

Leveraging Community Support for Business Growth: A Qualitative Study of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of community support in the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja. A qualitative research design was adopted, employing a case study approach to gain in-depth insights into the relationship between community engagement and business success. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 participants, including the business owner, employees, loyal customers, and community members, to understand their perspectives on the impact of community involvement on the growth of the catering business. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, identifying key themes such as participation in community events and social responsibility initiatives, digital and social media engagement, and customer loyalty programs as major drivers of business growth. Findings revealed that active participation in community events, strategic use of social media, and fostering long-term relationships with customers and institutions significantly enhanced business visibility and patronage. Additionally, the study identified untapped opportunities for the business, including formalizing community partnerships, strengthening digital marketing strategies, and developing structured training programs for aspiring chefs. The study concluded that community engagement was a critical factor in sustaining and expanding small businesses, providing both social capital and economic benefits. Based on these findings, it was recommended that Kemi's Catering Services expand its community involvement, enhance customer referral programs, and establish long-term institutional partnerships.

Keywords: *community support, business growth, employees, loyal customers, social media engagement,*

Introduction

In today's dynamic and highly competitive business environment, organizations are increasingly acknowledging the significance of community support as a crucial driver of growth and long-term success (Doan, 2023; Tuckerman et al., 2024). Traditionally, businesses were perceived as independent entities that operated in

isolation, with minimal interaction with their surrounding communities. However, this notion has gradually evolved into a more inclusive and interdependent approach, where businesses actively engage with their host communities, foster mutual support, and contribute to local development (Hasan et al., 2024; Juárez, 2014). This shift is particularly relevant for small and

medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often rely on community patronage, social capital, and goodwill to sustain and expand their operations (Lee & Hammant, 2024; Poi, 2024).

Community support refers to the collective efforts of local residents, businesses, and institutions in providing patronage, resources, partnerships, and goodwill to businesses operating within their environment (Kim et al., 2023; Shahid Satar, 2019). It encompasses various forms, including customer loyalty, word-of-mouth promotion, business referrals, and collaboration with local organizations. When businesses actively engage with their communities—through sponsorship of local events, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, or employment of community members—they build trust, foster a sense of belonging, and enhance their brand reputation (Lee & Hammant, 2024; Cyron et al., 2024). A business that prioritizes community engagement benefits from sustained patronage and an expanded customer base, leading to increased revenue and stability (Hasan et al., 2024).

The link between community support and business growth is evident in the way businesses that integrate local partnerships and community engagement into their operations experience competitive advantages (Tuckerman et al., 2024; Doan, 2023). SMEs, in particular, thrive when they tap into the social and economic networks of their immediate environment. When community members feel a sense of ownership or loyalty toward a business, they become voluntary brand ambassadors who promote its products or services (Kilkenny et al., 1999; Cyron et al., 2024). Additionally, businesses that collaborate with local suppliers and service providers create an ecosystem of mutual benefit, leading to innovation, cost-effectiveness, and long-term sustainability (Kim et al., 2023; Shahid Satar, 2019).

Business growth refers to the process through which an enterprise expands its operations, market share, profitability, and overall value (Oguh & Temofeh, 2024). Growth can be measured in several ways, including increased revenue, expanded customer base, geographic expansion, product diversification, and enhanced brand recognition. For businesses, growth is a critical indicator of success, reflecting their

ability to adapt to market dynamics, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and sustain their competitive edge (Löfsten et al., 2024).

Several factors contribute to business growth, including access to capital, a well-defined market strategy, innovation, strong leadership, and an enabling business environment (Oguh & Temofeh, 2024). Businesses that continuously improve their products and services, adopt new technologies, and maintain strong customer relationships tend to outperform their competitors. However, growth does not occur in isolation; it requires the right mix of internal capabilities and external support systems. This is where community support becomes a vital component, as it provides businesses with a reliable market, operational resources, and a supportive ecosystem for long-term expansion (Kilkenny et al., 1999; Juárez, 2014).

In Nigeria, MSMEs play a vital role in the economy, contributing significantly to employment generation, poverty alleviation, and economic diversification (Oluremi & Maku, 2024). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), MSMEs account for over 80% of businesses in Nigeria and contribute about 50% to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Despite their importance, many MSMEs struggle with growth and sustainability due to numerous challenges (Adeosun & Shittu, 2022).

