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THE USE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS IN THE FIELD OF FOOD SERVICE IN SAN JUAN DEL RÍO, QUERÉTARO POST- PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The food services are an important sector for any municipality, state or country, for traditions, culture, and other elements that make that same place characteristic get blended with its colors, aromas and flavors. In the municipality of San Juan del Río, Queretaro, a diverse number of situations arose as a consequence of the pandemic (Covid-19), among them stands out the flow capacity of the establishments, those being up to a fifty percent, definitive closures of establishments, the flow of delivery services due to the confinement, the prize inflation in many first need products for the development of the food service sector.

The pandemic situation forced the food sector to make decisions in the face of either this contingency or ultimate changing events which made an impact on both the administration and the finance of each one of the establishments, hence the lack of knowledge and prevision for these possible scenarios are among the main factors that affect the food service sector entirely and have a negative effect in the decision making for the growth and development of the sector. As part of the economic reactivation of our country it is necessary to take new strategies as an action plan for future contingencies.

Key words: tourism, pandemic, administrative process, food service, San Juan del Río, Queretaro.

Introduction

Derived from the economic recovery dynamics of 2022, the restaurant sector of Querétaro projected that in 2023 there could be up to 5% growth, data estimated by Rosalinda Hernández, president of the Cámara Nacional de la Industria de Restaurantes y Alimentos Condimentados en el Estado (CANIRAC).

In the same manner, that same organization highlighted that during the December month of 2022 a recovery of almost 95% was reached in comparison to that of the year 2019, this was due to the mobility of the end of the year combined the Christmas dinners of families and corporations alike.

It was specified that the economic spillover of the last month of this year was about 260 million pesos, out of a total of 300 affiliated restaurants in the municipalities of Tequisquiapan, San Juan del Río, Huimilpan, Corregidora, El Marqués and Querétaro.

The restaurants economic recovery is a process that is being handled gradually, for this reason the businesses administration is once again a strategic factor for its right functionality, nevertheless, as was mentioned by (Sánchez, Mónica 2014) in regards to administrative processes, everything is managed verbally under the leadership of the owner, planning being the most applied, however there's little monitoring of its fulfillment due to the absence of formal organization established control procedures.

Due to the aforementioned information and as is mentioned by Izquierdo, García, Baque, Salcedo, (2020) the main actions to develop an administrative process are: the strategic direction of the company based on the mission, vision, values, corporate slogan and an organizational structure is achieved from the implementation of an organizational chart and a manual of functions for restaurants.

At the beginning of this research the use or number of the administrative process was unknown either in its complete form or in some of its phases for the optimization of resources of the industry or the sector, as well as how it was used for the recovery of the pandemic originated by the COVID-19.

It is because of the aforementioned and with the aim of identifying the importance of using the administrative process in the food industry alongside new emerging strategies that allow more and better profitable benefits in order to reposition in the post pandemic market, that it was decided to carry out the following work.

It begins, because of it being necessary, with a theoretical trip on the variables, therefore proposing information regarding food services, the administrative process with each of its phases and a crossover is made with the same variables where the administrative process in the food service is considered.

Food services

Since the dawn of humanity, the humanity has had the need to feed itself in order to survive. At the beginning only hunted and gathered foods were consumed, following the uncovering of fire, agriculture, livestock, and the adoption of the sedentary way of life, different activities in the primitive communities were allocated and is there where we get the principles of collective alimentation from.

As years passed by this collective alimentation was perfected, this coming from the division of both the activities and spaces such as guest houses, social care homes for infants also called orphanages, in prisons, in schools and boarding schools, in other words, places that would provide food near or within the site where work or educational activities were carried out.

It's also noteworthy that food services have existed since hundreds of years ago, that being the case if we consider the first restaurants known as hostels and inns which would offer food to passing travelers, until they became the food services that we are familiar with currently, industrial canteens, cafes, school canteens, food services in hospitals, nursing homes, day care centers, etc.

