

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED OF 24 – HOUR OPERATING STORES

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Available Online: March 2025
Revised: January 2025
Accepted: January 2025
Received: February 2025

Volume III Issue 1 (2025)
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.15038801
E-ISSN: 2984-7184
P-ISSN: 2984-7176
<https://getinternational.org/research/>

Abstract

The rise of 24-hour retail stores in urban and semi-urban areas reflects the growing demand for convenience. This study examines the challenges and opportunities faced by these establishments in Batangas, Philippines, using a qualitative case study approach. Semi-structured interviews with store owners and employees reveal key operational, logistical, and regulatory difficulties. Operational challenges include inventory mismanagement, staffing shortages, and fluctuating sales. Poor stock rotation and inaccurate demand forecasting result in expired products and financial losses. Staffing, particularly for night shifts, is problematic due to high turnover and scheduling conflicts, affecting service quality. Seasonal demand fluctuations add further strain, making revenue unpredictable while operational costs remain fixed. Logistical challenges involve supply chain inefficiencies, security concerns, and inventory shortages. Dependence on external suppliers often leads to delivery delays, while theft and vandalism risks require improved security measures. Regulatory compliance adds complexity, particularly for small businesses struggling with labor laws, fair compensation, and workplace safety. Despite these challenges, opportunities for growth exist. The 24-hour model attracts customers with non-traditional schedules, such as students and night-shift workers. Personalized customer service, loyalty programs, and targeted promotions enhance engagement and retention. Technological innovations, such as automated inventory systems and digital payments, improve efficiency. To remain competitive, stores must improve inventory management, adopt flexible staffing strategies, strengthen supply chain partnerships, and enhance security. Addressing these challenges while leveraging growth opportunities ensures sustainability and long-term success in the evolving retail landscape.

Keywords: 24-hour retail stores, Challenges, Opportunities

Recommended Citation:

Diaz, R. D., Vasquez, C. N. B., Villano, M. C., Didal, M. A. D., Manggabon, J. A., Ramos, C. V., & Mangarin, J. A. (2025). CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED OF 24 – HOUR OPERATING STORES. GUILD OF EDUCATORS IN TESOL INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL, 3(1), 320–368. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15038801>

INTRODUCTION

The retail landscape changes like a highly complex and provocative relationship between consumers' preferences and the effectiveness of technology in processing and broadcasting information, together with the dynamics of the economy. Case in point: Retail houses within Batangas province have evolved with some even operating 24 hours. This article should have ascertained the challenges and opportunities that 24-hour retail stores pose in Batangas. It would determine the implications of the challenges and opportunities upon the strategies of operation and consumer behavior. What underlies this concept is a paradigm shift concerning retailing operations precipitated by the changes in the needs and expectations of the modern consumer (Smith et al., 2021). This study will focus on its objectives to investigate the challenges and opportunities of 24-hour retail stores and make a strategic plan. Consumers within this fast-paced world of rapid technological advancement and globalization are looking for convenience and accessibility in shopping experiences. This trend is more pronounced in urban areas since life is fast, and the consumers live very hectic lives. Having any type of goods or service available at any given hour of the day or night marks one defining characteristic of the modern retail landscape.

The most important factor of 24-hour stores in its rise is the manner through which technology has made commodities available at all times. E-commerce and also mobile applications and platforms have impacted massively the way a consumer shops. It can be possible for a consumer to shop online while a consumer can potentially access goods or services anywhere, anytime. While it's easy with technology, it does increase the complexity of issues regarding inventory management and staffing. For instance, inventory management is more taxing because the number of inventories held must be constantly checked to refill as products are sold out, ensuring that customers will always find a product in the store when they want it. Delivery sometimes needs to be more frequent than once a week or even by day and with more refined inventory systems to avoid stock out or overstocking. Furthermore, staffing adequately any shift, whether late night or early morning, is a challenging task. Retailers have to ensure effective scheduling of their employees, such that those scheduled to work night shifts should be adequately trained as well, and incentives should be offered to the willing staff in retail. The pandemic has also fast-tracked the adoption of 24-hour operations of retail outlets because "the old normal is gone and business needs to adjust to new norms and rules". Lockdowns, social distancing measures, and capacity restrictions change the way people shop, using more online shopping and having varied hours of business. As a reaction, retailers are using appropriate tactics that would help continue business operations and keep up with the changing needs of the consumer, including extended working hours, contactless payments, and increased sanitation and safety protocols to regain customers' confidence and trust. For instance, stores are now remaining open for 24 hours. Such studies reflect changes in consumer behavior.

Running a 24-hour business involves inputs involving various operations and logistics. Security is a business's main concern in businesses running all the time because theft and other crimes may be more prevalent during night shifts. To ensure the security of the staff and clients, mechanisms like putting up effective CCTV cameras, alarm systems, and probably security on premises have to be put in place. In the situation of pandemics, hygiene norms must be followed. Hygiene cleaning and disinfecting of utensils, appliances, and equipment with the general hygienic setting of the premises should be carried out regularly, meaning health security as well as following public health regulations.

Beyond these operationally significant challenges, long hours of operation also involve regulatory and logistical challenges. Opening hours, as observed from the case of the hours of opening stores, may be restricted by local

government regulations or zoning ordinances and licensing requirements which will significantly require retailers to obtain permits and approvals before launching operations 24/7. It is essential to manage the schedule of restocking and transportation logistics so that business operation would move along as smoothly as possible and goods delivered on time for the requirements of the customer. With risks and increased operational complexity, 24-hour operating stores also offer so many opportunities for retailers to differentiate themselves in the marketplace and gain an edge. It brings in new customers, who focus on convenience and accessibility, thereby expanding its customer base and foot traffic through the store. Besides that, 24/7 operating hours enable retailers to capitalize on late and early morning consumer demand for staple products and services while a novel means of generating revenues and stretching the sales opportunities.

Relative to the overall apparent trend of growth in the industry, there is a gap on the challenges and opportunities related to 24-hour operating retail stores. Although previous studies have been concerned primarily with customer satisfaction in 24-hour convenience stores, this study will explore particular, operational challenges and opportunities unique to 24-hour retail environments in Batangas. Therefore, this study systematically identifies and analyses challenges and opportunities that lead to actionable strategies and recommendations.

This study has key strategies for 24-hour retail stores in Batangas to address challenges and seize opportunities in round-the-clock operations. Effective strategies include flexible scheduling for workforce management, enhanced security protocols, and efficient inventory systems to ensure the continuous availability of goods. Technology integration, such as automated inventory tracking and digital payment options, can also streamline operations and improve customer convenience. Marketing initiatives emphasizing the accessibility and convenience of 24-hour service are also essential for attracting and retaining customers. These strategies aim to balance operational efficiency with customer satisfaction, ensuring sustainable growth and competitiveness in the 24-hour retail landscape.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to analyze the challenges and opportunities associated with 24-hour retail stores in Batangas, investigate their impact on consumer behavior and market dynamics, and develop strategic recommendations to enhance the operational efficiency and performance of these establishments. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Identify the operational, logistical, and regulatory challenges faced by 24-hour operating retail stores.
2. Explore the opportunities available to 24-hour operating retail stores for growth and customer engagement.
3. To identify the strategies by addressing the Challenges of 24-hour retail operation.
4. Develop a strategic plan based on the data gathered to enhance the operational efficiency and market competitiveness of 24-hour retail stores.

METHODS

RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

The primary objective of this study was to thoroughly investigate the challenges and opportunities faced by 24-hour retail stores. To achieve this, the researchers employed a qualitative research design utilizing a case study methodology, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of these issues. The case study approach was particularly well-suited for this research as it enabled a detailed examination of the unique challenges faced by each store, considering their specific contexts. This methodology facilitated the collection of firsthand insights through structured interviews with store owners, staff, and customers, resulting in authentic reporting and direct quotations. By focusing on multiple

cases, the researchers aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the operational challenges and growth potential within the 24-hour retail sector.

This study focused on 24-hour retail stores located in Batangas. The researchers purposefully chose participants for interviews to ensure a diverse range of perspectives, including store owners and staff members. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format, allowing for both guided questions and the flexibility to explore emerging themes.

The data collected was analyzed thematically to identify common challenges and opportunities, providing a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play in 24-hour retail operations. Qualitative case studies were particularly suitable for this research because they allowed for deeper insights into the subjective experiences and contextual factors affecting retail operations. By capturing the nuances of individual store experiences, the researchers uncovered rich, detailed information that quantitative methods may have overlooked. In summary, the insights gained from this qualitative case study contributed to the development of targeted strategies and recommendations aimed at enhancing the operations of 24-hour retail stores, aligning closely with our research objectives and ensuring that we captured the complexities of the retail environment effectively.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

This study utilized the convenience sampling technique, a form of non-probability sampling, to select six (6) retail stores that operate 24 hours a day. Convenience sampling involves choosing participants based on their accessibility and willingness to participate. This approach was chosen due to the practical constraints of the research context, where the objective was to quickly gather insights from 24-hour retail stores. By focusing on stores that were readily available and willing to share their experiences, the researchers aimed to efficiently identify the challenges and opportunities these businesses encounter.

The selected stores for this study were chosen based on specific criteria to ensure relevance to the research objectives. These included the requirement that the store operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and that it fits the definition of a retail store, selling goods directly to consumers for personal use, such as groceries, convenience items, or personal care products. Additionally, the stores must have been established or started operating 24 hours between 2020 and the present. The selection was further narrowed to those located within the selected municipalities in Batangas, ensuring geographic relevance. This set of criteria was designed to capture a sample of stores that are operationally stable and compliant, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities faced by 24-hour retail establishments in Batangas.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY

The study examined six (6) 24-hour operating retail stores, aiming to gather insights from respondents selected via convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method chosen for its practicality given time and accessibility constraints.

Participants were drawn from three different places: Balayan, Lian, and Nasugbu. Balayan had three respondents, contributing 50% of their total. Lian had two respondents, contributing 30% of their total. Nasugbu had one respondent, accounting for 20% of their total.

This distribution showcased the geographical spread and varied participation across different areas in Batangas. Ensuring representation from different municipalities allowed the study to capture a broader range of insights on 24-hour retail store operations, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researchers will conduct semi-structured interviews with both owners and employees of selected 24/7 operating retail stores. Part 1 is to identify challenges faced by 24-hour businesses. Part 2 aims to uncover opportunities perceived by the interviewees. Part 3 will gather participants' recommendations on improving operational effectiveness, addressing identified challenges, and maximizing identified opportunities. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing 24-hour retail operations stores.

VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENTS

To validate the research instrument, the researchers enlisted the assistance of the people below: a registered psychometrician, a college instructor, and a research adviser with a Master's degree in business administration. The experts recommended these in a face-to-face validation manner, which assures excellent, intensive, and interactive review of the material. The knowledge and input from such sessions became the basis for revising the questions in the interview in such a way as to guarantee the reliability and effectiveness of the instrument for the intended research.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The study will require permission from the Dean of the College of Business Administration, as well as approvals from local authorities and store management in the first district of Batangas. Once the consent from the participants was received, the researchers will conduct semi-structured interviews with six (6) 24-hour operating retail stores. This interview format allows for in-depth conversations, providing participants with the opportunity to share their experiences freely while also ensuring that key topics are covered.

The interview questions were validated by experts in business and with master's degrees, ensuring their relevance and clarity. Ethical standards were maintained throughout the data-gathering process. Participants were fully informed about the study's significance, their rights, and the measures taken to ensure their confidentiality and the anonymity of their responses.

This comprehensive approach to data gathering is designed to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings, ultimately contributing to a richer understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by 24-hour retail stores in Batangas.

DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers conducted a systematic analysis of the challenges and opportunities faced by 24-hour retail stores. The analysis began with transcribing audio recordings of the interviews, which will be done using transcription tool to ensure accuracy. The transcribed data will then be coded using a qualitative data analysis software tool, employing open coding to identify initial codes, followed by axial coding to explore relationships between codes.

A thematic analysis will be performed to identify common challenges and unique experiences among the stores. Themes will be identified based on their prevalence and significance, and efforts will be made to ensure the rigor of the analysis through triangulation and peer debriefing. Any contradictory data or unexpected findings will be examined to provide a nuanced understanding of the experiences shared by the participants.

The findings will be interpreted about the research questions and objectives, comparing them with existing literature to contextualize the results. The results will be compiled into a comprehensive report, including data visualizations and direct quotes from participants, discussing the implications for practice, policy, and future research. This thorough approach to data analysis aims to provide a rich understanding of the experiences of 24-hour retail stores, ultimately contributing to a greater knowledge of the challenges and opportunities they encounter.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study emphasizes high ethical standards to protect the rights and welfare of participants. Participants were provided with detailed forms of informed consent, written with the purpose, methods, and the risks and benefits associated with the study. The participant was allowed to pose inquiries and sign the form before a copy was prepared for them for their files. The voluntarily nature of participation was also underscored, and participants were made very clear that at their discretion, they could choose to withdraw from the study any time without this having a bearing on either their relationship with the researcher or with affiliated institutions.

For confidentiality, each participant was given a sort of pseudonym; for example, "P1," "P2," and so on. Identifying information from the transcripts of interviews was collected and extracted. Audio recordings were kept in encrypted files, and so was the transcription of recorded conversations, which remained within encrypted files and could only be accessed by members of the research team. The gathered data was used purely for research purposes. Any sort of perceived conflict of interest was declared in the informed consent and while reporting findings.

In reporting the findings of the study, the researchers ensured transparency with proper presentation without manipulation of the outcomes. If a participant demonstrated interest, they were provided with a real summary of findings for maximum transparency and engagement. The ethics of conduct in the course of conducting the study was put at the core in pursuit of honesty, integrity, and respect for the autonomy of the participants.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Challenges encountered by 24-Hour Retail Stores in terms of Operational, Logistical, and Regulatory

Operating a 24-hour retail store poses unique challenges that impact its overall efficiency, profitability, and sustainability. These challenges can be broadly categorized into three main areas: operational, logistical, and regulatory. Each category plays a critical role in ensuring the smooth functioning of a business that runs round-the-clock. Operational challenges center around the day-to-day management of staff, handling fluctuating sales, and competing within the market. Logistical concerns involve the coordination of stock, timely deliveries, and financial management to maintain consistent inventory levels. Finally, regulatory challenges encompass compliance with legal requirements, such as handling customer returns, adhering to labor laws, and ensuring store safety.

The following final review delves into these categories to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by 24-hour retail stores.

