their claims about sourcing ingredients both locally and internationally. They confirmed that certain key ingredients, like Wantai and sweet and sour sauce, are imported from Taiwan, while others are sourced locally, such as from Aurora. This balance between local and international sourcing reflects the participants' approach to offering a variety of flavors while managing availability. While importing ingredients

can present challenges, such as higher costs and longer delivery times, it allows the business to maintain the quality and distinct flavors their customers enjoy.

We mostly buy from the market, and we don't have a regular supplier because we ask around to find out where the prices are lower, as they don't have the same prices. Right now, I have a source I've been using for several weeks, but previously, I had different ones since their prices vary. Of course, we always check the freshness of the chicken. -P5

As for our ingredients, the butter comes from our direct supplier, Buttercup, while the other ingredients, like powder, are ordered from Manila, but they don't have a specific name. -P5

We source all our ingredients and chicken from Cagayan. We don't source locally; nothing is from Pagadian. The plant for these products is located there, so the company just delivers everything to us, and we were just advised to add lemongrass. -P8

The participants elaborated on their strategy of combining local and external sourcing for ingredients. They rely on Taiwanese suppliers for key ingredients, such as Wantai and sweet and sour sauce, which are not available locally. However, they source many other ingredients locally, with Aurora being a major supplier. This mix of sourcing strategies ensures they can maintain product quality and variety while managing logistical considerations.

External sourcing presents challenges in supply chain management, such as the need for robust logistics and inventory management systems to handle delays and quality control issues (Lee & Tager, 2021). However, it also offers flexibility, allowing businesses to access a wider range of resources and suppliers, which is crucial in meeting changing demand and ensuring consistent quality—especially in industries like food service, where product quality is key (Christopher, 2016).

### **Transportation of Raw Materials from Suppliers**

The participants' coworkers were asked about their observations on the transportation of raw materials, and their feedback aligned with the findings. A coworker noted that the participant's claim of personally handling transportation reflects their practical approach to logistics. They emphasized that using a personal vehicle enables quick, efficient trips to the market, meeting operational needs. This method ensures timely and smooth acquisition of ingredients, essential for maintaining the quality of chicken-based dishes.

The participant highlighted the practicality of using personal vehicles for transporting ingredients and products within the chicken-based dish business. By managing transportation independently, the participant benefits from proximity to suppliers, avoiding extra costs typically associated with third-party delivery services. This approach offers businesses the advantage of saving on delivery expenses, which are often high with third-party services, and reduces the need for further investments in logistics infrastructure.

The supplier is the one who delivers it here; we just wait for it to arrive. A panel truck will deliver it directly to us. -P7

We are just waiting for the delivery because they provide the transportation. The supplier delivers directly to our store using a freezer van.. -P8

Coworkers confirmed that the participants' statements about raw material delivery accurately reflect their logistics practices. They explained that suppliers usually deliver raw materials directly to the store, often using suitable vehicles like freezer vans for perishables. While some materials like sauces and powders are delivered directly, the participants tend to pick up their chicken. This hands-on approach demonstrates their dedication to product quality and active involvement in the supply chain.

There are times when we use a vehicle, and there are times when we just commute. Sometimes, someone drives for me, like my father or my husband, and when they're not available, I commute. It's not always me who buys the ingredients; some of my employees do the shopping, and they are also the ones who cook. -P5

Direct delivery from suppliers enables businesses to maintain higher quality control, especially for perishable goods like chicken, ensuring freshness and customer satisfaction. It also strengthens business relationships with suppliers, promoting better sourcing options and opportunities for collaboration. By sourcing ingredients directly from suppliers, businesses can ensure the freshness and quality of their products, which directly impacts customer satisfaction and can foster innovation in their offerings.

### **Determining Optimal Stock Levels for Chicken and Other Ingredients**

The participants' coworkers were asked to provide their insights, and their responses affirmed the findings. One coworker confirmed that the participants' approach to managing stock levels and freezer inventory for their chicken-based dishes accurately reflects their practices. They highlighted the importance of keeping a fully stocked freezer to ensure an adequate supply for several days, typically refilling it every three days. This strategy aligns with their operational goal of ensuring that chicken remains fresh and readily available for use.