Key obstacles facing MSMEs in Nigeria include limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, high operational costs, and regulatory bottlenecks (Okon, 2018). The lack of affordable financing options prevents many small businesses from expanding their operations, acquiring modern technology, or hiring skilled labour. Additionally, poor electricity supply, transportation inefficiencies, and inconsistent government policies increase the cost of doing business (Oluremi & Maku, 2024). Competition from larger firms and imported goods further constrains the ability of MSMEs to thrive in the market. For MSMEs to experience sustainable growth, there is a need for deliberate efforts to address these challenges through supportive policies, improved access to credit, and investment in critical infrastructure. Hence, this study assessed the influence of leveraging community support on business growth in Kemi

catering services in FCT-Abuja. **Statement of the Problem**

In an ideal business environment, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should have access to an enabling ecosystem that fosters growth, innovation, and sustainability. Business owners should benefit from adequate financial resources, functional infrastructure, government support, and community-driven initiatives that enhance market visibility and customer retention. Additionally, strong collaborations between businesses and local stakeholders should create a network of shared prosperity, where enterprises contribute to societal development while achieving their growth objectives.

However, the reality for many businesses in Nigeria, particularly MSMEs, is far from ideal. Despite their potential as drivers of economic growth, MSMEs continue to face significant challenges that hinder their expansion and longterm survival. The high cost of business operations, difficulty in securing funding, inadequate infrastructure, and stiff market competition create an unfavourable business climate. Many entrepreneurs struggle to keep their businesses afloat, let alone scale up to new markets or introduce innovative offerings. Moreover, limited government intervention in

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

4. In what ways can community support contribute to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja?
5. What specific strategies has Kemi's Catering Services employed to leverage community support for business expansion and sustainability?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leveraging community support for business growth has been a topic of increasing interest in recent years. Research has shown that businesses that engage with their local communities tend to experience increased customer loyalty, improved reputation, and ultimately, business growth (Kotler et al., 2021).

One key strategy for leveraging community support is through community engagement. This

promoting local businesses exacerbates these challenges, leaving many SMEs vulnerable to market fluctuations and external economic shocks.

If these problems remain unaddressed, the consequences could be detrimental to Nigeria's economic development. The inability of MSMEs to achieve sustainable growth may lead to increased business failure rates, higher unemployment, and a reduced contribution to national GDP. Furthermore, without the active integration of community support in business strategies, many small businesses may fail to harness the full potential of their local environments. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that combines policy reforms, financial inclusion initiatives, and deliberate efforts by businesses to engage with and leverage their communities for growth and sustainability.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine how community support can be effectively harnessed as a strategic tool for business growth, using Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja as a case study. Through qualitative analysis, the research aims to provide insights into best practices that other MSMEs can adopt to navigate challenges and achieve sustainable business expansion.

can take many forms, including sponsoring local events, participating in community organizations, and volunteering (Hoyer et al., 2021). Research has shown that businesses that engage in community engagement activities tend to experience increased customer loyalty and retention (Harris et al., 2022).

Another strategy for leveraging community support is through partnerships and collaborations. This can include partnering with local suppliers, collaborating with other businesses, and working with community organizations (Kotler et al., 2021). Research has shown that businesses that form partnerships and collaborations tend to experience increased innovation, improved reputation, and ultimately, business growth (Hitt et al., 2023).

Social responsibility initiatives are also an important way for businesses to leverage community support. This can include initiatives such as philanthropy, environmental

sustainability, and social justice (Carroll et al., 2019). Research has shown that businesses that engage in social responsibility initiatives tend to experience increased customer loyalty, improved reputation, and ultimately, business growth (Orlitzky et al., 2022).

Community support refers to the collective engagement, patronage, and goodwill that businesses receive from their immediate environment, including customers, local organizations, and other stakeholders. It encompasses various forms, such as customer loyalty, business referrals, word-of-mouth marketing, partnerships with local suppliers, and participation in community development initiatives. The role of community support in business success has been extensively documented in entrepreneurship and business management literature.