Operational Challenges Encountered by 24-Hour Retail Stores

Participants highlighted several operational challenges in maintaining a 24-hour retail store, including:

1. Inventory Management and Expiry Issues (Participants 1, 2)
2. Sales Fluctuations and Seasonal Demand (Participants 3, 5, 6)
3. Competition in the Market (Participants 4, 6)
4. Health and Well-Being of Employees (Participants 2, 3)
5. Staffing and Scheduling Challenges (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

1. Inventory Management and Expiry Issues (Participants 1, 2)

Inventory management and product expiry are significant challenges faced by 24-hour retail stores, as highlighted by several participants in the study. The continuous operation of these stores means that inventory is constantly in flux, and without proper oversight, products can expire before they are sold, leading to both financial losses and operational inefficiencies.

Participant 1 pointed out the dual issues of managing product expiry and pricing. They stated, "*Ang challenges na na-experience namin ay sa expiry at pricing. Kapag expired na of course, di namin yun pwedeng ibenta pa sa customer*" ("The challenges we experience are with expiry and pricing. When a product expires, of course, we can no longer sell it to customers"). This highlights the pressing need for 24-hour retail stores to stay on top of their stock, particularly for perishable items. Expired products represent a direct financial loss, as they cannot be sold and must either be discarded or marked down for clearance. This also carries a reputational risk if expired products accidentally remain available to customers. According to Panda (2019) Every product has a life cycle or it can be said that every product has a certain time period for useable conditions for mankind. After the expiration of the certain time period, the product is not for useable conditions and which is known as expired product.

In addition to expired products, pricing becomes a sensitive issue. Participant 1 further mentioned, "*May mga na-encounter din kami na customers na humi-hingi pa din ng discounts kahit na nasa low price na ang aming mga products*" ("We've encountered customers who still ask for discounts even when our products are already at a low price"). The constant pressure from customers to reduce prices, even for discounted products nearing expiration, adds another layer of complexity to the challenge. Retailers must find a balance between clearing old stock and maintaining profitability, a delicate task in an industry where thin profit margins are already common.

Participant 2 echoed similar concerns, focusing on how stock can sit unsold long enough to reach its expiration date. They shared, "*Ang pagsubok na kinaharap na ng aming tindahan ay sa stocks ng aming tindahan, na minsan ay inaabot na ng expiration*" ("The challenge faced by our store is with our stock, which sometimes reaches expiration"). This illustrates the broader problem of inefficient stock management. Whether due to overordering or poor sales forecasting, inventory can pile up, leading to waste. For 24-hour operations, where products are always available, keeping track of stock levels and ensuring timely sales is a critical yet often difficult task. As stated by Avram (2024), The meaning of expiration dates is not confined to the food industry. Maintaining the right and latest information on the latest expiration date of the product is challenging. Errors led to inefficient mistakes and costly mistakes, such as prematurely disposing of viable products or selling expired goods.

These issues with inventory management have wide-ranging implications for the overall performance of 24-hour retail stores. Financially, expired products directly cut into profits, and excessive discounting to move stock can further erode margins. Moreover, logistical inefficiencies in stock rotation can lead to product wastage, compounding losses. Customer satisfaction also comes into play, as shoppers may become frustrated if they encounter expired products or frequently see old stock on shelves.

Addressing these challenges requires the implementation of efficient inventory management systems. Retailers must adopt practices such as the "first-in, first-out" (FIFO) approach, which ensures that older stock is sold first, preventing items from sitting too long. Additionally, employing automated systems to track product lifecycles and alert staff when stock is approaching expiration could help mitigate these risks. Proactively managing their inventory, 24-hour retail stores can reduce waste, maintain profitability, and better meet customer demands.

In conclusion, inventory management, particularly the handling of product expiry and pricing, is a critical challenge for 24-hour retail stores. Without effective systems in place, these stores risk financial loss, reduced profitability, and strained customer relationships. Improving stock rotation, monitoring product lifecycles, and employing better sales forecasting, stores can overcome these operational hurdles and ensure smoother day-to-day operations.

2. Sales Fluctuations and Seasonal Demand (Participants 3, 5, 6)

Sales fluctuations and seasonal demand present another set of challenges for 24-hour retail stores, as evidenced by the experiences shared by participants. These stores must navigate periods of high and low customer traffic, balancing their inventory and staffing needs accordingly. The unpredictability of sales, particularly during off-peak seasons or inclement weather, can significantly impact profitability and operational efficiency.

Participant 3 described the variability in sales, stating, "*Kung minsan hindi araw-araw Pasko, minsan walang benta, hindi naman zero pero mahina lang at syaka pag maulan ay pahinga*" ("Sometimes, it's not Christmas every day; there are times when there are no sales. It's not completely zero, but it's slow, and when it rains, it's like taking a break"). This quote illustrates the inconsistency in customer traffic, especially during non-peak seasons or during bad weather. Retail stores must stay open 24 hours, but this doesn't guarantee a steady stream of customers. The operational costs of remaining open during slow periods, such as utilities and staffing, can outweigh the revenue generated, which puts a strain on the store's financial health. Seasonal demand, especially during summer, plays a major role in sales volume. Participant 5 noted, "*Pag hindi summer season, walang masyadong customer*" ("When it's not the summer season, there aren't many customers"). For many retail stores, particularly those located in areas dependent on tourism or seasonal shopping patterns, the summer months bring a surge in customer activity. However, these periods of high demand are often followed by extended lulls, during which stores must continue operating at full capacity but with reduced sales. The contrast between peak and off-peak seasons makes it difficult for 24-hour retail stores to maintain consistent revenue throughout the year. Variations in sales are inevitable in the business environment. Their causes can run as varied as the weather, considering which season it is, how the economy is doing, what the consumers want, or an unpredictable happening. The step your organization needs to prepare for this scenario, which is greatly unpredictable, is becoming aware of just how unpredictable the situation can be (*Dealing With Fluctuating Sales Cycles*, n.d.).

Similarly, Participant 6 shared, "*Kapag hindi summer season, mahina or wala masyadong bumibili, kaya bumabawi na lang kami kapag summer season*" ("When it's not summer, it's slow or no one buys much, so we make up for it during the summer"). This statement highlights the reliance on a few key months to drive profitability. While stores may see a boom in sales during the high-demand periods, they are forced to operate with much thinner margins during the rest of the year. This cyclical nature of retail demands strategic planning, including budgeting for off-peak periods and optimizing inventory to avoid overstocking when sales are slow.

The challenges of sales fluctuations and seasonal demand can have a ripple effect on other aspects of 24-hour store operations. For instance, during low-sales periods, stores may face excess inventory, which increases the risk of product expiration, as discussed earlier. Staffing also becomes an issue, as stores may need to adjust schedules or reduce hours to match customer demand, but doing so can affect employee morale and retention.

To mitigate the impact of these fluctuations, stores need to implement strategies tailored to managing both high and low-demand periods. One approach is to diversify product offerings, ensuring that the store can attract

customers year-round, not just during peak seasons. Additionally, promotions and discounts during slow periods can help drive foot traffic, even when demand is typically low. Furthermore, having flexible staffing arrangements—such as part-time or on-call employees—can allow stores to adjust labor costs more efficiently without sacrificing service quality. Based on the study of Mei (2022), that You cannot count on a consistent salary from month to month. You may earn a lot of money on some days and nothing at all on others. Summertime is typically the worst time of year for sales for those of us who offer gift-type things, with the possible exception of wedding products. mostly because people are taking vacations, spending more time outside, and avoiding being hooked to their phones or laptops to shop online. Therefore, don't give up just yet; it's not that your products aren't appreciated or that your prices are too high. After a few years of operation, you will begin to recognize the trends and cycles specific to your particular business seasons. Individuals are too preoccupied with the holidays to worry about spending money on training that would improve their business. But as you can guess, people have fresh aspirations and goals they would like to accomplish, so the beginning of the year is a perfect opportunity to do something along those lines. Remember to take into account additional holidays that fall on different dates throughout the year, such as Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and so on. Those are usually quite successful times for sales. In conclusion, sales fluctuations and seasonal demand are significant operational challenges for 24-hour retail stores. The unpredictability of customer traffic, particularly during off-peak times, can strain profitability and operational efficiency. Adopting flexible inventory and staffing strategies, along with targeted marketing efforts, stores can better navigate these fluctuations, ensuring more stable performance throughout the year.

3. Competition in the Market (Participants 4, 6)

Competition in the market is a critical operational challenge that 24-hour retail stores face. With more businesses entering the retail space, stores must constantly adapt to remain competitive. This competition can come in various forms, including pricing strategies, product offerings, and customer service. Participants shared insights into how their stores are affected by these market pressures and the strategies they employ to stay relevant.

Participant 4 highlighted the challenge of competition, stating, "*Ang challenges na kinakaharap namin ay ang kompetisyon sa merkado*" ("The challenge we face is competition in the market"). This simple yet impactful statement reflects the constant pressure that retail stores experience as they vie for customers in a crowded market. With more stores, including online retailers and larger chains, offering similar products, smaller or independent retail stores often struggle to differentiate themselves. This can lead to pricing wars, where stores are forced to lower their prices to match or beat competitors, ultimately affecting their profit margins. There needs to be genuine market rivalry for the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish in a nation. This may be characterized as an industry where many companies, both domestically and internationally, are forced to compete with one another only based on the quality of their products and services. Uncompetitive markets, on the other hand, may be defined as a setting for business where firms are shielded from rivalry and given preferential treatment. Long-term economic expansion and the promotion of the entrepreneurial spirit are common in nations with competitive marketplaces. However, nations that stifle market competition typically have fewer entrepreneurs and, thus, see slower rates of economic progress (*Market Competition / PovertyCure*, n.d.).

Participant 6 echoed similar sentiments, pointing out how seasonal demand intersects with competition: "*Isa pang bagay nakaapekto din sa amin ang pagpasok ng mga competition sa merkado*" ("Another factor that affects us

is the entry of competition in the market"). As new competitors emerge, especially during high-demand seasons like summer, stores face the risk of losing their customer base to others who may offer more attractive deals, promotions, or newer products. The presence of competitors intensifies during these peak times, making it even harder for stores to maintain consistent sales throughout the year. The competitive landscape can also lead to innovation and strategic adjustments. Stores must continually evaluate their strengths and weaknesses relative to their competitors. This might involve improving customer service, offering exclusive products, or creating loyalty programs to retain customers. For example, some stores may focus on building strong relationships with their suppliers to ensure they have access to exclusive or hard-to-find products that differentiate them from competitors. Others may invest in marketing and promotional efforts that highlight their unique value proposition, such as 24-hour availability or specialized services. It also mentioned by Paul Kagame that everyone benefits from competition. Everyone's potential is brought out via competition. No matter what social class they are in, even the impoverished have the same vitality and deserve the same freedom to strive for excellence and compete with others (Poverty cure, n.d.).

However, competition is not solely about pricing or products; it also extends to customer experience. Retail stores that operate 24 hours have an advantage in offering convenience, but they must ensure that this convenience translates into a positive shopping experience. Customers may choose to shop at a competitor not just because of price but because of factors like store cleanliness, staff friendliness, or ease of navigation within the store. Stores that prioritize these aspects of the shopping experience can create a loyal customer base that helps them withstand competitive pressures.

In conclusion, competition in the market presents an ongoing operational challenge for 24-hour retail stores. As new competitors emerge and market dynamics shift, these stores must continuously evolve to stay competitive. Focusing on pricing strategies, product differentiation, and enhancing the overall customer experience, stores can navigate the competitive landscape more effectively. While competition can be daunting, it also offers an opportunity for stores to innovate and refine their business models, ultimately leading to greater resilience in the face of market challenges.

4. Health and Well-Being of Employees (Participants 2, 3)

The health and well-being of employees represent a significant operational challenge for 24-hour retail stores. The nature of round-the-clock operations can lead to demanding work schedules, often resulting in employee fatigue and stress. Participants highlighted how these factors affect both employee performance and overall store operations, emphasizing the need for effective management strategies to support their staff.

Participant 2 noted, "*Sa employee at mga staff, kapag may nagkaka-sakit*" ("Regarding employees and staff, when someone gets sick"). This statement underscores a common issue faced in 24-hour operations: the heightened risk of illness among employees due to irregular working hours and the stress of constant customer interaction. Employees working night shifts or irregular hours may experience sleep disturbances, which can lead to decreased immune function and increased susceptibility to illness. As a result, when employees fall ill, the store's operational capacity can be compromised, creating additional strain on remaining staff members. Participant 3 further elaborated on this challenge by stating, "*Dahil nga kami ay small business pa lamang, kami lang ang nagtu-tulungan. Nakaka-apekto na din ito mismo sa aming kalusugan, at may mga pagkakataon na hindi na naming ito kinakaya*" ("Since we are still a small business, we are all helping each other. This is affecting our health, and there are times when we can't

handle it anymore"). This statement highlights the unique challenges faced by small businesses operating 24 hours. With limited staff, the burden often falls on a few individuals, leading to increased workloads and stress. The cycle of working long hours without adequate rest can result in burnout, which not only affects the individual's health but also the store's performance due to decreased productivity and morale. Moreover, the impact of poor health on employee turnover cannot be overlooked. High turnover rates can lead to operational inefficiencies, requiring businesses to spend time and resources on recruitment and training new staff. This further exacerbates the challenges of maintaining a stable workforce in an environment that demands constant vigilance and customer service. In accordance with (*Employee Wellbeing*, n.d.) Far too often, qualification for benefits, insurance, and health coverage is determined by one's socioeconomic status as an employee. Thus, it is logically true that, in the course of things, disadvantaged populations are precisely who, despite their greatest need, lose out. It will therefore be immediately necessary for employers to update their woefully inadequate and out-of-date healthcare benefits and install measures that will help all of their employees. According to P. Team (2024) There is now a powerful and well-established relationship between worker health and company performance. In general, healthy employees enhance corporate performance, and vice versa. However, at a more detailed level, many dimensions of employee well-being have been shown to correspond with particular dimensions of company performance. good mental health can improve an employee's cognitive flexibility and their ability to problem solve. Condition of the employees let them build more beneficial interpersonal relationships, which further enables them to seek support and knowledge from other individuals much better than usual. The health of an organization's workforce can have many impacts on the profitability of the organization. Healthy employees usually remain highly engaged and motivated with productive responses to productivity. This builds profits through decreased absenteeism, reduced health care expenses, and enhanced aggregate performance. Companies that invest in employees' health and wellbeing often develop an excellent work atmosphere, better supporting increased employee retention and customer loyalty for firms socially responsible. Research has shown companies that care about the health, happiness, and safety of their employees are stock market performers.

To mitigate these challenges, 24-hour retail stores need to implement health and wellness programs that prioritize employee well-being. This can include flexible scheduling to allow for adequate rest, regular health check-ups, and mental health support. Encouraging open communication about health issues can create an environment where employees feel supported and valued, potentially reducing absenteeism and increasing job satisfaction.