The food services evolution has relied on technology, nutritional equipment and care as well as sanitary hygienic. Nevertheless, is mentioned by the author Blanca Dolly that the food service has reached such an extension, variety and complexity every time bigger than merely serving food just for the humanity's need of feeding itself (Dolly. B. 2006).

Definition of food service.

In order to define the food service concept, we can begin with Fontanos's take who points that food services are places where food is both prepared and served to people who require its consumption Fontanot (2000); this users or costumers are called diners.

Now well, based on the aforementioned the secretary of agriculture, livestock and fishing of Argentina in its manual of good manufacture practices for food service, in which to define them uses the term “entidad”, points out that, accordingly they design, prepare, store and distributes food for its consumption by a population group.

In the same manner the Official Mexican Standard NOM-043-SSA2-2012, Servicios básicos de salud, Promoción y educación para la salud en materia alimentaria, tells us that food services offer to the diners good quality food that is fitting to both their physical and physiological state, as well as helping promote good health or controlling diseases and helping the recovery of sick individuals by adhering to the correct diet criteria. (NOM-043-SSA2-2012, 2012).

On the other hand, Caballero (2016) defines this term as the preparation of food for a certain number of diners that is greater than those that comprise a family group, which can also be called collective feeding.

These definitions comprise to a certain degree what the food service does as well as to whom is aimed at, at the same time Peru’s health system claims in its work, rules for the establishment and operation of collective feeding services, that the food service are canteens, cafeterias and establishments that provide food either through themselves or through concessions to Institutions such as Ministries, public or decentralized Institutions, factories, companies, universities, schools, nurseries, companies, shelters, rehabilitation centers and in general, to all those that serve to a specific group of people. (R.S. N° 0019-81-SA/DVM, 1981.)

Although it has been mentioned how various authors and institutions define food service, it can be inferred that they are indeed entities that offer food to a group of people, with these requiring to meet certain criteria such as a certain quality as well as being able to pursue objectives such as the health of their users.

Food service classification.

According to the population group they are aimed at food services are split in commercial and non-commercial Dolly, B (2006). Additionally, non-commercial food service can be self-managed or owned as well as concessionary.

Commercial

These are businesses in which the purpose is obtaining a remuneration, a variety of dishes are offered in an open schedule. The characteristics of users are varied they can be entire families with adults, elders, children, teenagers or only adults and elders who are supposed to possess a good health, economic availability, given that the place, dishes and drinks are up to the diner’s choice.

Non-commercial

As its pointed out by its name they don’t have profit as their main end, but rather giving food the users or collectivities that are present in a specific place at the meal time, with an already established menu, the characteristics of the user are similar to each other, for instance, children in nurseries, elders in nursing homes, orphanages, inmates, all these sites have a subsidy or budget obtained by the government or other institutions. The menu will depend on the kind of diner as well as its physical and physiological characteristics.

We can also give mention to the services with payment of quota: in this type of service a quota is paid for the food, they are not for profit, the payment is for the recovery from the expenses of the resources used.

Administrative process

Background

The administrative process has been a role model for generations, it was developed and used in the late XIX century and early XX century by Henry Fayol, from that moment onwards it has been identified as the practice basic structure, the process is born with the need of explaining and giving structure to an entire administrative function that has as objective coordinating all the others functions of the organization. Additionally, is based on discipline, order, flexibility, creativity and efficiency. (Guíatecnica, operativa y administrativa. 2013).

As time pass by it becomes fundamental to have evolution and adaptation, both have been key factors for the companies throughout diverse stages, from the handcraft to its transition to the industrialization, the industrial development and its growth up to the big industry, contemporary of new technologies and science, involved in both research and technological development, and subsequently when facing globalization.

In this way, administration is a discipline that has been transformed over time, in order to cover the needs and changes of society since the end of the XIX century, administration has been defined in the terms of four specific functions: planning, organization, direction and control. (Sanchez, M. 2014.)