The participant explained their stock management approach, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the freezer's inventory. They aim to refill it every three days with enough supplies to last for a few days, ensuring that stock levels are sufficient to meet operational demands while preserving product freshness. This regular restocking allows them to efficiently manage inventory and ensure ingredients are always available for production.

It depends on the freezer, ma'am because we have a two-door freezer and a three-door one. Our three-door freezer can store 500, and the two-door can hold 300, so when we make a booking, and the two-door is available, we can only maintain 300 because that is all it can hold. -P1

It is essential to check the inventory to avoid running out; we continually monitor our stocks and expiration dates. If there are any that are nearing expiration, we remove them so they do not stay too long. -P2

I guess it is really about preserving the stocks properly because often they are not handled well or mixed up, and they spoil quickly, especially if there are eggs and butter; they deteriorate quickly. So, you need to freeze them properly and not mix them with others. -P4

Businesses that implement effective inventory management techniques can significantly reduce food waste while ensuring the availability of essential ingredients like chicken. The First-In-First-Out (FIFO) method is a widely recommended practice for managing freezer inventory. By using older stock before newer stock, the FIFO method helps maintain the freshness of ingredients such as chicken and minimizes waste (Harrison & Thompson, 2022). This practice is vital for businesses, particularly in the food industry, where ingredient quality is crucial to customer satisfaction.

The participants' coworkers confirmed that the participants closely monitor stock levels and expiration dates to avoid shortages. Communication within the team is essential, as they regularly remind each other about needed supplies. They also emphasized the importance of proper preservation techniques, particularly for delicate items like eggs and butter, to prevent spoilage. Coworkers noted that strict adherence to freezing protocols ensures ingredient quality, in line with best inventory management practices.

Yes, based on my previous answers, we don't stock too much to avoid spoilage. We only keep what is suitable for maybe one or two days, so when it is about to reach two days and is almost sold out, we buy more. -P6

We usually don't cook everything at once because most of what we prepare is chicken. We cook it today for tomorrow, and we only cook it as needed. It depends on the number of customers we have. -P3

The participants themselves underscored the importance of diligent inventory management. One participant stressed the need to regularly check stock levels and expiration dates to prevent shortages, often communicating with team members about required supplies. Another participant highlighted the significance of proper preservation techniques, especially for perishable ingredients like eggs and butter. They emphasized that maintaining strict freezing practices and avoiding cross-contamination is crucial for ensuring the quality and longevity of their inventory. Regular inventory checks help businesses maintain optimal stock levels and avoid stock-outs, ensuring that quality ingredients are always available for production (Goh & Lim, 2020).

### **Challenges Encountered in Sourcing Chicken and Other Raw Materials**

The participants' coworker was consulted about the challenges in sourcing chicken and raw materials, and their response confirmed the accuracy of the participants' statements. They noted that when customers request specific sauces that are unavailable, it leads to dissatisfaction and decreased sales. Additionally, they pointed out issues when customers ask for particular chicken dishes that cannot be prepared due to insufficient marination or preparation time.

The participants highlighted key challenges related to customer satisfaction and inventory management. They explained that when customers request sauces that are unavailable, it often leads to a loss of sales, as customers may decide not to place an order. Similarly, they face difficulties when customers request specific chicken dishes they are unable to fulfill due to lack of chicken supply or the need for advance preparation or marination.

It is like this, ma'am: the main challenge we have encountered so far is when a customer is looking for a specific sauce that's not available. When that happens, the customer often decides not to order, which affects our sales. -P2

We have an issue where customers sometimes ask for a specific chicken dish, but we can't provide it because we either don't have the chicken or we haven't prepared or marinated it in advance. -P3

Customer satisfaction largely depends on aligning service and product offerings with consumer expectations. Understanding these expectations is crucial for businesses in the food industry, especially with the rapid shifts in consumer preferences for quality, flavor, and health (Oliver, 2021). Another challenge lies in adapting to evolving dietary preferences and health trends. Businesses often struggle to meet the diverse nutritional needs of customers, including those seeking healthier options or specific dietary accommodations (Davis & Thompson, 2023).