In conclusion, the health and well-being of employees in 24-hour retail operations are paramount not only for the individuals affected but also for the overall efficiency of the business. Recognizing and addressing these challenges, stores can foster a healthier work environment that contributes to improved employee morale, reduced turnover, and enhanced operational performance. The emphasis on employee health is not just a matter of compliance; it is a strategic imperative that can lead to sustained success in the competitive retail landscape.

5. Staffing and Scheduling Challenges (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Staffing and scheduling challenges are critical operational issues for 24-hour retail stores, where the need for consistent coverage must be balanced with the complexities of employee availability and the demands of round-the-clock operations. Participants shared their experiences regarding the difficulties they encounter in managing staff schedules and recruitment, underscoring the impact these challenges have on store performance and employee morale.

Participant 1 remarked, *"In case na may absent, or merong may sakit, nagha-hire kami ng relievers para mapunan pansamantala yung pwesto nila"* ("In case someone is absent or sick, we hire relievers to temporarily fill their positions"). This highlights the importance of having contingency plans in place to address unexpected absences, which can be frequent in a 24-hour environment. The reliance on temporary staff, however, can create additional challenges, as these individuals may lack familiarity with store policies, procedures, and customer service expectations. Consequently, the quality of service may suffer, affecting customer satisfaction and overall operational efficiency. Also, Martin and Martin (2023) stated that Any business requires an adequate number of persons to be effectively utilized. For instance, in the service industry, you never know what you're going to face during the course of the day. For any place or time, there may be an unpredictable demand! And if it happens when you are short-staffed, it is the worst nightmare for everyone working there. Moreover, if you do not derive an understanding of when your workers are available to work and do not handle your team members effectively, then you will just contribute to the noise about scheduling. For instance, let's say you are a business owner and your food bagger was absent and your cashier had to leave early because of a family emergency. The crew will only get more stressed if there is an unexpected rise in clients. This, moreover, prolongs the waiting time if there are supplementary hands.

Participant 2 noted that their employees work on fixed schedules, stating, *"Ang aming mga empleyado ay may fixed schedule. Kung may mga pagkakataon naman na may a-absent, naga-adjust ang iba para mapunan ang oras na nawala"* ("Our employees have fixed schedules. If someone is absent, others adjust to cover the lost hours"). While having fixed schedules can provide stability for employees, the need for adjustments can also lead to strain. Employees may feel pressured to cover additional shifts, which can increase their workload and potentially lead to burnout. This balancing act requires careful management to ensure that the well-being of employees is not compromised.

Participant 3 provided insight into how family involvement can influence staffing: *"Wala kaming tauhan, kaming pamilya lamang ang nagpa-palit palitan"* ("We don't have staff; only our family takes turns"). This approach, while beneficial for fostering a strong commitment to the business, can also pose challenges. Family members may have different strengths and weaknesses regarding retail operations, and their overlapping schedules may not always align, leading to inconsistencies in store management. Additionally, this reliance on family can limit growth potential, as the store may struggle to expand its workforce and may face challenges in scaling operations.

Participant 4 described a more structured approach to staffing: *"Sa umaga hanggang gabi, kami ang namamahala sa tindahan. Pagdating naman ng gabi hanggang umaga, meron kaming ilang tauhan para magbantay naman sa ganong oras"* ("During the day, we manage the store ourselves. At night, we have a few staff to watch over during those hours"). This strategy illustrates the necessity of ensuring that the store is adequately staffed at all times. However, it can also lead to an overreliance on a limited number of employees, particularly during nighttime hours when fewer staff may lead to challenges in service and security.

Participant 5 remarked, *"Walang problema pagdating sa mga tauhan kasi may kapalitan naman kapag dumarating na ang oras ng gabi"* ("There are no issues regarding staff because there are replacements when the night comes"). While this statement reflects a level of confidence in the staffing arrangements, it does not account for the potential variability in employee commitment or availability, especially in smaller operations where personal relationships may influence attendance.

Lastly, Participant 6 mentioned, *"Sa aming tindahan kaming pamilya lamang din ang nagtutulungan sa pagbabantay ng tindahan 24 oras"* ("In our store, we are also just family members helping each other watch the store 24 hours"). This underscores the theme of family involvement in staffing, which can be both a strength and a limitation. While family dynamics can enhance cooperation and commitment, they can also complicate scheduling and decision-making processes. As mentioned by Milligan and Milligan (2024), Staffing is not for the faint of heart. You will need to monitor your revenue, staff, demanding needs of tight scheduling, and how healthy your company is, as well as keep an appropriate work-life balance personally. One of the hardest parts of staffing deals with scheduling employee availability. The types of employee availability that you will schedule depend on the size of your team. Big businesses have different issues from small businesses. Small businesses often have to accommodate the limited availability of the few employees. Larger businesses have to arrange more availability schedules than well as generate enough shifts for a greater number of workers. In a large workforce, every shift can be considered "desirable." It's certainly the case that some shifts are more desirable than others. Nobody wants to work the night shift. Moreover, employees rarely want "clopen," late night, or morning shifts. Alternating late night and early morning shifts are the least wanted shift. High personnel turn-over rate and no-shows can be owed to inappropriate scheduling.

In conclusion, staffing and scheduling challenges are pivotal operational concerns for 24-hour retail stores. The balance between maintaining adequate staff coverage and ensuring employee well-being requires strategic planning and effective communication. Implementing flexible scheduling, developing robust contingency plans, and promoting a culture of support among employees, stores can better navigate these challenges. Addressing staffing issues is essential for maintaining operational efficiency and ensuring a positive shopping experience for customers, which ultimately contributes to the store's success in a competitive retail environment.

Logistical Challenges Faced by 24-Hour Retail Stores

Several logistical issues were identified, particularly concerning supply and inventory management:

1. Supply Chain and Delivery Management (Participants 1, 2, 3)
2. Stock Availability and Financial Constraints (Participants 3)

1. Supply Chain and Delivery Management (Participants 1, 2, 3)

Supply chain and delivery management present significant logistical challenges for 24-hour retail stores, where the timely availability of products is crucial to maintaining customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Participants shared their experiences regarding how supply chain issues affect their operations, highlighting both the difficulties they encounter and the strategies they employ to address these challenges.

Participant 1 emphasized the critical role of supply management, stating, *"Malaki ang epekto ng supply delivery at inventory management sa isang 24-hour store. Kapag hindi mo naprovide ang kailangan ng customer, syempre pupunta at maghahanap sila ng ibang store na mapo-provide ang kaylangan nila"* ("The impact of supply delivery and inventory management is significant for a 24-hour store. If you can't provide what the customer needs, they will go find another store that can provide it"). This statement underscores the necessity of having reliable supply chains to ensure product availability at all times. In a competitive retail environment, failure to meet customer demands can lead to lost sales and diminished customer loyalty. Dunderwal (2022) also cited that the retail industry is highly competitive, and even the slightest difference in the degree of satisfaction may become the major motivator of revenues. The supply chain may influence the inventory stocked, the timing for shipment to stores, which may adjust

the consumers' behavior, and even the exact places where the products are placed inside the store. In addition, the customer will not come back for more orders if he had a poor shopping experience and that the goods are delivered late due to problems in the supply chain with respect to delivery or logistics. You can make changes that will increase client satisfaction and have your company up there with the best by knowing the ins and outs of the supply chain. Since a supply chain is considered the most important thing for any successful retail business, selecting the right supplier is very crucial. To run a successful retail business, retailers need to contact those suppliers who are competent enough to satisfy their needs and expectations. Knowing how it works and what influences it can make you better decision-making on your retail business.

Participant 2 echoed this sentiment, noting, *"Malaki ang epekto ng supply delivery sa pagpapatakbo ng isang 24-hour na tindahan, sa availability ng mga produkto"* ("The effect of supply delivery on running a 24-hour store is significant regarding product availability"). The participant's focus on product availability highlights the importance of effective supply chain management. When stores run low on inventory due to delivery delays or supply shortages, they risk not only disappointing customers but also impacting their overall sales performance.

Moreover, Participant 3 revealed another dimension of this challenge, stating, *"Malaking kakulangan sa supply, pag nau-ubusan kami nang panggastos, pag naka-ipon ulit saka lamang kami nakaka-bili ng stock"* ("There is a significant shortage in supply; when we run out of funds, we can only purchase stock once we save again"). This insight points to the interplay between financial management and supply chain operations. Limited financial resources can severely restrict a store's ability to maintain adequate inventory levels, leading to cycles of shortages and missed sales opportunities.

While some participants experienced challenges, others shared positive experiences regarding supply management. For instance, Participant 4 mentioned, *"Mayroon kaming mga direct supplier, kaya wala kaming problema pagdating sa supply delivery"* ("We have direct suppliers, so we don't have any issues with supply delivery"). This indicates that having established relationships with suppliers can mitigate some logistical challenges, ensuring that product deliveries are consistent and reliable.

Additionally, Participant 5 noted, *"May suppliers na kusang nagdedeliver na ng mga products na aming binibenta"* ("Some suppliers voluntarily deliver the products we sell"). This proactive approach from suppliers can enhance the efficiency of operations, allowing store owners to focus more on customer service rather than worrying about inventory levels.

Lastly, Participant 6 mentioned, *"Araw araw ay may mga pumapasok na distributor para magdala ng supply na products kaya di na ako umaalis ng tindahan upang mamili ng mga supply"* ("Every day, distributors come in to bring supply products, so I don't leave the store to shop for supplies"). This consistent delivery schedule not only saves time but also ensures that the store is well-stocked to meet customer demands. According to the findings of Jenkins (2023), Chain control in retail supply engages in managing a complex set of processes dealing with estimating market demand and supply procurement to have the right products and inventories. Retailers would need smoother operations to meet consumer expectations and sustain supply chains at optimal levels. The past few years indicate the peak number of challenges in supply chain management experienced, which include increasing material costs, scarcity of workforce, frequent stock out, high and unstable cost of shipping, and changing consumer behavior. And these are times when flexibility and speed would be the only way to optimize supply chain success. On the other hand, inflexibility

and delays result in more operational expenses, frustrated clients, and ultimately a bad influence on a business profitability. A well-working supply chain allows retailers to streamline their supply-side functions and thus reduce the costs and work more flexibly. Efficient supply chain also lets businesses provide goods to customers much faster in a timely manner, which automatically gives business a competitive advantage and helps in building stronger customer relationships over time.

In summary, supply chain and delivery management are essential logistical challenges faced by 24-hour retail stores. The ability to effectively manage inventory and ensure timely product availability significantly influences store performance and customer satisfaction. Fostering strong relationships with suppliers, implementing efficient inventory management practices, and maintaining clear communication channels, stores can navigate these challenges successfully. Ensuring a reliable supply chain not only enhances operational efficiency but also helps build customer trust and loyalty in a highly competitive retail landscape.

2. Stock Availability and Financial Constraints (Participants 3)

Stock availability is a critical component of successful retail operations, particularly for 24-hour stores that need to meet customer demands around the clock. Participants identified financial constraints as a significant factor influencing their ability to maintain optimal stock levels. This challenge highlights the intricate relationship between financial management and operational effectiveness in a retail context.

Participant 3 articulated the impact of financial limitations on stock management, stating, "*Malaking kakulangan sa supply, pag nau-ubusan kami nang panggastos, pag naka-ipon ulit saka lamang kami nakaka-bili ng stock*" ("There is a significant shortage in supply; when we run out of funds, we can only purchase stock once we save again"). This statement illustrates the cyclical nature of inventory management, where insufficient funds can lead to stock shortages, which in turn can affect sales and overall business performance. The lack of available stock not only limits the store's ability to serve its customers but also places the business at a disadvantage compared to competitors who may have more robust inventory levels. Moreover, financial constraints can hinder the ability to stock diverse product offerings, which are essential for attracting and retaining customers. When stores are unable to invest in a variety of products, they risk becoming less appealing to consumers who seek choice and convenience. In a 24-hour retail environment, this can result in customers opting to shop elsewhere when their needs are not met, further exacerbating the financial struggles of the store. As explained by M. Keenan (2023), When you run out of an item in your inventory, it's known as a stockout. While out-of-stock situations can arise at any point in the supply chain, they most severely affect store shelves and earnings right before a client makes a purchase. Editorial Team (2024) also added that stockout occurs when a product is not available for customers to purchase. Online and physical retailers both experience stock shortages. Stockouts are frequently caused by shortages of supplies and poor inventory control. An additional instance of a stockout occurs when a store maintains inventory in its warehouse, but the item isn't accessible for purchase at the desired time for the client. One of the main effects of a stockout is the loss of revenue for a business. When items are out of stock, customers can't purchase them, meaning the business can't make money unless it receives more stock. This may also lead to fewer sales in the future if customers decide to purchase items from other companies instead.

The interplay between stock availability and financial constraints is compounded by the demand fluctuations experienced by 24-hour retailers. Participant 3's insights reveal that during certain times, such as non-peak seasons,

sales may decline, leading to reduced cash flow. This creates a situation where the store struggles to replenish its stock during crucial selling periods, thus perpetuating a cycle of limited inventory and lost sales opportunities.

In addressing these challenges, store owners must adopt strategic financial planning and inventory management practices. Closely monitoring cash flow and sales trends, they can make informed decisions about when to purchase stock and how much to invest. Implementing flexible payment terms with suppliers or exploring credit options can also provide stores with the financial flexibility needed to maintain adequate stock levels.

Additionally, diversifying revenue streams can help alleviate some financial pressures. For instance, offering promotional events or loyalty programs could encourage customer spending, generating additional funds that can be reinvested in stock.

In summary, stock availability is fundamentally tied to financial constraints in 24-hour retail operations. The ability to manage inventory effectively hinges on maintaining a steady cash flow, and when financial limitations restrict purchasing power, it can lead to significant challenges in meeting customer demand. Employing sound financial strategies and fostering relationships with suppliers, retailers can improve their stock management practices, ultimately enhancing their ability to serve customers and sustain business growth.

Regulatory Challenges in Operating 24-Hour Retail Stores

Participants mentioned compliance and regulatory issues that affect 24-hour operations:

1. Customer Returns and Refunds (Participant 1)
2. Employee Health and Labor Compliance (Participants 2, 3)
3. Store Safety and Security (Participant 6)

1. Customer Returns and Refunds (Participant 1)

Customer returns and refunds represent a significant regulatory challenge for 24-hour retail operations, particularly in terms of maintaining compliance and ensuring customer satisfaction. The handling of returns is not merely a logistical issue; it also involves regulatory adherence that can impact the overall operation and reputation of the store.