Definition of the administrative process

This term has a diverse number of definitions and many authors describe their characteristics from their foundation, nonetheless, most of them approach to it as the process of both giving structure and using sets of resources aimed towards the fulfillment of goals, in order to carry out the tasks in an organizational environment.

On the other hand, Porter, Hitt and Black (2006) points out in his book “administración”, that is a complex process which requires the integration of different labors, among them being the planning and the organization of what must be done.

Among the definitions that are made regarding this concept, we agree with Guadalupe Blandez, who points out that it is called administrative process because within the organizations a series of important activities are systematized for the fulfillment of objectives (Blandez, M.D.G, 2014).

It is also common for it to be defined as a tool, for the job that the administrators develop within an organization whose elements that make it up allow the tactical and strategic commanders of the organization to carry out the processes of planning, organization, management and control of a company.

They are defined as the set of successive phases or stages through which the administration becomes effective, which are interrelated and form an integral process. (Munch. L. & Garcia, J. 2004).

The administrative process is defined as an achievement of phases or stages through which the administrative practice is carried out, the administrative process is made up of a set of phases or steps in a cyclical manner. (Guíatécnica, operativa y administrativa. 2013).

Phases of the administrative process.

The administrative process it's a dynamic process and its stages or activities are intimately related to each other, didactically they can be analyzed on separately, even if in practice they are carried out simultaneously.

It was Henry Fayol who determined the four vital functions in administration, he believed that there was a need for systematizing the tasks in a company.

According to the book “administración”, unaperspectiva global of the authors koontzy, Wehrick and Cannice, the administrator functions are: planning, organization, direction and control that make up the administrative process when considered from the systematic point of view. Fayol points out that these elements apply to business, organizations, political, religious, philanthropic, and military.

The administrative process begins with planning and organization in addition with direction and control, all of which must work synergistically in order to achieve effective results. (Luna, A. 2014).

Planning

Is the first of the stages that are carried out during an administrative process in which are settled since the beginning the actions that must be followed, establishing principles and the series of operations (costs, budget) for their realization: as well as the ability to look into the future and project the means to fulfill the objectives.

Planning constitutes a basic function for the administrators, since it gives origin and determines the next stages of the administrative process.

Planning represents the beginning and base of the of the administrative process without it whatever is carried out in the organization, direction and control has no purpose, since it would work without the results that every social organism seeks being determined, and this would risk its future. Planning determines what the company wants to be, where will be established, when will begin operations and how is going to be done. (Luna, A. 2014).

Alfredo himself (2014), mentions that planning matters among other things because is the foundation for the administrative process in order to make a fitting sense to the fulfillment of itself, it prepares the company with enough strength to face its problems, it accounts for all the outer environment in order to take advantage of the opportunities. It allows the executive to evaluate alternatives in order to make the best decision, correctly schedule time and resources throughout the company structure, and establish the foundations for control.

Organization

It is the stage where the split between job and structure is established, necessary for the fulfillment of planning. With its own principles and tools, levels of both authority and responsibility are established. The functions, duties and departments of either people or groups of people are settled as well. (Luna, A.2014)

According to Blandez, the organization is the mechanism for the settling the necessary structure for the rational systematization of resources in a company. He also points out that this systematization is carried out through the assignment of a hierarchy; as well as the availability, correlation and grouping of activities, with the purpose of carry out and simplify the functions of a social group. (Blandez, M. 2014).

Munch (2015). In his work “Manejo del proceso administrativo”, mentions that the purpose of the organization is to both coordinate and optimize functions and resources, but also to simplify the work. In other words, it is about making the operation of the company easy and the processes smooth for those who work in it, while serving customers and satisfying social needs.

In this stage of the administrative process, functional areas, structures, and processes are defined as well as systems and hierarchies in order to achieve company objectives; systems and procedures for carrying out the work are also structured. The organization implies multiple advantages that support the importance of performing activities efficiently and with a minimum of effort.