According to Porter and Kramer (2011), businesses that actively engage with their communities create shared value, leading to long-term profitability and sustainability. They argue that businesses should integrate community needs into their core strategies rather than treating them as peripheral concerns. This aligns with the stakeholder theory, which posits that businesses thrive when they consider the interests of all stakeholders, including customers, employees, and local communities (Freeman, 1984).

Furthermore, studies indicate that businesses that build strong relationships with their communities enjoy enhanced brand loyalty and customer retention. Research by Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) on consumer-company identification shows that customers are more likely to support businesses they perceive as socially responsible and community-oriented. Similarly, local networks and collaborations among businesses and community groups foster trust, improve market access, and provide valuable resources that contribute to business success (Felzensztein et al., 2014).

In the context of small businesses, particularly in developing economies, community support can be a critical factor in overcoming market entry barriers and sustaining competitive advantage. For instance, SMEs that participate in community-based events, support local causes, or engage in social responsibility initiatives tend to

attract positive public perception and increased patronage (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). This is particularly relevant for businesses in the food and catering sector, where reputation and word-of-mouth referrals significantly influence customer decisions.

However, the extent to which businesses leverage community support varies. Some businesses proactively seek to engage with their communities, while others struggle due to financial constraints, lack of awareness, or weak business networks. Scholars emphasize that for community support to translate into tangible business benefits, firms must actively cultivate relationships, demonstrate reliability, and contribute positively to the local economy (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

Business Growth

Business growth refers to the expansion of a company's operations, revenue, market reach, and overall business value over time. It is a key indicator of business success and can be achieved through various means, including increased sales, customer base expansion, diversification of products and services, and geographic expansion. Growth is essential for businesses as it enhances profitability, strengthens market positioning, and ensures long-term sustainability.

Several theories explain the mechanisms of business growth. Penrose's (1959) theory of firm growth argues that businesses expand by utilizing their internal resources efficiently and identifying new market opportunities. Similarly, the resource-based view (RBV) suggests that firms with unique capabilities and strong organizational resources are more likely to achieve competitive advantage and long-term growth (Barney, 1991).

Empirical studies on business growth emphasize factors such as access to finance, innovation, marketing strategies, and business networks as critical determinants of success (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2000). Small businesses, in particular, often face challenges related to limited funding, market competition, and regulatory constraints. However, those that leverage strong customer relationships and community engagement tend to experience steady growth despite these challenges (Covin & Slevin, 1991).

In Nigeria, business growth is often hindered by infrastructural deficits, high operational costs, and policy inconsistencies (Adebisi & Gbegi, 2013). SMEs, which form the backbone of the Nigerian economy, struggle with financing, customer retention, and competition from larger firms. Nevertheless, businesses that adopt innovative strategies, invest in customer engagement, and leverage community support tend to perform better in the long run (Osotimehin et al., 2012).

Community support has been increasingly recognized as a significant enabler of business growth. Studies show that businesses that actively involve their communities in decisionmaking, address local needs, and participate in social initiatives often benefit from higher customer loyalty, brand advocacy, and long-term profitability (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). This suggests that for small businesses, particularly in sectors like catering, community support can serve as both a growth driver and a sustainability mechanism.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research design, as it sought to explore and understand how community support contributed to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja. A qualitative approach was appropriate because it allowed for an in-depth examination of real-life experiences, behaviours, and perspectives, particularly in a business context where human and social interactions played a critical role (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study employed a case study approach, which was justified by the need to investigate a single entity—Kemi's Catering Services—within its real-life context. Case studies were particularly useful for understanding complex phenomena in their natural settings and providing detailed insights into business strategies and growth dynamics (Yin, 2018).

To collect primary data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including the owner of Kemi's Catering Services, employees, loyal customers, and members of the local community who engaged with the business. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility in questioning, enabling respondents to share their experiences

and insights freely while ensuring that key aspects of the research questions were addressed (Bryman, 2016). The study involved 15 participants, selected through purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals with direct experience in the business's operations and community engagement efforts. The participants included the business owner, four employees, five loyal customers and five community members (5) – including representatives from religious organizations, schools, and local businesses who have collaborated with or patronized the catering service. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and was conducted either in person or via phone calls, depending on participant availability.