Participant 1 emphasized this point by stating, "*Ang return/refund ay isa sa mga challenges na naranasan ng aming store. Ang ginagawa namin in case na nagrequest si customer, pinapalitan naming ng another item/product*" ("Returns/refunds are one of the challenges our store has experienced. What we do when a customer requests it is to replace it with another item/product"). This statement encapsulates the complexities of managing customer expectations while also navigating the requirements for returns and refunds set forth by consumer protection regulations. The process of handling returns and refunds is multifaceted, involving both customer service and compliance aspects. Retailers are legally obligated to provide customers with the option to return products under certain conditions. This not only enhances customer trust and loyalty but also aligns with consumer rights laws that protect buyers from defective or unsatisfactory products. However, this legal requirement places a burden on retailers, as they must develop and implement clear return policies that comply with regulations while also considering their operational capacity to manage returns efficiently. According to S. Rasoulzadeh (2024) Any business has to suffer the consequences of returns on products but can give you and your clients frustration, cost, and dissatisfaction. Consumers will return the purchased item for one or more of several valid reasons: being unhappy, finding products damaged, discovering defects, or simply deciding they do not want the goods. Additionally, people have differences in how the

return should be done-online, in-store, or by mail. And they would also expect other outcomes such as credit, exchange, refund, or having the item repaired. To break this barrier, you have to inform your customers of your return policy, process, and possibilities in a consistent and clear manner. Moreover, you should listen to their concerns and worries and try to cover all their needs and demands as much as you possibly can.

Additionally, the way a store handles returns can significantly influence customer satisfaction. Effective return policies can enhance the shopping experience, encouraging customers to make purchases with the confidence that they can return items if necessary. However, a poorly managed returns process can lead to dissatisfaction and damage the store's reputation, ultimately affecting repeat business. As noted by Participant 1, the solution implemented by their store—offering an exchange rather than a direct refund—reflects an effort to provide customer service while mitigating the financial impact of returns.

Furthermore, the management of returned items presents logistical challenges. Once a product is returned, the store must assess its condition and determine whether it can be resold, discarded, or sent back to the supplier. This decision-making process is vital as it directly affects inventory levels and financial outcomes. If returned items cannot be resold, they may represent a financial loss that impacts the overall profitability of the store.

To navigate these challenges effectively, retail operators must ensure that their staff are trained in customer service protocols regarding returns and refunds. This includes understanding the store's return policy, effectively communicating with customers, and efficiently processing returns to minimize wait times and frustration.

In conclusion, managing customer returns and refunds is a critical regulatory challenge for 24-hour retail stores that involves compliance, customer satisfaction, and operational efficiency. Implementing clear policies and training staff appropriately, retailers can enhance their ability to handle returns while maintaining regulatory compliance and fostering positive customer relationships. As such, effective returns management is not only a necessary operational aspect but also a strategic element that can significantly influence customer loyalty and business success.

2. Employee Health and Labor Compliance (Participants 2, 3)

Employee health and labor compliance are crucial regulatory challenges for 24-hour retail stores, as they directly impact not only the well-being of employees but also the operational integrity of the business. These challenges encompass various aspects of employee welfare, adherence to labor laws, and the implications of health issues within a continuously operating environment.

Participants 2 and 3 highlighted the significance of these issues in their operations. Participant 2 noted, "*Sa employee at mga staff, kapag may nagkaka-sakit*" ("Regarding the employees and staff, when someone gets sick"), while Participant 3 added, "*Dahil nga kami ay small business pa lamang, kami lang ang nagtu-tulungan. Nakaka-apekto na din ito mismo sa aming kalusugan, at may mga pagkakataon na hindi na naming ito kinakaya*" ("Since we are still a small business, we only help each other. This also affects our health, and there are times we can no longer handle it"). These statements reflect the interconnectedness of employee health and compliance issues, emphasizing the need for effective management in a high-demand retail setting. The 24-hour nature of retail operations poses unique challenges related to employee health and well-being. The constant demand for staffing can lead to long hours and inadequate rest for employees, increasing the risk of burnout and health-related issues. Participant 3's comment about the impact on health underscores how excessive work hours and insufficient support can result in physical and mental exhaustion among staff. This not only affects employee morale but can also lead to higher absenteeism and turnover

rates, which are detrimental to the stability of the workforce. Based on the study of Caine and Caine (2019), Sickness absence has wide ranging direct and indirect effects on businesses and other organizations. These include, Lower productivity due to reduced labor force, Responsibility of paying wages or sick pay for absent employees, Cost of recruitment and training of temporary fill-ins, Probability of decreased customer satisfaction, and reduction in motivation and morale of other people serving there. Others will have to carry the additional workload, which may eventually lead to overwork, stress, and further absence from work through ill health.

Labor compliance adds another layer of complexity to these challenges. Retailers are obligated to adhere to labor laws that regulate working conditions, hours, and employee rights. Failure to comply with these regulations can lead to legal repercussions and fines, further straining the operational capabilities of the store. For small businesses operating 24 hours, the challenge is often magnified, as they may lack the resources to ensure comprehensive compliance while managing the day-to-day demands of the business.

Moreover, when employees are unwell or unable to work due to health issues, the burden often falls on remaining staff to cover shifts, leading to increased stress and workload. Participant 2's mention of illness among staff members illustrates how interconnected the health of employees is with operational capacity. When sickness arises, the small team may struggle to maintain regular store operations, which can ultimately impact customer service and sales performance.

To effectively address these challenges, 24-hour retail stores should prioritize employee well-being and establish protocols to ensure compliance with labor regulations. This may include implementing regular health check-ups, offering mental health support, and creating a more flexible work schedule that allows for adequate rest. Furthermore, investing in employee training on health and safety can foster a culture of well-being and awareness, equipping staff with the knowledge to recognize and address potential health risks.

In conclusion, employee health and labor compliance are paramount considerations for 24-hour retail operations. Prioritizing the well-being of their workforce and ensuring adherence to labor laws, retailers can create a healthier work environment that enhances employee satisfaction and productivity. This, in turn, contributes to the overall success and sustainability of the business, highlighting the importance of viewing employee health and compliance as integral components of operational strategy in the retail sector.

3. Store Safety and Security (Participant 6)

Store safety and security are critical regulatory challenges faced by 24-hour retail stores, significantly impacting both the employees' sense of security and the overall operational effectiveness of the business. With round-the-clock operations, these stores must implement measures to protect against various risks, including theft, vandalism, and potential harm to staff and customers.

Participant 6 expressed concerns about safety, noting, "*Sa safety ng aming tindahan dahil wala pang cctv na nakalagay sa aming tindahan*" ("Regarding the safety of our store, we don't have CCTV installed yet"). This statement highlights a prevalent issue among many small 24-hour retailers: limited resources to invest in adequate security measures. The absence of security cameras can make stores more vulnerable to theft and crime, creating an environment of insecurity that can deter both employees and customers. The implications of inadequate store safety are multifaceted. From an employee perspective, the lack of safety measures can lead to heightened anxiety and stress, impacting job satisfaction and overall morale. Staff members may feel less secure working in an environment where

their safety is not prioritized, which can affect their performance and willingness to engage with customers. For example, if employees fear for their safety during late-night shifts, they may be less inclined to assist customers or manage the store effectively. In the words of Security (2019), Your staff may feel unsafe if they are aware of your inadequate security measures. If your building is easily accessible or frequently the victim of theft or damage, staff members won't feel secure at work. Additionally, if your firm has experienced a security issue that was handled poorly, feelings of discomfort can escalate. In addition to creating an unfavorable work atmosphere, a lack of safety can also lower productivity and raise employee churn. Strong security is the best approach to guarantee that your staff feel safe and protected when they report to work.

Additionally, safety concerns extend beyond employee well-being to customer experience. Customers are likely to avoid shopping at stores they perceive as unsafe, impacting foot traffic and, consequently, sales. The perception of safety can significantly influence consumer behavior; if customers feel at risk while shopping, they may choose to patronize competitors with better security measures in place.

Moreover, regulatory compliance related to safety and security is essential. Retailers must adhere to local laws and regulations regarding safety standards, which may include proper lighting, emergency exit routes, and protocols for handling emergencies. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in legal repercussions, fines, or even business closure, further complicating the operational landscape of 24-hour stores.

To mitigate these challenges, 24-hour retailers should prioritize enhancing their safety and security measures. Implementing a comprehensive security plan may include investing in CCTV cameras, hiring security personnel, and training employees in safety protocols. Additionally, ensuring adequate lighting inside and outside the store can help deter criminal activity and create a safer environment for both staff and customers.

In conclusion, store safety and security are paramount concerns for 24-hour retail operations. As highlighted by Participant 6's observations, the lack of adequate security measures can undermine the safety of employees and customers alike, negatively impacting the overall operational success of the store. Prioritizing safety and ensuring compliance with relevant regulations, retailers can foster a secure shopping environment that enhances customer trust and employee morale, ultimately contributing to the sustainability and success of their business.

Opportunities for Growth and Customer Engagement in 24-Hour Retail Stores

Participants identified several specific opportunities for growth and customer engagement available to 24-hour operating retail stores:

1. Personalized Customer Engagement (Participants 1, 2, 3)
2. Promotional Strategies to Attract Customers (Participants 2, 3)
3. Unique Product Offerings (Participants 3, 5)
4. Convenience through Extended Operating Hours (Participants 1, 4)
5. Meeting Diverse Customer Needs (Participants 2, 4, 6)
6. Enhanced Revenue Opportunities (Participants 5, 6)
7. Responsive Adaptation to Customer Preferences (Participants 1, 6)
8. Community Integration (Participants 2, 4)

1. Personalized Customer Engagement (Participants 1, 2, 3)

Personalized customer engagement is a significant opportunity for growth in 24-hour retail stores, playing a crucial role in attracting and retaining customers. As these stores operate around the clock, the ability to connect with customers on a personal level can lead to enhanced customer loyalty and increased sales. Participants in the study emphasized that meaningful interactions with customers during their visits create a positive shopping experience that encourages repeat patronage.

Participant 1 highlighted the importance of being available for customers, stating, "*Kahit off-hours, sinasagot ko pa din yung mga questions or kapag may kailangan ang customers*" ("Even during off-hours, I still answer questions or assist customers when they need help"). This commitment to responsiveness illustrates how employees prioritize customer needs, fostering an environment where shoppers feel valued and appreciated. When customers perceive that their needs are met, they are more likely to return, solidifying their loyalty to the store. Additionally, (O, 2023) also stated that customer interaction in today's corporate environment has changed from being a one-size-fits-all strategy to one that is more individualized and customized. For businesses to engage with their customers more deeply, build stronger bonds with them, and eventually increase brand loyalty, personalization is essential. The days of grabbing consumers' attention with generic marketing messages are long gone. Customers of today demand a tailored experience that addresses their individual needs and interests. In customer engagement, personalization is recognizing the uniqueness of every client and adjusting interactions accordingly.

Moreover, the participants noted that creating a welcoming atmosphere is vital. One participant stated, "*Kapag may kailangan sila, ina-assist ko pa din sila at pinakikisamahan ng maayos*" ("When they need something, I still assist them and engage with them properly"). This attentiveness to customer requests enhances their shopping experience, leading to greater satisfaction. When employees provide assistance with a genuine attitude, customers are more inclined to view the store as a go-to destination for their needs.

Casual interactions also emerged as a key component of personalized engagement. Participant 3 shared, "*Pinakikitunguhan namin ang customer na parang tropa lamang, or tatanungin mare ano Ano Sayo katulad nang ganyan, makikipagbolahan muna sa customer*" ("We treat the customer like a friend, asking them how they are and joking with them first"). Fostering a friendly and approachable atmosphere, store employees can create a relaxed environment that encourages customers to engage more freely. This not only makes the shopping experience enjoyable but also opens up channels for customers to express their preferences, allowing the store to tailor its offerings accordingly. In the study of Dungan (2023), Exactly preschedule greetings that are especially prepared for every and each recipient can really make a difference in improving your customer relations. It is an easy way yet one that is very effective to let them know you appreciate and recognize them as unique people. A firm can build trust and a sense of belonging when it greets its consumer by their name. This is because the company shows that it understands and cares about them while taking its time to know who they are. In the case of personalized engagement with the customers, key is the understanding of the journey of the customer. You would want to know where they stand in the buying process, what their pain is, so you could calibrate your messaging to their needs. That's where customized communication fits into the equation. You are more apt to capture their attention and keep it there by adjusting your messages and offers to the right time and in the right channel. One may find single client interaction through phone calls or live chats to be the biggest help in strengthening the bond with your clients. They allow you to build a more

intimate and trustworthy kind of relationship with your clients because it allows a personal touch. In one-to-one conversations, you can help in a more personalized and responsive manner where you get to attend to their specific needs and issues. Short talks, in a nutshell, individualized customer engagement involves tailoring interactions and communication to the unique needs and preferences of particular customers. Such a thing keeps greetings, communication, rewards, and recommendations as personal as possible to help create trust, a sense of belonging, and intimacy with customers while increasing their engagement and loyalty.

The impact of personalized customer engagement extends beyond immediate interactions. Satisfied customers are likely to recommend the store to friends and family, leading to increased foot traffic. Furthermore, as one participant noted, the ability to provide tailored services is a distinctive advantage of operating 24 hours. Being accessible and attentive at all hours, these stores can cater to unique customer needs, such as late-night essentials or specific requests that might not be addressed by competitors with limited hours.

In conclusion, personalized customer engagement represents a vital opportunity for growth and customer loyalty in 24-hour retail stores. Through attentive service, friendly interactions, and responsiveness to customer needs, these stores can cultivate lasting relationships with their clientele. As the participants highlighted, the emphasis on personalized engagement not only enhances customer satisfaction but also strengthens the competitive position of 24-hour retail stores in an increasingly crowded market. Prioritizing meaningful connections with customers, these businesses can create a sustainable foundation for long-term success.

2. Promotional Strategies to Attract Customers (Participants 2, 3)

Promotional strategies play a pivotal role in driving customer engagement and increasing foot traffic to 24-hour retail stores. The participants highlighted various tactics that can be employed to attract customers and differentiate their offerings in a competitive market. These strategies not only enhance visibility but also foster customer loyalty by creating a sense of value.

Participant 2 emphasized the effectiveness of incentives, stating, "*Bigyan ang mga customer ng mga promo at freebies upang mawili sila na bumalik-balik sa iyong tindahan*" ("Give customers promotions and freebies to encourage them to keep coming back to your store"). This statement underscores the importance of offering tangible rewards that entice customers to return. Promotional activities such as discounts, buy-one-get-one offers, or loyalty programs can significantly enhance the appeal of a retail store, making it a more attractive option compared to competitors. By incorporating promotions that resonate with their target market, retailers can effectively increase customer retention and encourage repeat visits.