The importance of this phase can be summarized, as Münch points out, in that it reduces costs and increases productivity, reduces or eliminates duplication of functions, establishes the company's architecture and simplifies work. (Münch. L. 2015)

Direction

In this phase we start from the idea that directing is guiding the talent and effort of others in order to achieve the expected results; that is, to influence their performance and coordinate both their individual and team efforts. Another definition of leadership is that of the process of influencing and motivating people to work toward organizational goals. To act as a director, an administrator

We can also analyze what the author Luna (2014) propose, that the word, organization, derives from the Greek word “órgano”, which means instrument. The organization is a group of people with a common goal, assembled by a set of relations of authority responsibility.

In this stage, the activities are coordinated in order to achieve the effective accomplishment of the previously planned through decision making, taking into consideration two elements, that of execution (referring to the operative personal and the activities that carries out) and that of administration, being more about the direction of the process itself.(Luna, A. 2014)

Direction is the execution of the plans accordingly to the organizational structure, through the guidance of the personal's efforts, this by motivation, take of decisions, communication and the employment of leadership, points out Münch (2015).

Although it is true that all the stages of the administrative process are of equal importance, it is in the direction stage where the plans materialize and all the elements of the administration are executed properly; Hence, the concepts of administrating and directing are commonly confused.

Control

It is the stage of the administrative process through which the fulfillment of the objective in which the plans execution and the detection of deviations is evaluated, this with the goal of establishing the corrective measures needed according to the objectives.

Control means comparing actual performance with the planned in order to determine variances. (Blandez, M.2014). Subsequently, these variations are analyzed and the causes that prevented the expectations from not being met are determined. Once the causes are detected, it is followed by the study of them and the redirection the action plan.

Blandez share with us that there is a relation between control and the next ideas:

- Verification: observe if what we plan is being fulfilled.
- Execution of authority: actions must be measured in order to control them. Anything that can be measured can be improved
- Limitation: standards to be met are set and we must adjust ourselves to them

Luna (2014) on the other hand, when referring to control, points out that control is the last phase of the administrative process, which comes to assess what was done in planning, organization, integration and direction.

For writers on the subject, control is an essential stage in the administration, given that, even if a company has effective plans, a correct organizational structure and efficient management, the manager will not be able to verify the real situation of the company. (Luna, 2014).

For Koontz and Wehrich (1998), in classical terms, control is the process which consists of supervising the activities carried out in an organization or company in order to guarantee that it is carried out as planned and to correct any significant deviation. Meanwhile, for Hitt, Black and Porter (2006), the administrative control function is the regulation of the activities and behaviors of both the person and organizations to either adjust or confront the actions in regards to the objectives.

In this way Luna explains that the importance of the control relies on the fact that it is in this stage where the gaps that happen in the planning, organization, integration and direction are detected. It is a key piece for the determination of corrective measures for the detected deviations, it additionally detects the company's parts in which the problems have occurred, and also counts with the capacity for analysis of variations.

Administrative process in foodservice

According to the Asociación Mexicana de Miembros de Facultades y Escuelas de Nutrición (AMMFEN). The professional field of food services is characterized by planning, directing, the control and evaluation of the activities of a food service, in order to ensure quality standards for the diners who demand the service. The activities carried out include: resource management, menu planning, service operation and evaluation, staff training and consumer orientation. It is developed in institutional and commercial foodservices (Asociación Mexicana de Miembros de Facultades y Escuelas de Nutrición, 2016).

The Universidad en línea y a distancia de México (UNADM, 2021), points out that in order to carry out the food services operation, a set of actions or stages known as administrative process is required, of which we already addressed the conceptualization of its stages previously.

This institution tells us that once we understand and analyze the administrative process and its stages, we will be able to clearly identify it when applied to food services that, as we have already reviewed, are labeled as companies or industries, of which their transformation material is food, and the service they offer are the dishes and menus.