For data analysis, thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and recurring themes in the collected data. This method was well-suited for qualitative research as it allowed for systematic examination of qualitative data by categorizing responses into meaningful themes related to community support and business growth (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to, ensuring informed consent from all participants, confidentiality of responses, and voluntary participation. Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured that their identities would remain anonymous, in line with ethical guidelines for qualitative research (Orb et al., 2001).

Results and Discussions

This section presents the findings of the study based on the two research questions. The results are structured according to the key themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis.

Research Question 1: In what ways has community support contributed to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja?

From the data collected, two major themes emerged regarding how community support has contributed to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services: (1) Increased Customer Base through Word-of-Mouth and Referrals and (2) Business Stability through Community Partnerships and Patronage. These themes are discussed further.

Theme 1: Increased Customer Base through Word-of-Mouth and Referrals

One of the most significant ways in which community support has facilitated the growth of Kemi's Catering Services is through word-of-mouth. The excerpts from participants are presented below:

"I first heard about Kemi's Catering through a friend who had hired them for an event. After trying their food, I recommended them to others. Now, most of my friends use their services whenever they need a caterer." (Respondent 3)

"Kemi's Catering was highly recommended by a relative who had used their services for a wedding. After my first experience, I became a regular customer, and I always suggest them to people looking for reliable catering services." (Respondent 5)

"I attended a corporate function where Kemi's Catering provided the food, and I was impressed. When I later needed catering services for my own event, they were my first choice because of the positive feedback I received from others." (Respondent 1)

"Word-of-mouth marketing is very strong in our community. I was convinced to try Kemi's Catering after several people spoke highly of their service and professionalism." (Respondent 2)

"People trust recommendations from those they know. I got to know about Kemi's Catering through my church members, and now I refer them to others because of their consistent quality." (Respondent 4)

mouth referrals and recommendations from satisfied customers. The majority of respondents indicated that they initially learned about the

Theme 2: Business Stability through Community Partnerships and Patronage

Another key aspect of community support is the role of partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and events in stabilizing revenue generation. The data revealed that schools, religious organizations, and corporate bodies within Abuja frequently engage Kemi's Catering Services for their catering needs, which provides a steady income stream for the business. For instance, a local Muslim organization confirmed that they have worked with Kemi's Catering Services for several years, emphasizing that the

"We have been using Kemi's Catering for over three years now because they not only provide good food but also support community initiatives. We prefer working with a business that understands our needs and contributes to the local community." (Respondent 2)

catering service through personal recommendations from family, friends, and colleagues. These referrals have played a crucial role in establishing Kemi's Catering Services as a trusted brand within the local market, leading to customer retention and business expansion. Several participants emphasized that they were

introduced to the business through positive testimonials, which influenced their decision to patronize the catering service.

business's consistent quality and community involvement made them a preferred choice. Similarly, an event planner noted that their organization exclusively recommends Kemi's Catering for catering services at weddings and corporate events. These partnerships help the business maintain a stable customer base, reducing the uncertainties often associated with SME operations in Nigeria. Many respondents stated that their trust in the business was strengthened due to Kemi's Catering's reputation for reliability, professionalism, and active involvement in community initiatives. The excerpts from participants are as follows:

"Our church holds several events throughout the year, and Kemi's Catering has always been our go-to caterer. Their ability to cater to large gatherings efficiently while maintaining quality is why we keep coming back." (Respondent 3)

"As an event planner, I always recommend Kemi's Catering to my clients. I have worked with them for over four years, and their consistency in delivering excellent service makes them my preferred choice. My clients are always satisfied, which helps build my reputation as well." (Respondent 1)

"Our school collaborates with Kemi's Catering for student programs and staff events. What makes them stand out is their commitment to meeting our dietary requirements and their punctuality in delivery." (Respondent 4)

"We have a long-standing partnership with Kemi's Catering for our corporate luncheons. Their professionalism and responsiveness to feedback ensure we always have a great experience. This kind of partnership is invaluable to our company." (Respondent 5)

"I first got to know about Kemi's Catering through a community event they sponsored. Their willingness to engage in local projects made me trust them more. Since then, my family and I have continued to patronize them for all our major events." (Respondent 2)

"The catering industry is highly competitive, but Kemi's Catering stands out because of their strong community presence. By working closely with different organizations, they have built a loyal customer base that ensures their business remains stable." (Respondent 6)

Research Question 2: What specific strategies has Kemi's Catering Services employed to leverage community support for business expansion and sustainability?