Moreover, the use of limited-time offers emerged as a strategic approach to create urgency among customers. Participant 3 mentioned, "*Pagda-dagdag pa ng mga produkto na sa aming tindahan lamang makikita*" ("Adding products that can only be found in our store"). This strategy not only highlights unique offerings but also fosters a sense of exclusivity, compelling customers to make immediate purchases. Introducing time-sensitive promotions, such as flash sales or exclusive product releases, retailers can motivate customers to take action and visit the store more frequently, thus boosting sales. According to Ginesi (2023), Freebie marketing is the art of advertisement whereby firms give their target market free goods or services or valuable information. The aims are to get noticed, interact with potential clients, and instill brand loyalty. Companies impress customers in giving something of value out for free, promoting reciprocity, and pointing out the level of quality of their products. The end of this process is to make the

receivers into devoted patrons by generating buzz and increasing visibility of the brand. Freebie marketing is flexible and can be of great help almost any business be it any size, or industry. Being a small local business, a startup or a large corporation, the act of offering freebies can make you stand out, help you compete with big brands, and really build a loyal customer base. Online businesses, software companies, service providers, and physically sales-based companies can also derive good advantages out of freebie marketing and in turn increase followers, win trust, and convert.

Another critical aspect of promotional strategies is effectively communicating these offers to potential customers. Engaging customers through various channels—be it social media, local advertisements, or word-of-mouth—can significantly increase awareness of ongoing promotions. Leveraging these channels, 24-hour retail stores can reach a broader audience, effectively spreading the word about their special offers and unique products. Furthermore, the participants noted that personalized promotions can also enhance customer loyalty. Collecting data on customer preferences and purchase history, retailers can tailor promotions to meet individual needs. This level of customization can make customers feel valued and understood, fostering a deeper connection with the store. For instance, sending personalized discount coupons for frequently purchased items can lead to increased customer satisfaction and repeat business.

In conclusion, promotional strategies are essential for attracting customers to 24-hour retail stores. As highlighted by the participants, offering incentives, utilizing limited-time promotions, and effectively communicating these strategies can significantly enhance customer engagement and loyalty. Creating a value-driven shopping experience and ensuring that customers are aware of unique offerings, these retailers can strengthen their market position and foster long-term relationships with their clientele. Ultimately, strategic promotional initiatives can transform the shopping experience, making 24-hour stores a preferred choice for consumers seeking convenience and value.

3. Unique Product Offerings (Participants 3, 5)

Unique product offerings are a significant avenue for growth and differentiation in 24-hour retail stores, allowing them to cater to diverse customer needs and preferences. Participants highlighted how these distinctive products not only attract customers but also foster loyalty by providing items that may not be readily available elsewhere.

Participant 3 emphasized the importance of exclusivity, stating, "*Pagda-dagdag pa ng mga produkto na sa aming tindahan lamang makikita*" ("Adding products that can only be found in our store"). This highlights a critical strategy for engaging customers: curating a selection of unique items that cannot be easily sourced from competitors. Focusing on exclusive products, 24-hour retailers can create a niche market that draws customers seeking something different. This approach not only positions the store as a unique destination but also encourages consumers to return for the exclusive offerings that cannot be found in other establishments.

Participant 5 elaborated on the types of unique products that can attract customers, noting, "*Ang mga binibili sa aming tindahan ay kanilang mga kagustuhan at hindi pangangailangan tulad ng alak, sigarilyo, at ilang mga junk foods*" ("The items bought at our store are their desires and not necessarily needs, such as alcohol, cigarettes, and some junk foods"). This statement underscores the significance of stocking products that cater to the specific wants of customers rather than just their needs. Offering items that appeal to customers' desires, such as indulgent snacks or late-night cravings, 24-hour retail stores can establish a loyal customer base that sees the store as a go-to destination

for satisfying these urges. Moreover, the strategic selection of products tailored to the local demographic can significantly enhance customer engagement. For instance, if a store is situated near entertainment venues, including unique snack items or party supplies can attract late-night patrons. This localized approach not only increases sales but also demonstrates a keen understanding of the customer base, which can further strengthen loyalty and engagement. From 3G NETWORK - Grow, Gain, Global (n.d.), Offering distinctive products gives a company a competitive edge, builds brand loyalty, allows for larger profit margins, and sets the company apart from competitors. All of these factors can have a big impact on a company's success. They do, however, call for thorough preparation, a large financial commitment, and ongoing innovation. Through comprehension of the market, emphasis on innovation, and achievement evaluation, enterprises can proficiently utilize distinctive product offerings to stimulate expansion and attain sustained prosperity.

Additionally, offering seasonal or themed products can create excitement and encourage repeat visits. For example, during holidays or special events, introducing limited-time offerings that align with customer celebrations can attract foot traffic and stimulate sales. Participant 3's observation about adding unique products speaks to the broader concept of product lifecycle management—continuously refreshing the inventory to include items that resonate with current trends and customer preferences.

In conclusion, unique product offerings are a vital component of growth for 24-hour retail stores. As highlighted by the participants, curating exclusive items, catering to customer desires, and strategically selecting products based on local demographics can enhance customer engagement and loyalty. Positioning themselves as unique destinations for specific needs and preferences, these retailers can effectively differentiate themselves from competitors, fostering a loyal customer base that values the distinct offerings available at their stores. Ultimately, this strategy not only drives sales but also establishes a strong competitive advantage in the market.

4. Convenience through Extended Operating Hours (Participants 1, 4)

The convenience offered by extended operating hours is a cornerstone of the business model for 24-hour retail stores, significantly enhancing customer satisfaction and engagement. This unique aspect of their operations allows these stores to cater to a wide array of customer needs at any hour, effectively positioning themselves as indispensable resources in the community.

Participant 1 articulated the importance of this convenience, stating, "*Malaki ang impact ng pagkakaroon ng isang 24-hour na tindahan. Lalo na kung limitado lamang ang bilang ng 24-hour na tindahan sa isang lugar*" ("The impact of having a 24-hour store is significant, especially when the number of 24-hour stores in an area is limited"). This statement underscores the competitive advantage of being a 24-hour establishment in an environment where few others operate at such hours. Customers experiencing urgent needs or cravings in the middle of the night can rely on these stores, fostering a sense of loyalty and gratitude among patrons who value accessibility. According to Better Retailing (2020), Being available when the customers want you and easily accessible with a wide variety of products is the premise behind a convenience shop. You must be open while the supermarkets are closed so that you can maximize your investment and be convenient. Even if sales patterns develop over time inside your organization, you never know when a significant group of sales may happen. It's just a matter of being there when people need you to make something that might otherwise be an average day until 6 o'clock turn into a double- or triple-digit day by 8 o'clock.

Participant 4 further emphasized the advantage of being available at all hours, noting, "*Dahil nga 24-hour kami, napo-provide naming ang mga pangangailangan ng mga customer sa kahit anong oras*" ("Because we are open 24 hours, we can provide for our customers' needs at any time"). This convenience transcends mere product availability; it speaks to a commitment to customer service that recognizes and accommodates the varied schedules of modern consumers. For individuals working night shifts, late-night socializers, or those in emergency situations, the ability to access necessary products and services at any hour is not just a convenience but a vital service. In addition, *UpZaar 3.0*, (n.d.), stated that extended hours of operation also tend to provide businesses with new marketing avenues. Being open for longer might allow you to reach an exponentially larger number of people who do their shopping at times different from regular business hours. Increased exposure does translate to increased chances for new recognition of your brand and even to attracting more customers. For instance, if your business sells sporting goods and you are open 24/7, then those clients searching for a tennis or basketball racquet can call at any time of day or night. From this more extensive marketing opportunity, you should see an increase in sales due to the more extensive possibility, which should help to fuel the growth of your business. The most obvious benefit of extended operating hours is the possibility of increased sales. This will open for much longer, hence attracting more shoppers who actually do shopping after hours when most businesses are usually closed. Sales may otherwise be lost to other businesses. Increased accessibility can work towards enhancing customer loyalty since, the customer is likely to go back to the business if it has been open when they required it. Longer hours will surely give a competitive edge to companies. The business shops can differentiate itself from competitors and attract clients seeking a convenient shopping option by staying open late. This will further boost both sales as well as brand recognition.

The impact of extended hours also relates to customer behavior patterns. Many consumers lead busy lives, and having the option to shop outside of conventional hours aligns with their lifestyles. For example, parents managing work and family responsibilities may find it challenging to shop during traditional business hours. The ability to purchase daily essentials during late-night hours alleviates stress and enhances the overall shopping experience, creating a reliable source for those who might otherwise struggle to find time to shop.

Furthermore, the operational strategy of maintaining extended hours allows for a diverse customer base. The availability of 24-hour stores attracts not only regular consumers but also transient customers, such as travelers or night shift workers, who require access to food, beverages, or other necessities at unconventional times. This expanded customer reach can significantly increase foot traffic and sales, particularly during off-peak hours when other retailers are closed.

In conclusion, the convenience provided by extended operating hours is a key driver of customer engagement and loyalty in 24-hour retail stores. As highlighted by Participants 1 and 4, this strategic choice positions these stores as essential resources within their communities, catering to the diverse needs of customers at any time. Prioritizing accessibility and aligning with customer lifestyles, these retailers can enhance their competitive advantage, foster loyalty, and ultimately ensure their operational success in a dynamic market landscape.

5. Meeting Diverse Customer Needs (Participants 2, 4, 6)

The ability of 24-hour retail stores to meet diverse customer needs is a critical factor that enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. Recognizing and accommodating the varied preferences and requirements of their clientele, these stores position themselves as versatile and responsive community resources.

Participant 2 highlighted the importance of understanding customer needs, stating, "*Remittance, bills payment, at card transactions ang unique na napo-provide ng aming tindahan sa aming mga customer*" ("Remittance, bills payment, and card transactions are the unique services we provide to our customers"). This statement illustrates how 24-hour stores extend their offerings beyond traditional retail items to include essential financial services that cater to the everyday needs of their customers. In doing so, they not only attract a broader customer base but also establish themselves as integral parts of their customers' daily routines. As explained by Lumoa (2024), You require different perspectives and views to cater to the individual needs of all your clients. Diversity refers to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, or veteran status; it is more than just gender. Therefore, to include others in an organization, you cannot stop at diversity only, because diversity is dead without a culture that embraces people from diverse backgrounds. People eventually leave your team if you do not value their opinions and do not treat them as they deserve. Diversity is a wise commercial decision, but it has to be married to an open culture. Diverse client experiences have clear financial benefits. There is research to suggest that competition advantage tends to lie with those businesses that have a culture that values diversity and inclusiveness.

Participant 4 elaborated on the role of convenience in meeting customer needs by stating, "*Dahil nga 24-hour kami, napo-provide naming ang mga pangangailangan ng mga customer sa kahit anong oras*" ("Because we are open 24 hours, we can provide for our customers' needs at any time"). This responsiveness ensures that customers can access essential products and services whenever they require them, whether it's late-night medication, snacks, or emergency supplies. The store's ability to cater to immediate needs fosters a sense of reliability and trust among customers, encouraging them to return frequently.

Moreover, Participant 6 emphasized the store's role in addressing specific customer preferences, noting, "*Since kami nga ay malapit sa resort, unique na ipinupunta sa amin ng mga customer ay cash in cash out services*" ("Since we are near a resort, customers uniquely come to us for cash in and cash out services"). This insight illustrates how location plays a significant role in shaping customer needs and preferences. Offering services tailored to the local demographic, particularly vacationers and resort visitors, the store effectively capitalizes on its geographical advantages, enhancing its appeal to diverse customer segments. As well as Gurus (2022), says that first and foremost, it is fundamental to know the wants and needs of your customers. You may start meeting each customer's specific wants once you get an idea of what he or she needs. Secondly, it is also integral to have regular contact with your client base. You may ensure they are always updated on your offers with such an action. Managing and communicating with consumers is pivotal to be successful in business. The origin, habits, and interests of thousands of clients need to be understood to fulfill their requirements. Companies of all scales are highly demanding and very tough to effectively manage the various and diversified needs of the clients. Only when a company gets its products or services properly formulated can it successfully satisfy consumers' demands while maintaining an identifiable brand character.

The implications of meeting diverse customer needs extend beyond immediate sales; they contribute to building long-term relationships. Customers who feel understood and valued are more likely to express loyalty to the store, often sharing their positive experiences with others. This word-of-mouth marketing can be incredibly powerful, drawing in new customers who may be seeking the same personalized service and attention.

Additionally, the ability to adapt and cater to diverse customer needs positions these 24-hour stores favorably against competitors. As more retailers strive to differentiate themselves, the capacity to provide unique services and products

can be a key differentiator. In a market where many stores operate on a traditional schedule, those that remain open around the clock and actively listen to their customers' requirements stand out as leaders in customer service and satisfaction.

In conclusion, meeting diverse customer needs is a pivotal aspect of the operational strategy for 24-hour retail stores. As demonstrated by Participants 2, 4, and 6, the ability to provide tailored services and products not only fulfills immediate customer demands but also fosters loyalty and trust. Remaining responsive to the unique needs of their clientele, these stores can enhance customer satisfaction and position themselves for sustained success in a competitive retail environment.

6. Enhanced Revenue Opportunities (Participants 5, 6)

The operation of 24-hour retail stores presents significant revenue opportunities that are vital for their growth and sustainability. Maximizing their operational hours, these stores tap into a broader customer base, ultimately enhancing their financial performance and market position.

Participant 5 emphasized the financial advantages of extended hours, stating, "*Mas mataas ang kita kumpara sa ilang oras lamang na tindahan*" ("We earn more compared to stores that operate for limited hours"). This insight highlights a fundamental benefit of 24-hour operations: the potential for increased sales through continuous customer access. Being open around the clock, these stores can cater to varying schedules and preferences, allowing them to capture sales that would otherwise be missed if they operated on a traditional schedule. According to the data from Research paper (n.d.), 24-hour stores increase productivity since they cater to consumers whose schedules may not be standard, especially night shift workers and students. Since individuals can shop at their convenience, rather than changing personal or work schedules to accommodate the hours of traditional operation, they can shop at their convenience. Businesses enjoy sales when generally sales are low, thus ensuring a smooth cash flow throughout the day and night. Extended hours also spread the crowding problem at peak hours, therefore improving customer experience. On a bigger scale, 24-hour stores maximize opportunities for sales through accessibility and increase productivity for consumers as well as business operations.