Stages of the administrative process in food service

In food services, to start with the planning, the type of food service is considered, whether it is commercial or non-commercial, the objective of the food services and the user population. This allows making a plan, making decisions and forecasting. in order to choose the food (raw material), dishes that will be present in the preparation of menus, etc. (UNADM, 2021)

In regards to the organization of food services, it is in this stage where, the needed structure for carrying out the planning with the equipment and utensils needed per area, the work division, the authority levels, responsibility, functions and the duties of the members of the groups, are all established. (UNADM, 2021)

The direction of food services is the use of techniques and methods for the handling of resources, the management of conflict, the decision making and the application of a creative administration that encourages the implication of the staff as a work team. For instance, the recognition the staff's attitudes in regards to the execution of the activities (Salgado, Guerrero, 2016).

On the other hand, the control is a stage of the administrative process that is deeply related to the direction stage, due to the fact that out of the supervision that was carried out, it is the fulfillment of the objective in which whether the executions of the plans were accomplished what is evaluated, additionally deviations are detected in order to establish the corrective measures accordingly to the objectives.

The short, medium and long term strategies are settled. Those strategies must be done in considering what was settled during the direction process, when it comes to food services they can be oriented towards the training of staff, making changes to the menus, increasing or decreasing supplies, giving structure to the activities by area, having radical measures for the management of conflicts, requesting an improvement to the structure and infrastructure, among others (UNADM, 2021).

The resources if a food service are, human resources, utensils, supplies, and the food itself. (UNADM, 2021).

For the purpose of this research its understood that it is through the application of the administrative process that the administrator, the manager, the nutrition service chief or the manager of the food service must accomplish the objectives of the organization.

Methodology

This research was carried out with a qualitative approach, which is a set of steps that produce descriptive data in order to understand the people's point of view, as well as the phenomena that surround them and delve into their experiences, opinions and meanings; in other words, the way in which they perceive reality, based on the observable behavior and the vocabulary they use (Hernández, Fernández, Baptista (2010).

A scientific research allows various ways in which it can be classified, which is why that this research, according to the author Zorrilla (1998), was set to be of a mixed nature, being that the one that involves both documentary and field research. Being the first the one which is carried out through the consultation of documents (books, magazines, newspapers, reports, yearbooks, registers, codex, constitutions, etc.); and the field or direct research that is carried out in the place and time in which the phenomena under study occur.

On the other hand, this research was classified as both exploratory and descriptive, according to Garza (1993), an exploratory research aims to become familiar with the problem under study and select, adapt or refine the procedures available for further research.

Regarding the design of the research, a non-experimental research was carried out, since, as mentioned by Hernández, Fernández, Baptista (2010), in this type of research the phenomena are only observed as they occur in their natural context, in order to later analyze them without having modified the variables, since they act naturally and the researcher has no control over them.

Hernández, Fernández, Baptista (2010) mentions, the purpose of this design is to begin to know a variable or a set of variables, exploring them at a specific time.

The free interview was used as the research's technique and instrument.

Results

With the information collected from the interview with the local representative of the Consejo Queretano de Restauranteros A.C., it was possible to obtain relevant data regarding the application of the administrative process in the restaurant sector.

The restaurants in San Juan del Río currently have an administration directed by the owners themselves, that is, that they are characterized by being family businesses, which limits them to structuring an organization chart in which authorities, functions and responsibilities are determined, as a consequence this generates little assertiveness in the making of decisions.

Not having a mission, vision, values, ethics, objectives, etc., indicates a lack of philosophy and planning, thus, the administration of restaurants is carried out empirically due to the lack of awareness of an administrative process. , the former, based on the low probability of hiring Managers, since they do not give themselves the opportunity to transfer the power of administration to a person outside the family structure, seeing it as a threat to the growth and permanence of the business in the market.

There is a paradigm in which when a family business is handed over to a formal administration that involves the hiring of managers, assistant managers, executive chefs, etc., it can be affected in regards to the success or failure of the business itself, this due to the lack of commitment in the workers.

The lack of awareness of the existing theories of the administration present in the owners of the restaurants implies that they are forced to act empirically in the administration of their business, which encourages that their strategies are just to solve the daily problems and not allowing to have a long-term vision which allows growth and continuous improvement.