Findings from the study revealed that Kemi's Catering Services has actively engaged in several strategies to enhance community support and sustain business growth. Two major themes emerged: (1) Participation in Community Events and Social Responsibility Initiatives and (2) Digital and Social Media Engagement.

Theme 1: Participation in Community Events and Social Responsibility Initiatives

Kemi's Catering Services has actively participated in community-based events and

charitable initiatives to enhance its visibility and strengthen its relationship with the local population. These engagements have played a role in fostering goodwill and encouraging patronage from community members. Key community engagement strategies identified include providing discounted or free catering services for community-based charity programs, sponsoring local events such as weddings, cultural festivals, and religious gatherings and offering internship and training opportunities for aspiring chefs within the community. These initiatives not only enhance brand recognition but also foster long-term loyalty among community members, ultimately contributing to business sustainability. Excerpt from the participants are presented further.

"I had no prior catering experience, but Kemi's Catering gave me the opportunity to learn and gain hands-on experience. This has helped me start my own small business." (Respondent 1)

"During our community festival, Kemi's Catering volunteered to provide free food to the elderly and less privileged. Their generosity left a lasting impression, and since then, we have always patronized them for our events." (Respondent 3)

"We organized a wedding for an underprivileged couple, and Kemi's Catering was one of the sponsors. They provided food at no cost, and everyone was impressed. Many people who attended have since become their loyal customers." (Respondent 5)

"Kemi's Catering doesn't just provide services for profit; they give back to the community. They have sponsored several charity initiatives, and that's why I always recommend them to my friends and colleagues." (Respondent 4)

"As a young chef, getting practical experience was difficult until I got an internship opportunity at Kemi's Catering. Their mentorship and training shaped my career, and I now run my own food business." (Respondent 2)

Theme 2: Digital and Social Media Engagement

In addition to physical community interactions, the study found that Kemi's Catering Services has strategically used social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp to engage with its local community and attract new

customers. The business frequently shares photos and videos of successful catering events, customer testimonials and reviews and exclusive discounts and promotional offers for repeat customers. These efforts have contributed to increased online visibility, with customers frequently tagging and recommending Kemi's Catering Services in their personal posts.

"I follow Kemi's Catering on Instagram, and I always see updates on new dishes and customer reviews. That's how I got to know about them, and I've been using their services ever since." (Respondent 7)

"Whenever I need a caterer, I go through their Instagram page. Seeing positive reviews and mouth-watering food pictures helps me decide. Their strong online presence makes them stand out." (Respondent 8)

"I was tagged in a post about Kemi's Catering by a friend who had used their service. After checking their profile and reading customer comments, I decided to try them out. They didn't disappoint!" (Respondent 9)

"They engage with their audience so well! I once commented on a post, and they responded immediately. That level of interaction builds trust and makes them feel more approachable." (Respondent 10)

"Social media has made it easy for us to communicate with Kemi's Catering. We place orders via WhatsApp, and they always respond promptly. Their digital engagement has made transactions smooth and convenient." (Respondent 11)

Discussion of findings

The primary objective of this study was to examine the ways in which community support contributes to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja. Specifically, the research sought to answer the following questions: (i) In what ways can community support contribute to the business growth of Kemi's Catering Services in Abuja? (ii) What specific strategies has Kemi's Catering Services employed to leverage community support for business expansion and sustainability?

The findings of this study revealed that community support has significantly influenced

the growth and sustainability of Kemi's Catering Services through various means, including word-of-mouth referrals, community partnerships, participation in social responsibility initiatives, and digital engagement. The role of community support in entrepreneurship has been widely acknowledged in existing literature (Doan, 2023; Tuckerman et al., 2024). This study confirms that a strong reciprocal relationship between small businesses and their communities fosters business success, as argued by Kilkenny et al. (1999).