When it comes to raw materials, there are times when we run out of suppliers, and we have no choice but to wait. Sometimes, we end up lacking in flavor because we haven't been able to try everything from our suppliers. Instead of having all the ingredients to serve nine dishes, we might only be able to serve five or four. With chicken, if there's no supplier available, we just have to work with whatever chicken is available at the store, or however many kilos they have. Then the next day, we'll go get more in case we run out, which means we have to close early. -P4

It is really difficult to find a chicken supplier if you lose your current one or if the ingredients you rely on from your supplier become unavailable. We have yet to experience that, but I know it can be challenging. It is hard to find a replacement for the ingredients you use for your chicken dishes, which can change the flavor. -P4

The participants' coworkers were consulted about their observations on sourcing raw materials, and their feedback corroborated the findings. They shared that when suppliers are unavailable, it forces the participants to wait for new stock, leading to a lack of essential flavors in their dishes. As a result, the menu options are limited, sometimes offering only four or five dishes instead of the usual nine. When chicken supplies are low, they must use whatever is available locally, which can affect the consistency and quality of their dishes.

Of course, there are other competitors out there, so you really need to stay ahead of them. It's not just them who know about this chicken-based dish business; I don't know everything either. It can be quite challenging. For us, it's all about being patient and just focusing on perfecting our recipe. -P3

My main issue with that is that it takes a long time to sell. Since it needs to be cooked beforehand, it's okay to choose raw chicken, but sometimes we end up with stock that we have to throw away. For example, last night, I had to throw away three pieces because they became tough, and it's hard for us to serve that. -P6

The quality of the chicken can be an issue. Sometimes, Magnolia serves chicken wings that are really huge, and customers complain because they're too big. Other times, they're just tiny—almost like they're too small to be from a bird. -P4

The participants described difficulties in sourcing raw materials, noting that occasionally they are left without suppliers, forcing them to wait for stock replenishment. This delay leads to missing ingredients and limits their menu options. Instead of offering the usual nine dishes, they sometimes have to settle for only four or five. If chicken is in short supply, they must rely on whatever is available at local stores, which impacts the consistency and quality of their meals. As a result, they often close early to restock for the following day. Variability in ingredient quality can significantly impact flavor profiles. Factors like chicken breed, feed composition, and farming practices can lead to noticeable discrepancies in flavor.

Research suggests that standardized sourcing practices can mitigate these issues (Bowe & Duffy, 2020). Additionally, the cooking methods used—such as frying, roasting, and grilling—play a crucial role in determining the flavor outcome, as differences in temperature and cooking time can produce varied results (Chichester & Rojas, 2022).

#### **Coping Mechanisms Employed by Chicken-Based Dish Businesses to Overcome Sourcing Challenges.**

The participants' coworkers were consulted about resource-sharing practices within the business, and their responses confirmed the findings. One coworker explained that borrowing chicken from other branches during slow periods reflects their collaborative approach to inventory management. When one branch faces low stock, the branches communicate and coordinate with each other to ensure they meet customer demands.

The participants rely on resource-sharing between branches to source chicken, often needing additional options. When other branches experience slow days, they take advantage of the situation by borrowing chicken from them. They communicate regularly to check stock availability, allowing them to secure the necessary supplies quickly and meet customer needs.

We don't have any other options; we rely on our own resources. Sometimes, if other branches have a slow day, we just borrow chicken from them. We call that branch to check if they have stock, and if they do, we just go there to get it. This way, we can still provide for our customers. -P1

Maybe it's best to outsource more because if you can't get what you need from your first supplier, you really need a second option. If your supplier can't provide anything, you have to look for another option ahead of time. And if you find another option, you'll probably have to adjust your product because the flavor will definitely be different. You will have to make some adjustments since it's not the same supply you're used to using in your product. -P4

The owner hired a vlogger, and then our sales suddenly boomed to 16,000 a day. Since then, our sales have remained high, with our lowest daily sales now at 10,000. -P2

Resource-sharing among branches can lead to significant cost savings and operational efficiency. Studies have shown that sharing inventory and human resources enables businesses to reduce waste and better respond to fluctuations in demand, thus improving service delivery and profitability (Kim et al., 2019). By sharing stock levels and coordinating deliveries, businesses can reduce stockouts and excess inventory, which ultimately enhances customer satisfaction. Centralized inventory systems can make this sharing more effective (Rahman et al., 2021).