Participant 6 elaborated on the competitive edge provided by 24-hour availability, noting, "*Malaki ang epekto ng pagiging 24-hour ng aming tindahan sa merkado sapagkat sa pagdating ng alas nuebe ng gabi ang ibang tindahan ay sarado na kaya nakakalamang kami sa competitors*" ("The impact of being a 24-hour store on the market is significant because by 9 PM, other stores are closed, so we have an advantage over our competitors"). This statement underscores how 24-hour operations enable stores to fill a gap in the market. With many competitors closing their doors in the evening, the 24-hour store becomes the go-to option for late-night shoppers or those in need of emergency supplies. This strategic positioning can lead to higher sales volumes during off-peak hours, driving overall revenue growth. Along with Aithor (2024), says that The modern landscape of consumerism and retailing is a competitive business. Commercial places are meant to attract customers, and their existence creates economic benefits for cities. Customers and commercial organizations can have an advantage from the diversification of commercial centers with increased activities and longer hours. As a fact, shopping spaces increase their trading hours with sales and the reduction of costs in commercial businesses. These have driven huge commercial building operations such as departmental stores and supermarkets to cut down on running costs and ensure that commercial activities are maintained to provide even more extended time frames of the operations. However, this has also led to commercial

activities bringing about comparable operation that is worthy of either day or night shift. From an urban life with a 24-hour opening hour of commercial activities, the demands of employment and home life have changed significantly, thus allowing businesses to adapt to extended office hours and also evening and weekend leisure time. The ability of commercial areas to adapt to both a day and night lifestyle can reduce the economic benefits of such diversification of activities. Districts are not only under the influence of shopping, leisure areas, and residential areas but also the dwellings of inhabitants. The ethical customs and law of a nation will protect its proprietors and inhabitants right to peaceful existence with hardly work interminable hours through the night.

Moreover, the extended operating hours facilitate the introduction of specialized services and products that align with the unique demands of late-night customers. For instance, offering items like snacks, beverages, or emergency supplies during late hours can significantly contribute to revenue. As Participant 5 pointed out, "*Pag may mga hinahanap ang mga customer sa aming tindahan akin itong inililista at dinadagdag sa aming mga produkto ibinebenta*" ("When customers ask for specific items in our store, I make a note of it and add it to our product offerings"). This proactive approach to inventory management not only addresses immediate customer needs but also opens up avenues for additional sales, thereby enhancing overall revenue opportunities.

Additionally, the flexibility afforded by 24-hour operations allows for dynamic pricing strategies and promotional campaigns tailored to specific times of day. For example, implementing late-night discounts or promotions can attract budget-conscious customers and increase foot traffic during hours that might typically see lower sales. This adaptability in pricing can lead to improved sales performance and a more robust revenue stream.

The implications of enhanced revenue opportunities extend beyond immediate financial gains. Increased profits allow for reinvestment in the business, whether through expanding product lines, improving store facilities, or enhancing marketing efforts. As these stores continue to grow and adapt, they can cultivate a loyal customer base that contributes to long-term success.

In conclusion, enhanced revenue opportunities are a crucial advantage of operating 24-hour retail stores. As highlighted by Participants 5 and 6, the potential for increased earnings through continuous customer access, strategic product offerings, and innovative pricing strategies can significantly impact a store's financial health. Capitalizing on these opportunities, 24-hour retailers can establish themselves as indispensable community resources while achieving sustained growth in a competitive marketplace.

7. Responsive Adaptation to Customer Preferences (Participants 1, 6)

In the fast-paced environment of 24-hour retail operations, the ability to adapt responsively to customer preferences is crucial for sustaining engagement and ensuring business growth. This adaptability not only enhances customer satisfaction but also fosters loyalty, which is essential for long-term success in a competitive market.

Participant 1 articulated the importance of responsiveness, stating, "*Kahit off-hours, sinasagot ko pa din yung mga questions or kapag may kailanagan ang customers*" ("Even during off-hours, I still answer questions or assist customers when they need something"). This statement reflects a commitment to customer service that transcends typical business hours. Remaining accessible and responsive, employees can build rapport with customers, creating a sense of trust and familiarity that encourages repeat visits. Such interactions can significantly influence customers' perception of the store, turning casual shoppers into loyal patrons. Based on the research of Experts (2024) Customer responsiveness is a measure of the speed with which and the effectiveness with which an organization responds to the

needs of its customers. It refers either to how fast the responsive organization meets the demands placed upon it or how effectively it answers customer inquiries and complaints, implements recommendations, and receives feedback. It also states to describe speed and accuracy in filling orders. The effective response of customers ensures customer satisfaction and loyalty. It is desirable for the shortest time possible to answer customers' inquiries and give them feedback. Organizations must have systems and monitor and respond to their customer inquiries and act on such issues if they arise. Organizations typically carry out assessments of levels of customer responsiveness using monitoring tools such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, or mystery shoppers. High levels of customer responsiveness need to be attained by organizations for them to be successful in today's competitive marketplace. A company's success is largely contingent upon its customer relationships, the quality service it can deliver, and the satisfaction it can achieve for its customers about its products or services. Unless an organization has an efficient strategy of customer responsiveness, the organization is liable to lose business opportunities because of dissatisfied customers who will spread bad word-of-mouth about the organization. An important thing in offering an excellent customer experience to customers is responsiveness. Fast and effective responses to the inquiries and feedback of customers reinforce an interest in customers and build their confidence in the business. Responding quickly to any concerns or questions of the customers for or against products saves valuable time and generates a sense of accountability toward customers. This helps in developing a positive overall customer experience by encouraging loyalty and making the clients feel that there is a voice for them. Excellence in response builds excellent relations between businesses and customers and also increases customer retention. When they are assured, they will receive a prompt answer, the customers have more confidence in the business's products or services and are likely to return for subsequent purchases or refer friends to them. Thus, having a trustworthy system affords the ability to serve customers quickly, facilitating the formation of business relationships that can be developed over time. The more satisfied the customers will help businesses to have better opportunities for upselling to increase revenue potential. Customer responsiveness again influences the growth of revenues since a good reputation also comprises customer growth for the company.

Furthermore, Participant 6 shared a proactive approach to adapting to customer needs, emphasizing, "Kailangan maayos pa rin ang iyong pakikitungo at pakikiusap sa mga customer" ("It's essential to maintain good interaction and communication with customers"). This sentiment highlights the significance of effective communication in understanding and addressing customer preferences. When employees take the time to listen to customer feedback and inquiries, they can identify trends and specific demands that may not be immediately apparent. This responsiveness allows for a more tailored shopping experience that aligns with customer expectations, ultimately enhancing satisfaction. As emphasized by Deskeo (n.d.), being responsive at work makes up an important aspect of your performance to be optimized. It allows you to face challenges and to seize opportunities and manage stress. To improve that, get informed, have time management, and have clear communication. Now, let's not forget a well-designed workspace, because workspaces play an essential role as professionals in optimizing professional responsiveness. Indeed, a well-designed work environment might enhance responsiveness through comfort, access to resources, teamwork, information control, and establishing an environment that encourages high-speed decision-making.

The concept of responsive adaptation extends to product offerings as well. Participant 1 noted the importance of continuously evaluating customer requests: "*Kapag may mga hinahanap ang mga customer sa aming tindahan akin itong inililista at dinadagdag sa aming mga produkto ibinebenta*" ("When customers ask for specific items in our store, I make a note of it and add it to our product offerings"). This proactive inventory management approach demonstrates

an understanding that customer preferences can shift over time. Actively incorporating customer feedback into product selections, the store not only enhances its relevance but also solidifies its role as a community hub that meets diverse needs.

Additionally, the flexibility of 24-hour operations enables stores to quickly respond to emerging trends and seasonal demands. For instance, during holidays or special events, adapting product offerings to include themed items can attract more customers. This agility is particularly beneficial for small retailers, as they can pivot more rapidly than larger competitors who may have more rigid supply chains.

Moreover, responsive adaptation can enhance the overall customer experience. When customers feel that their preferences are acknowledged and acted upon, they are more likely to feel valued and appreciated. This emotional connection can lead to positive word-of-mouth referrals, further expanding the store's customer base.

In conclusion, responsive adaptation to customer preferences is a vital strategy for 24-hour retail stores seeking to foster loyalty and drive growth. As illustrated by Participants 1 and 6, maintaining open lines of communication, actively seeking customer feedback, and adjusting product offerings in response to those insights are critical elements of success. Prioritizing customer engagement and responsiveness, these retailers can create a shopping environment that not only meets but exceeds customer expectations, ultimately contributing to sustained success and competitiveness in the market.

8. Community Integration (Participants 2, 4)

Community integration is a vital aspect of the operational strategy for 24-hour retail stores, as it fosters a strong connection with local customers and enhances brand loyalty. Embedding themselves within the community, these stores can create a loyal customer base that views them not just as retailers, but as integral parts of their daily lives.

Participant 2 emphasized the importance of community involvement, stating, *"Bigyan ang mga customer ng mga promo at freebies upang mawili sila na bumalik-balik sa iyong tindahan"* ("Offer customers promotions and freebies to encourage them to return to your store"). This approach not only incentivizes repeat visits but also demonstrates a commitment to supporting the local community. Offering special promotions, stores can cater to the specific needs and preferences of local customers, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement. Such promotional strategies often create a buzz within the community, encouraging word-of-mouth marketing that further enhances the store's visibility and reputation. As pointed out by Perkins (2023), In business terms, the freebie could be that initial act that gets patrons to repay by being loyal, returning, or even recommending the company. According to the reciprocity principle, freebies are viewed as having greater value in relation to other promotional reductions. The moment a person assists us in doing something, we should always want to give back at one point. Offering free things to others is not a new concept. Earlier, it was used as a tool by companies to promote their brands in a better and more manageable way.

Moreover, Participant 4 highlighted the unique offerings that can arise from understanding the community's needs, mentioning, *"Kapag may mga hinahanap ang mga customer sa aming tindahan, akin itong inililista at dinadagdag sa aming mga produkto ibinebenta"* ("When customers ask for specific items in our store, I make a note of it and add it to our product offerings"). This commitment to responding to customer requests showcases how 24-hour retail stores can adapt their inventory to meet local demands. Providing products that resonate with community interests, retailers can cultivate a loyal customer base that appreciates their dedication to serving local preferences.

Additionally, Al-Hussain (2024) says that Free stuff is perhaps one of the most important strategies that is always effective in the marketing landscape. Giving away free products or services can be one of the most compelling ways to increase participation, attract new customers and foster brand loyalty. Let us find out why freebies are an important constituent of your marketing mix and how you can use them to impact your marketing strategy in the best possible way. Freebie is a fantastic way of gaining trust from your target market. If you are providing something of value free, it shows the world you believe in what you're selling. You trust people enough to let them try what you are offering. This gesture of goodwill can be quite the glue that binds your brand and the people watching it; they become loyal and increase the chances of return business. Freebies can dramatically increase your brand's presence. This will most probably make people talk it up to their friends and family and even share it on social media, which usually leads to an increase in awareness about your brand, and getting you in front of a larger audience. People like sharing good deals and free offers online, which ultimately helps your brand push out and through all types of media. A freebie enables potential customers to engage with your product or service risk-free for them to find the value for the service or product. This goes well with unknown brand names who want to enter the market. Demonstrating the superiority and value of the offering will have more probability chances that customers will return and purchase in the future.

Community integration extends beyond mere transactions; it involves building relationships that enhance customer loyalty. When stores actively participate in local events or collaborate with other businesses and organizations, they position themselves as supportive pillars of the community. For instance, hosting local events or participating in community festivals can provide additional opportunities for engagement, allowing stores to showcase their offerings while contributing to the local culture. This can create a positive feedback loop, where increased visibility leads to more customer interaction, resulting in higher sales and continued community support.

Furthermore, being an active community member allows 24-hour retailers to gain valuable insights into the preferences and concerns of their customer base. Engaging with local residents, store owners can better understand the unique challenges faced by the community and tailor their services accordingly. For example, if a local charity is raising funds for a cause, a 24-hour store might choose to donate a portion of its sales to that initiative. Such actions not only strengthen ties with the community but also enhance the store's image as a socially responsible business.

In conclusion, community integration is a powerful strategy for 24-hour retail stores aiming to enhance customer loyalty and drive growth. As illustrated by Participants 2 and 4, building strong connections with the local community through promotions, responsive product offerings, and active participation in local events can foster a sense of belonging among customers. Prioritizing community integration, these retailers can create an environment where customers feel valued and engaged, ultimately contributing to sustained success and a positive reputation within the market.

Strategies to Address Challenges in 24-Hour Retail Operations

Participants in the study shared various strategies implemented to tackle the challenges associated with operating a 24-hour retail store. The following specific strategies were identified:

1. Adjusting Pricing and Promotions (Participants 1, 4)
2. Enhancing Inventory Management (Participants 2, 6)
3. Increasing Staffing Levels (Participants 1, 3)
4. Prioritizing Customer Service (Participants 3, 4)

5. Utilizing Online Sales Strategies (Participant 6)
6. Effective Space Management (Participants 2, 5)
7. Implementing Safety and Security Measures (Participants 4, 6)

1. Adjusting Pricing and Promotions (Participants 1, 4)

Adjusting pricing and implementing promotions are crucial strategies for 24-hour retail stores, as highlighted by the insights of Participants 1 and 4. These strategies not only influence sales but also reflect the dynamic nature of consumer behavior and market competition.

Participant 1 emphasized the importance of competitive pricing, stating, "*Kailangan naming i-adjust ang presyo namin para makasabay sa iba*" ("We need to adjust our prices to keep up with others"). This underscores the necessity for retailers to remain agile in their pricing strategies. In a competitive market, consumers have access to multiple options, and they often compare prices across various stores, particularly in the 24-hour retail environment where convenience plays a significant role. Adjusting prices, retailers aim to attract price-sensitive customers and boost sales. In the research of SheerID (2023), The use of promotional pricing has become one of the sales strategies whereby brands may temporarily reduce the price of a product or service to attract prospects and customers. If a brand lowers the price for a short period, it artificially increases the value of a product or service because it creates a sense of lack in the minds of the consumers. Then, a brand uses promotional pricing to attract the customer when it is trying to acquire new customers by encouraging cost-conscious shoppers to purchase. It increases short-term cash flows and can help create customer loyalty. Perhaps the key time for a promotional pricing strategy is in the short term. Done to excess, it actually costs brands money by eating into their profit margins. It encourages customers to become "price-oriented," or they may stock up during the promotion. It also adds to the already-noisy marketplace where communications and awareness get muddled due to promotions and discounts. Promotional pricing is a very popular sales strategy. After all, 80% of marketers have reported that promotions and discounts are important in their customer acquisition strategy.

Moreover, Kuchkanov (2024), Stated that Promotional pricing is that kind of pricing strategy in which a product or service is offered at a discounted price for a short period of time. A promotional pricing strategy provides for stimulating demand, increased sales, and attraction of new customers. Promotional pricing is an important strategy for businesses for the following reasons: It can make businesses quickly increase sales and earn revenues. It can create revenues for businesses concerning the slow season or while launching new product lines. It can be applied for liquidation of surplus stock since it enables one to cut down carrying costs, thus enhancing cash flows. Since price-sensitive customers who otherwise would not have purchased the product at regular prices get attracted, it can expand a customer base. A promotional price can create a feeling of urgency and even make the consumer spend money with impulse, which increases the sales and profit.