First, word-of-mouth referrals emerged as a crucial driver of customer acquisition for Kemi's Catering Services. The study found that a

substantial number of customers initially learned about the business through recommendations from family, friends, and colleagues. This aligns with Juárez (2014), who emphasized the importance of community engagement in strengthening business reputation and market positioning. When businesses actively interact with their communities and deliver quality services, they build trust, leading to organic customer growth through referrals (Kim et al., 2023).

Second, the establishment of community partnerships with local businesses, religious organizations, schools, and event planners has contributed to revenue stability. By providing catering services to these institutions, Kemi's Catering Services has secured consistent patronage, reducing the uncertainties associated with SME operations. These findings are in agreement with Poi (2024), who identified community entrepreneurship development (CED) as a critical strategy for business stability and economic security in Nigeria. Furthermore, community-oriented businesses tend to attract long-term clients who prioritize collaboration with businesses that contribute to social wellbeing (Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017).

Additionally, the study highlights the role of community events and social responsibility initiatives in strengthening customer loyalty and enhancing brand visibility. Kemi's Catering Services has actively participated in local charity programs, cultural festivals, and training programs for aspiring chefs, fostering goodwill and deepening community ties. This finding supports the work of Shahid Satar (2019), who noted that community engagement in social enterprises builds customer trust and enhances business sustainability.

Moreover, digital and social media engagement has served as a vital tool for community interaction and business growth. The study found that Kemi's Catering Services effectively utilizes platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp to promote its services, interact with customers, and encourage referrals. This finding resonates with Cyron et al. (2024), who explored how online communities influence engagement and business growth. Social media has become an essential avenue for small businesses to maintain

visibility and leverage community-driven marketing strategies (Lee & Hammant, 2024).

The findings of this study underscore the importance of community support in the growth and sustainability of small businesses. Kemi's Catering Services has successfully leveraged word-of-mouth referrals, community partnerships, corporate social responsibility, and digital engagement to establish a strong market presence. These strategies have not only facilitated customer retention but also enhanced the overall business resilience. The study reaffirms that fostering a symbiotic relationship between businesses and their communities leads to mutual benefits, as demonstrated in prior research (Hasan et al., 2024).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study underscore the importance of community support in the growth and sustainability of small businesses. Kemi's Catering Services has successfully leveraged word-of-mouth referrals, community partnerships, corporate social responsibility, and digital engagement to establish a strong market presence. These strategies have not only facilitated customer retention but also enhanced the overall business resilience. The study reaffirms that fostering a symbiotic relationship between businesses and their communities leads to mutual benefits, as demonstrated in prior research. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for Kemi's Catering Services:

1. It is imperative to deepen involvement in local events and charitable initiatives, strengthening brand reputation and fostering greater customer loyalty. Expanding these initiatives can position the business as a trusted community partner and attract more referrals.
2. There is need for a more strategic approach to social media marketing, including targeted advertising and influencer collaborations, remains an untapped avenue for increasing brand visibility. Enhancing digital engagement

can help the business reach a wider audience and attract new clientele.

3. While partnerships with schools, religious institutions, and corporate organizations provide a steady revenue stream, there is need to establish formal agreements or long-term contracts can mitigate market uncertainties and ensure financial predictability.
4. The absence of a structured customer referral program presents a missed opportunity. Therefore, introducing incentives for word-of-mouth recommendations can encourage loyal customers to actively promote the business, leading to sustained growth.
5. The business can further differentiate itself by formalizing its training and internship programs for aspiring chefs through providing structured skill development opportunities that can enhance community goodwill while also creating a talent pipeline for the business's future workforce.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research focused on a single case study, limiting the generalizability of findings to other small businesses in different regions. Future research could adopt a comparative approach by examining multiple small businesses across diverse sectors to identify broader trends in community-driven business growth. Second, the study relied primarily on qualitative data, which, while rich in detail, may benefit from quantitative validation through customer satisfaction surveys and financial performance analyses. Lastly, further research could explore the impact of digital transformation on community-supported businesses, considering the evolving role of technology in entrepreneurial success.

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