The participants' coworkers were consulted regarding their sourcing strategies, and their feedback validated the findings. According to a coworker, the participants place emphasis on having multiple suppliers to ensure a consistent supply of raw materials. They mentioned that finding alternative sources is crucial when the primary supplier is unavailable. This aligns with the participants' strategy of outsourcing to maintain supply levels, even if it means adjusting product recipes due to variations in flavor and quality.

Well, I also told my cook always to be prepared because there can suddenly be many customers wanting to buy at any time, so we need to be ready at all times. -P3

We will contact the company, ma'am, to inform them that we are running low on stock or are about to run out. This way, we can avoid being completely out of stock, so we will reach out in advance. -P7

The participants see increasing outsourcing as a necessary strategy to ensure a steady supply of ingredients. They stress the importance of having a secondary supplier in case the primary one fails to deliver, helping prevent potential shortages. This proactive approach allows the business to adapt to changes in supply and maintain operations, even if the alternative suppliers offer different flavors or qualities.

Outsourcing logistics can provide significant cost savings for businesses in the food industry. By utilizing third-party logistics providers (3PLs), chicken-based dish businesses can lower transportation costs and enhance operational efficiency. 3PLs bring established networks and expertise, improving service delivery (Aitken et al., 2020). By outsourcing logistics, businesses can focus more on core competencies like product development and customer service, ultimately allowing them to better serve customers and build brand loyalty (Wang et al., 2021).

## **4. Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

The study shows that chicken-based dish businesses in Pagadian City employ various strategies to tackle sourcing challenges, focusing on high-quality raw materials and essential ingredients like food enhancers, natural products, and coatings to enhance flavor and quality. They prioritize using local products to ensure freshness and support community suppliers. Additionally, they implement operational strategies such as resource sharing between branches and outsourcing logistics to maintain a consistent supply. The businesses also leverage influence marketing to boost brand awareness and sales, adapting their product lines as ingredient changes occur. By adopting smart cost management models and maintaining strong communication with suppliers, they navigate supply unpredictability and rising prices, ensuring both customer satisfaction and sustainable success in the competitive food industry.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

The researchers recommend the following:

1. Chicken-based dish businesses should adopt best practices for sourcing ingredients, such as establishing relationships with multiple local suppliers to ensure consistent availability and quality of raw materials. This strategy can mitigate risks associated with supply chain disruptions and help businesses adapt to fluctuations in demand.
2. Business owners are encouraged to implement cost-effective measures, such as bulk purchasing and negotiating with suppliers, to manage ingredient costs. By leveraging these practices, businesses can enhance their profitability while maintaining the quality of their products.
3. Industry stakeholders, including government agencies like the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), should provide support through training programs and workshops that focus on best sourcing practices, inventory management, and operational efficiency. These initiatives can equip business owners with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve their sourcing strategies.
4. Future researchers should explore the impact of digital marketing and e-commerce on the growth of chicken-based dish businesses. Investigating how these tools can enhance brand visibility and customer engagement will provide valuable insights for practitioners seeking to navigate the challenges of sourcing and competition in the food industry.

#### **Acknowledgements**

The proponents of this study would like to express their utmost gratitude to the individuals who contributed to the overall success of this study throughout the entire Accounting Research Method subject. We deeply appreciate their contributions and sincerely acknowledge their involvement. In particular, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the following:

To the Almighty God, for continuously blessing us with grace and guidance throughout the entire duration of this research. We express our profound appreciation to our beloved parents, who provided us with unwavering support throughout this study. Their presence and encouragement have been invaluable, and we recognize that they are indeed the greatest gift bestowed upon us by our Almighty God.

To the research instructor, Mylene P. Alfanta, CPA. Her guidance and unwavering belief in our abilities have been instrumental in our progress. The proponents were also thankful for her patience and deeper understanding of the subject matter and encouraging us to persevere in facing challenges.

To the adviser, Ace Virgel T. Batingal, CHRA. We are grateful for their understanding of our shortcomings and for guiding us. Their professional knowledge and insights have been invaluable in shaping this study.

Researchers are immensely grateful to our classmates and friends for their helpfulness, understanding, and approachability. Their willingness to advise and answer our questions has been greatly appreciated. We thank them for generously giving their time and being a source of support.

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