Generally, promotional pricing is a great strategy that can help companies in scores of marketing and financial goals. For example, promo pricing in terms of discounts and other advertisements of offers is a successful technique in raising sales and attracting buyers. Although popular, the increase in sales is rarely worth the cut in revenue and there are several reasons that explain why promotional prices aren't as effective as they seem. Price promotions have been one of the most popular strategies used by retailers for decades. Whether it is "buy one, get one free" or placing an item on sale for a short period, companies are willing to give up a portion of their profit if that translates to one's

incentives for purchasing. According to the definition of promotional pricing, logically, it appears as a technique of reducing the prices to attract more customers. This should, theoretically, compensate the lost revenues with increased attraction due to fear of losing a bargain at the promotional price.

Furthermore, *High Low Pricing Strategy Explained: The Pros & Cons*, (n.d.), assumed that One of the advantages of a high-low price strategy is that it boosts your organization's overall profitability because customers may also buy full-priced items when opportunities to buy products at a reduced or reduced price are offered to them. While the higher sales volume can also take place online, one aspect of high-low pricing strategy that takes place much more often in brick-and-mortar retail stores is in regards to maintaining inventory-filled sales floors. Customers go into an actual retail store intent on purchasing one thing that they see being sold at a reduced price and then leave with more items once they have browsed through the store.

Moreover, Participant 4 added that promotions, such as discounts and special offers, serve as effective tools to increase customer traffic. They remarked, "*May mga times na nagkakaroon kami ng promo para makahikayat ng mga customer*" ("There are times we have promotions to attract customers"). This highlights how well-timed promotions can draw in customers who might otherwise not shop during late hours. Promotions create a sense of urgency, prompting consumers to take advantage of deals before they expire, which can significantly enhance foot traffic and sales volume.

However, while adjusting pricing and promotions can drive immediate sales, they also present certain challenges. Participant 1 noted, "*Minsan, kahit na nag-discount na kami, may mga customer pa ring humihingi ng mas mababang presyo*" ("Sometimes, even after we discount, some customers still ask for lower prices"). This ongoing pressure from customers for further discounts complicates the pricing strategy. Retailers must navigate the fine line between offering attractive promotions and maintaining profitability. When promotions become too frequent or aggressive, they can undermine the perceived value of the products, leading customers to expect lower prices regularly rather than valuing the products at their full price.

Furthermore, Participant 4 highlighted the operational implications of promotional pricing, stating, "*Kailangan din naming magplano nang mabuti para hindi maubusan ng stock*" ("We also need to plan carefully so we don't run out of stock"). Effective promotion planning is essential to ensure that inventory levels align with promotional activities. Insufficient stock during a successful promotion can lead to customer dissatisfaction, as potential sales are lost, and loyal customers may be frustrated by unavailable products. Conversely, overstocking in anticipation of promotions can lead to excess inventory, which might eventually result in price markdowns or wastage of perishable goods. In line with the study of SheerID (2023), The use of promotional pricing has become one of the sales strategies whereby brands may temporarily reduce the price of a product or service to attract prospects and customers. If a brand lowers the price for a short period, it artificially increases the value of a product or service because it creates a sense of lack in the minds of the consumers. Then, a brand uses promotional pricing to attract the customer when it is trying to acquire new customers by encouraging cost-conscious shoppers to purchase. It increases short-term cash flows and can help create customer loyalty. Perhaps the key time for a promotional pricing strategy is in the short term. Done to excess, it actually costs brands money by eating into their profit margins. It encourages customers to become "price-oriented," or they may stock up during the promotion. It also adds to the already-noisy marketplace where communications and awareness get muddled due to promotions and discounts. Promotional pricing is a very popular

sales strategy. After all, 80% of marketers have reported that promotions and discounts are important in their customer acquisition strategy.

The implications of pricing and promotional adjustments extend beyond immediate financial outcomes. They play a vital role in shaping customer perceptions and fostering loyalty. When customers perceive they are receiving good value, they are more likely to return, thereby enhancing customer retention and building long-term relationships. However, if customers frequently encounter out-of-stock situations or feel that prices are not justified, their loyalty may wane.

In conclusion, adjusting pricing and promotions is a strategic necessity for 24-hour retail stores, reflecting both market demands and customer expectations. Participants 1 and 4's insights illustrate the complexities involved in implementing these strategies effectively. While competitive pricing and promotions can drive sales and attract customers, they also require careful management to avoid negative impacts on profitability and customer satisfaction. By balancing pricing adjustments with thoughtful promotional strategies, retailers can enhance their market position and foster a loyal

2. Enhancing Inventory customer base.Management (Participants 2, 6)

Effective inventory management is a critical factor in the success of 24-hour retail stores, as underscored by Participants 2 and 6. With continuous operations, these stores face unique challenges that necessitate robust inventory practices to ensure product availability, reduce waste, and enhance operational efficiency.

Participant 2 stressed the importance of maintaining adequate stock levels, stating, "*Kailangan palaging kumpleto ang aming stocks upang lagi kang pupuntahan ng mga customer*" ("It's essential to always have our stocks complete so customers will keep coming back"). This insight highlights the direct correlation between inventory availability and customer satisfaction. In a 24-hour retail environment, where consumers expect immediate access to products at any time, having a well-managed inventory is paramount. Insufficient stock can lead to missed sales opportunities and customer frustration, as shoppers may turn to competitors if they cannot find what they need.

Moreover, Participant 6 echoed this sentiment by stating, "*Kapag wala masyadong bumibili sa aming tindahan, iniaalok ko ang mga ito o pinagbebenta sa online*" ("When not many customers are buying in our store, I offer these products or sell them online"). This reflects a proactive approach to inventory management, where the participant recognizes the need to adapt to changing demand patterns. Utilizing online platforms to sell surplus stock not only helps to mitigate losses but also expands the market reach beyond the physical store. This dual approach ensures that products are not sitting idle and that the store maximizes its potential revenue streams. According to Caramela (2024), Proper management of inventory is one of the main defining elements of business profitability. Still, most small businesses neither adequately manage their products nor materials. Some stock too little product and lose customers, while others overstock due to fear that they might run out. This also creates cash flow problems. Proper management of inventories strikes a balance between these two extremes.

However, the challenge of inventory management in 24-hour operations is compounded by the need for accurate demand forecasting. As Participant 2 noted, "*Dapat may maayos na inventory management at sa mga stocks*" ("There should be good inventory management and stock control"). This suggests a recognition of the necessity for systematic tracking and analysis of stock levels to prevent overstocking or stockouts. Effective inventory management systems can provide real-time data on sales trends, helping retailers make informed decisions about replenishment

and stock rotation. Additionally, Chew (2022) stated that besides having too little or too much inventory, poor inventory management creates inefficiencies since you don't have precise real-time information about how much inventory you have. This increases your risk of getting the wrong inventory replenishment from suppliers or selling inventory that does not exist. This can also result in lost sales and lost repeat customers or carrying too much oversized inventory of the wrong SKUs. An ideal scenario is to keep an optimum inventory level by effective forecasting of demand based on historical information plus an outlook of external trends. Proper inventory management helps business organizations handle fluctuations in demand and also balance warehousing cost against ordering cost.

The implications of poor inventory management extend beyond financial losses. For 24-hour retail stores, the presence of outdated or unsold stock can affect the shopping experience, as customers may be deterred by seeing empty shelves or outdated products. This not only damages the store's reputation but can also reduce customer loyalty, as shoppers may prefer stores that consistently meet their needs.

To enhance inventory management, retailers must adopt strategies such as implementing inventory management software that allows for real-time tracking of stock levels and automated reordering processes. Additionally, training staff on best practices for inventory handling and encouraging open communication about stock levels can foster a culture of accountability and responsiveness.

In conclusion, enhancing inventory management is vital for the operational success of 24-hour retail stores. The insights from Participants 2 and 6 illustrate the complexities and necessities of maintaining sufficient stock levels while adapting to consumer behavior. Prioritizing effective inventory practices, retailers can improve customer satisfaction, minimize waste, and ultimately drive profitability in a highly competitive environment.

3. Increasing Staffing Levels (Participants 1, 3)

The staffing levels within 24-hour retail operations significantly impact customer service and overall operational efficiency, as highlighted by Participants 1 and 3. The constant need for service during all hours means that having an adequate number of employees is crucial to meet customer demands and maintain smooth operations. Participant 1 emphasized the necessity of additional staff, stating, *"Isang bagay sa mga ilang customer, maikli yung pasensya nila. So may tendency na pag nagsa-sabay-sabay is hindi maiwasang may hindi maasikaso"* ("One thing about some customers is that they have short patience. So when they come in at the same time, it's inevitable that some may not be attended to"). This observation reveals the pressing challenge of customer patience and satisfaction, particularly during peak hours when multiple customers are present. In a 24-hour setting, where customer service expectations are high, the presence of sufficient staff is essential to ensure that all customers receive timely attention. When stores are understaffed, it can lead to longer wait times and a diminished shopping experience, potentially driving customers to seek alternatives. According to the findings of Kaizo (2023), Understaffing is that term you use to describe a situation wherein a company or organization is not having enough employees to meet its needs. In some cases, that lack of staffing may come from rapid scaling or a recent scale-down. And if you do not have enough people to deal with demand, it affects the reputation greatly at the company level. Understaffing issues create long wait times, frustrated customers, and a huge revenue loss. Since there are fewer employees to cater for the consumers and to put into working lines, then the quality of the product and service goes down. If a firm emphasizes to work strictly according to quotas, then only a lesser number of people have to work harder to carry out a larger volume of work, and errors increase. When an organization is constantly understaffed at work, it becomes difficult to offer service support in an

effective way, and customers may need to wait longer or receive no support at all. This easily leads to frustration and dissatisfaction by customers. Understaffing at the workplace can also lead to dissatisfaction and frustration from employees who fail to have the proper time with a customer, thus failing to give the attention they deserve.

Workplace understaffing makes the existing workers take over additional work, thus raising stress levels on the agents to complete their tasks and realize performance targets. Short-staffed working will also affect the morale of employees; it lowers job satisfaction, affects one's mental and physical health, and prolongs periods the employee has to be absent from work.

Participant 3 further underscored the importance of having attentive staff, sharing, "*Kailangan palaging attentive ang tao sa tindahan, or palaging merong nakabantay para mapagbilhan agad ang customer at hindi mainip*" ("Staff must always be attentive in the store, or there should always be someone on watch to serve customers quickly so they won't get impatient"). This highlights a crucial aspect of retail operations: the need for proactive customer engagement. An adequately staffed store can respond quickly to customer inquiries and needs, which is vital in a retail environment where shoppers expect immediate assistance, especially late at night or during off-peak hours when fewer employees are typically scheduled.

The challenges associated with inadequate staffing extend beyond customer dissatisfaction. When employees are overwhelmed due to insufficient numbers, it can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction, further exacerbating the staffing issue. Participants noted that longer wait times and inattentiveness could harm the store's reputation, making it essential to find a balance between labor costs and service quality. As stated by the study of *The Negative Effects of Being Short-Staffed* (n.d.), "One recent study, more than 50 percent of workers are not engaged at work as a result of stress, leading to a loss of productivity. When your employees feel that they have an endless list of work or deadlines that are perennially bearing down on them, stress levels will rise. In contrast, those workplace environments in which employees feel that they are part of a team that equitably divides duties tend to be far more productive and cheerful. chronically understaffed companies can also precipitate increased rates of workplace accidents. As individual workers in an understaffed facility put in extra hours, over-tiredness, high stress levels, and physical exhaustion will likely set in. Tired and distracted employees not only are less productive but also more prone to workplace injuries that can drive up your worker's compensation costs.

To address these challenges, 24-hour retail stores should consider implementing flexible staffing strategies. This could involve using part-time employees during peak hours or employing scheduling software to optimize staff allocation based on historical sales data and traffic patterns. Additionally, cross-training staff can ensure that employees are versatile and can assist in various roles, allowing for better coverage during busy periods.

Moreover, fostering a positive work environment can also aid in staff retention and attract new hires. Providing adequate training and support will empower employees to deliver exceptional service, which can enhance the customer experience and increase overall store efficiency.

In conclusion, increasing staffing levels is a crucial strategy for improving customer service and operational effectiveness in 24-hour retail stores. The insights from Participants 1 and 3 emphasize the link between adequate staffing and customer satisfaction, underscoring the necessity of balancing labor costs with the need for responsive service. By adopting flexible staffing solutions and investing in employee satisfaction, retailers can enhance their service quality, ultimately fostering customer loyalty and driving sales growth.

4. Prioritizing Customer Service (Participants 3, 4)

Customer service is a fundamental aspect of retail operations, particularly in 24-hour stores where customer expectations for immediate assistance are heightened. Participants 3 and 4 highlighted the critical role of prioritizing customer service in creating a positive shopping experience and fostering customer loyalty.

Participant 3 articulated the importance of maintaining strong relationships with customers, stating, "*Maayos na pakiki-sama lamang palagi sa mga customer*" ("Always having a good relationship with customers"). This sentiment underscores that positive interactions with customers are not merely a function of transactional exchanges but rather involve building rapport and trust. In a 24-hour retail environment, where customers may visit at odd hours, having employees who can engage positively and provide personalized service can significantly enhance the shopping experience. Such relationships can lead to increased customer satisfaction, encouraging repeat visits and cultivating brand loyalty. As found by Barron (2024), Good customer service means building relationships with your customers. That means you can have a response time that is rapid for servicing requests; you don't ignore customer feedback, be it negative or positive; you offer self-service help documents; and your process of getting in touch with support is frictionless. While the nature of business you are running as determines what kind of customer service needs are there, best customer service teams use feedback-gathering tools to identify specific needs from their customer base and create solutions targeted to that specific kind. Instead of assuming you know what your customers want, use surveys and interviews to tap the view of your customers on your business. These tools will reveal other opportunities to improve your offerings and make the lives of your customers easier for your team. Emotional intelligence is having an awareness of others' emotions and the ability to quickly respond to them.

In customer service, it is invaluable in helping to diffuse difficult customer interactions. Any business has a frustrated or upset customer, and the best service teams can de-escalate a situation and prevent potential churn. At the end of the day, the best customer service teams solve their customers' problems. They are tenacious and devoted to helping their customers succeed. Often, this means that their agents must be creative and work up some form of unique solution for the customer's problem. Happy customers are important to your business. They are on their way to brand loyalty if positive customer service experiences continue. And poor customer experiences can ruin all that your business and brand have accomplished in good will with those customers, and you could lose them talking to more people about it than you would ever gain from a good customer experience.