The COVID-19 contingency implied consequences for the economy of restaurants, due to the closure of establishments, low income, inflation, staff cuts, etc., this disruptive event gave us the insight that the lack Knowledge of planning, organization, direction and control in restaurants leads to the ignorance of assertive decision making.

Regarding the administrative process, it is stated that it is not put into practice in the business, the plan that is carried out is based on the current needs, not allowing to carry out a type of plan with specific objectives in the short, medium or long-term that are aligned with the mission, vision, values, etc., nevertheless, during the pandemic situation, they adopted tactical planning in order to be able to provide immediate solutions to the crisis that was being experienced, that being the planning that they continue to use currently.

The organization is a complex phase for this type of businesses, that do not have an organizational structure, which refers to the fact that responsibilities, delegation of activities, authority, division of labor and allocation of resources are focused on the decision-making of the owner. which limits the sight in the execution of the activities, meaning that centralization generates a disadvantage when it comes to the fulfillment of the tasks in a timely manner.

The management of the activities is centered in colonies such as: manager, cashiers, cooks, waiters, drinks bar, each colony carries out the activity that corresponds to it, but also the extra activity that must be carried out in order to complement those same activities, all under the leadership of the owner.

The control as a part of the evaluation of the fulfillment of the objectives, is carried out by the owner of the business, and by taking into account the multiple activities carried out, it is determined that the monitoring of the results is not done objectively and statistically, thus, it is measured from the comparison of income during a period, this due to the absence of strategic and operational planning.

The results indicate that restaurants do not have an administrative process to guide the administration of their businesses and this has generated limitations in various areas.

Discussion

The restaurants of San Juan del Río, Querétaro., do not apply an administrative process based on already existing theories, a factor to achieve the objectives of the businesses is not considered, however, the functions of the administrative process are carried out empirically, the experience from the years they have been in the market and the way through which they have achieved success, continues to give them guidelines enough to function without a clear and objective structure.

As mentioned by Izquierdo, Aída & García, Mayra, (2020) in the conclusions of their research: the administrative processes of restaurants of folk food that were investigated have been empirical since their beginning and are operated in a slightly automated manner, which produced a low control of sales, thing that coincides with what happened during the contingency, the lack of an administrative process generated a loss of income in the businesses, therefore the lack of strategic and tactical planning could be the key to the impact not being representative.

On the other hand, Sánchez, Mónica, (2020) found in their research that administrative processes are carried out informally, in some extreme cases without the owners of the restaurants not identifying which process they correspond to. The vision and leadership of the owner constitute the main guideline, the problem is that it occurs under his perceptions and experiences achieved by years of work.

Conclusions

Based on the results, it is concluded that it is important that restaurant owners hold meetings for the analysis and establishment of the mission, vision, objectives, values and internal policies, which are the reason for being of any organization and of its human capital to achieve growth and development in processes, innovation, services, products and knowledge management for the optimization of capacities and available resources in order to reactivate themselves in the competitive market.

It is important that for the restaurant owners to carry out the settling of short, medium and long-term objectives as part of a strategic plan, as well as the administration of personnel, material and financial resources, which have an impact on decision making regarding disruptive events.

The use of the administrative process in restaurants is of the utmost importance for both owners and workers, it is suggested guidance, accompaniment and training regarding the relevant subjects of effective administration for decision-making in disruptive events.

The post-pandemic economic reactivation is a relevant and elementary subject at the national and international level for the economic sectors to resume their activities with innovation in order to reposition themselves in the market, resuming and improving their participation.

In the same manner, it is convenient to point out that the administrative process must be an integrating element for the administration of restaurants in San Juan de Río. There must be a commitment on the part of the owners to implement administrative models that add to their development and growth, as a part of the learning that COVID-19 left and that one should not think that everything will continue to function as before the contingency, but rather that one must have the insight of the new administrative theories that speak of adapting to the global needs in order to achieve the short, medium and long term objectives.

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