Moreover, Participant 4 emphasized the effectiveness of promotional strategies as a means of enhancing customer service. They noted, "*Pagbibigay ng promo's, buy 1 take 1. Nagiging effective ito dahil bumabalik ang mga customers*" ("Offering promotions like buy one, take one. This becomes effective because customers come back"). Promotional strategies not only draw customers in but also contribute to their overall experience in the store. Providing value through promotions, retailers can not only attract first-time shoppers but also incentivize them to return, reinforcing a cycle of customer engagement.

The emphasis on customer service extends beyond friendly interactions and promotional offers; it also encompasses attentiveness to customer needs and feedback. Establishing systems for gathering customer feedback—such as comment cards or digital surveys—can inform retailers about customer preferences and areas for improvement. This proactive approach demonstrates that the store values its customers' opinions and is willing to adapt to better meet their needs, further enhancing the shopping experience. In Employment, Small Business and Training (2024)

mentioned that listening, understanding your customer's needs, thanking the customer, and promoting a positive, helpful, and friendly environment will ensure they leave with a great impression. A happy customer will return often and is likely to spend more. They may also refer other people to your business. Consider these elements of good customer service. In a 24-hour retail context, where employees may work during less busy hours, the potential for a disconnect between customer expectations and service delivery can increase. Therefore, investing in staff training focused on customer engagement techniques can equip employees with the skills needed to provide exceptional service consistently. Training programs can cover areas such as conflict resolution, active listening, and effective communication, ensuring that all employees feel confident and prepared to meet customer demands.

Additionally, fostering a culture that prioritizes customer service within the organization can have lasting benefits. When employees understand that their role extends beyond simply restocking shelves or completing transactions, they are more likely to take the initiative to provide excellent service. Management should encourage and reward staff for going above and beyond in their interactions with customers, creating a sense of ownership over customer satisfaction.

In conclusion, prioritizing customer service is a critical strategy for enhancing the operational effectiveness of 24-hour retail stores, as emphasized by Participants 3 and 4. Building strong customer relationships, implementing effective promotional strategies, and fostering a customer-centric culture among employees, retailers can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. This focus on customer service not only enhances the immediate shopping experience but also contributes to the long-term success and competitiveness of the store in a challenging retail landscape.

5. Utilizing Online Sales Strategies (Participant 6)

In today's retail landscape, integrating online sales strategies has become essential for 24-hour retail operations, as highlighted by Participant 6. The ability to leverage digital platforms not only enhances visibility but also provides additional avenues for revenue generation, especially during off-peak hours when foot traffic may be low.

Participant 6 stated, "*Kapag wala masyadong bumibili sa aming tindahan iniaalok ko ang mga ito or pinagbebenta sa online*" ("When there aren't many customers in our store, I offer these or sell them online"). This approach illustrates a proactive response to fluctuating in-store sales by tapping into online marketplaces. Utilizing online sales strategies, retailers can reach a broader audience beyond their physical location, attracting customers who prefer the convenience of shopping from home or who may not be able to visit the store during traditional hours. The integration of online sales can effectively mitigate the challenges faced by 24-hour retail stores in managing stock levels. For instance, when certain products do not move quickly enough in-store, transitioning them to an online platform can increase their chances of being sold before they expire. This strategy not only helps in clearing inventory but also minimizes losses associated with unsold goods. The flexibility of online sales enables retailers to manage stock dynamically, adapting their sales strategies to current market demands and customer behaviors. In the assessment of Business Gateway (n.d.) Reach, if people can buy from you without visiting your physical shop, it becomes possible to attract customers from outside your local area, city, or even country. This is very helpful for companies selling niche products where there may not be enough people living locally who would be likely to buy them. Flexibility, you will not be tied down to manning a shop counter to opening times but you might be free to choose when you work, to deal with, and fill online orders. Cost savings, you will have some costs involved in setting up online but you can often get going with a significantly smaller financial commitment than taking a lease on physical premises. Many vendors begin

or even operate their entire business without having their ecommerce website. Instead, they have a presence on another platform. This is because selling through another platform gives business access to the platform's existing audience large number of people who are already actively shopping in that marketplace and looking to make purchases. The other platform's infrastructure can also be of great use to businesses, handling important things such as payments and returns, tracking of orders, and product listing templates.

Additionally, engaging in online sales opens up opportunities for marketing promotions that can drive traffic back to the physical store. For example, offering online exclusive deals or creating a loyalty program that rewards both online and in-store purchases can enhance overall customer engagement. Such strategies encourage customers to interact with the brand across multiple channels, increasing the likelihood of repeat business.

Moreover, online platforms allow for the collection of valuable customer data and insights. Retailers can analyze purchasing patterns, preferences, and feedback from online transactions, providing a clearer understanding of customer needs. This data can inform inventory management decisions, promotional strategies, and even in-store customer service improvements. Knowing which products are popular online, retailers can adjust their in-store stock accordingly to meet customer demand, creating a more cohesive shopping experience.

However, while transitioning to online sales, it is crucial for retailers to ensure that their online presence is user-friendly and efficient. A poorly designed website or a complicated purchasing process can deter potential customers. Therefore, investing in quality e-commerce platforms and providing clear instructions for navigating the online shopping experience is essential.

Furthermore, effective logistics and fulfillment systems must be established to support online sales. This includes managing shipping, handling returns, and ensuring that customers receive their orders promptly. A seamless online shopping experience paired with reliable delivery will enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, reinforcing the brand's reputation.

In conclusion, utilizing online sales strategies is a vital component for enhancing the operational efficiency of 24-hour retail stores, as emphasized by Participant 6. Expanding into digital marketplaces, retailers can address sales fluctuations, optimize inventory management, and gain deeper insights into customer behavior. The effective integration of online and offline sales channels creates a holistic retail experience that can drive profitability and foster long-term customer loyalty in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

6. Effective Space Management (Participants 2, 5)

Effective space management is a critical aspect of operational efficiency for 24-hour retail stores, as highlighted by Participants 2 and 5. The ability to optimize physical space directly impacts customer experience, inventory organization, and overall store performance. Participants emphasized that ensuring adequate space for stock is essential to maintaining a smooth and effective retail operation.

Participant 2 pointed out, "*Sapat na espasyo para sa stocks ng aming mga produkto*" ("Sufficient space for the stocks of our products"). This statement underscores the necessity of having enough storage and display areas to accommodate inventory levels. In a 24-hour retail environment, where products are consistently being sold and restocked, cramped or poorly organized spaces can lead to several challenges, including difficulty in accessing items, inefficient restocking procedures, and customer frustration.

When space is limited, it can hinder the ability to showcase a variety of products, reducing customers' choices and potentially leading to lost sales opportunities. Retailers need to maximize their available space through strategic layout planning. This can include using vertical shelving, optimizing display arrangements, and implementing effective zoning strategies that categorize products logically for ease of access and enhanced customer navigation. In the documentation of Siva (2024), Space management has a very important role to play in optimizing one's utilization of physical space be it on behalf of their homes, offices, or other public areas. Efficient space management affords a number of benefits, including workflow, clutter reduction, collaboration, and creativity-all to be enhanced. Space management includes monitoring and tracking of physical inventory, such as space. It concerns the thinking-through of layout, workflow, storage, and aesthetics, all to craft work spaces. Space management allows strategic solutions of space utilization challenges with better workplace experiences. Essentially, it is a type of facility management that meets safety regulation and business objectives by supporting the various needs of the users.

Participant 5 echoed these sentiments by stating, *"Isang bagay na kailangan ng sapat na espasyo para sa mga produkto ng isang tindahan"* ("One thing that a store needs is sufficient space for its products"). This highlights the universal recognition among participants that effective space management is crucial for operational success. When retailers have adequate space to organize their products, they can improve the efficiency of stock management, reduce the time staff spend locating items, and create a more inviting shopping environment for customers. In line with the study of Lefert (2023), says that efficient storage is the basis of growth and success for small businesses. It minimizes utilization of available space, improves operation, and increases productivity. Proper business storage solutions enable companies to work on their inventory properly and prevent misplaced items that improve organization, thus saving employees' time and effort and making the workplace safer.

Moreover, effective space management extends beyond just stock storage; it also involves ensuring that the layout promotes a positive shopping experience. A well-organized store encourages customer flow and reduces congestion during busy hours, which is particularly vital for 24-hour operations that cater to varying customer volumes throughout the day and night. Retailers should consider factors such as aisle widths, product placements, and checkout locations to create an environment that facilitates smooth movement and easy access to products.

The implications of effective space management are multifaceted. Financially, a well-organized store can lead to increased sales through enhanced product visibility and improved customer experience. Customers are more likely to make purchases if they can easily find what they need without feeling overwhelmed or frustrated by cluttered aisles. Additionally, space optimization can lead to reduced labor costs, as employees can work more efficiently in a well-structured environment, spending less time searching for items and more time assisting customers.

To further enhance space management, retailers can employ inventory management systems that integrate with their physical layouts. These systems can provide insights into stock levels, sales trends, and space utilization, enabling retailers to make informed decisions about product placement and inventory turnover. Understanding which products sell well and which ones may require more space, retailers can adjust their layouts accordingly, ensuring that the most popular items are readily accessible.

In conclusion, effective space management is essential for the operational efficiency and effectiveness of 24-hour retail stores, as emphasized by Participants 2 and 5. Ensuring sufficient space for products and creating an organized, customer-friendly environment, retailers can enhance sales, improve employee productivity, and elevate the

overall shopping experience. A strategic approach to space management not only addresses immediate operational challenges but also contributes to long-term success and competitiveness in the retail market.

7. Implementing Safety and Security Measures (Participants 4, 6)

Implementing robust safety and security measures is a fundamental concern for 24-hour retail stores, as emphasized by Participants 4 and 6. Given the constant operational hours, these stores face unique challenges related to ensuring the safety of both customers and staff while safeguarding their inventory and assets. The insights provided by the participants highlight the critical need for comprehensive security strategies in the retail environment.

Participant 4 stated, *"Mahalaga ang seguridad ng aming mga produkto at ng mga tao sa loob ng tindahan"* ("The security of our products and the people inside the store is important"). This assertion underscores the dual responsibility of retailers to protect both their merchandise and the safety of customers and employees. With increased foot traffic during late-night hours, the risk of theft, vandalism, and other criminal activities can escalate. Therefore, it is crucial for 24-hour retailers to establish effective security protocols that address these potential threats. As pointed out by the study of Nomadia (n.d.), In business terms, security is a must-have. Security provision in a company involves much more than just the mere mechanism of an administrative formality-it is rather a process to protect employees, assets, and ensure continuity in a company's operations. Managing security within a corporate circle has been a multifaceted challenge given the sources of risks in the form of environment-related, cyber, and physical security risks. Employees are another excellent resource for companies. They are what produce goods and services, ensure the satisfaction of customers, and perform other activities in the business. The security measures protect employees from accidents and illnesses. Employees in an organization might face risks such as injuries or disabilities and even deaths in extreme cases. Security ensures that a company reduces cases of accidents in the workplace to guard the health and well-being of the employees.

One critical measure is the installation of surveillance systems, such as security cameras, which can deter criminal behavior and provide valuable evidence in case of incidents. Participant 6 noted, *"Kami ay gumagamit ng CCTV para sa seguridad"* ("We use CCTV for security"). The presence of visible security cameras not only helps monitor activities within and around the store but also reassures customers that their safety is prioritized. This sense of security can enhance the shopping experience, making customers feel more comfortable visiting the store, especially during late-night hours. In the research of Systems (2024), stated that Monitoring employees is regulated and needs to be done with care not to breach the right of privacy. CCTV helps organizations improve the security of employees, especially the welfare of those who work remotely or are single-occupancy. Using CCTV film for case study training materials is a very new concept. Like monitoring employees, care has to be taken not to breach one's human right to privacy. CCTV cameras contribute, of course, to the safety of employees as they monitor the workplace's activities and environments. In hazardous places or circumstances, cameras help ensure compliance with safety measures and serve as evidence after accidents or other types of incidents. CCTV is particularly helpful for monitoring staff who work alone, thus constituting a lone worker vulnerability, or who work remotely but are possibly far away from assistance or medical facilities. CCTV can detect 'man down' incidents and help businesses respond quickly and correctly by probably identifying when a slip and fall is happening.

In addition to surveillance, security personnel can play a vital role in maintaining a safe environment. Participant 4 suggested, *"Kailangan namin ng mga guwardiya na magbabantay sa loob ng tindahan"* ("We need security

guards to watch over the store"). The presence of trained security personnel can act as a deterrent to potential offenders and provide immediate response capabilities in the event of an emergency. Moreover, security staff can assist in resolving conflicts, managing crowd control during peak hours, and ensuring that safety protocols are adhered to. Safety measures should also encompass customer service aspects, such as training staff to recognize suspicious behavior and respond appropriately. Participant 6 mentioned, *"Dapat alam ng mga empleyado kung paano tumugon sa mga sitwasyon"* ("Employees should know how to respond to situations"). Equipping staff with the knowledge and skills to handle potential security threats not only fosters a safe environment but also instills confidence among customers. Employees should be trained to communicate effectively with security personnel and to implement emergency procedures, ensuring a coordinated response to any incidents.

Furthermore, implementing safety measures extends to physical store layout and design. Adequate lighting both inside and outside the store can significantly enhance safety. As Participant 4 pointed out, *"Ang tamang ilaw ay mahalaga para makita ang lahat sa paligid"* ("Proper lighting is important to see everything around"). Well-lit areas deter criminal activities and make it easier for customers and staff to navigate the store safely.

Additionally, establishing emergency protocols and conducting regular safety drills can prepare both employees and customers for potential emergencies, such as fire or medical incidents. This proactive approach ensures that everyone in the store knows the appropriate steps to take in case of an emergency, thereby enhancing overall safety.

In conclusion, implementing effective safety and security measures is vital for the success of 24-hour retail stores, as highlighted by Participants 4 and 6. A multifaceted approach that includes surveillance systems, security personnel, staff training, and proper store design contributes to a secure shopping environment. Prioritizing safety, retailers can protect their assets, ensure the well-being of their customers and employees, and foster trust and loyalty among shoppers. Ultimately, a commitment to safety not only mitigates risks but also enhances the overall shopping experience, reinforcing the store's reputation as a reliable and secure place to shop.

Table 1

Strategic Plan

| Strategy | Objectives | Actionable Strategies | Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1. Enhancing Inventory Management | Reduce product expiry rates and optimize stock levels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement an Automated Inventory Management System. - Adopt the FIFO Method. - Conduct Regular Inventory Audits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in expired products by 30% within six months. - Increase in inventory turnover ratio by 15% within a year. |
| 2. Increasing Staffing Levels | Improve customer service and | - Hire Additional Staff for High-Demand | - Customer satisfaction scores increase by 20% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | operational efficiency. | Times. - Implement Staff Training Programs. | within three months. - Reduction in customer wait times by 25% within six months. |
| 3. Prioritizing Customer Service | Enhance customer experience and build brand loyalty. | - Develop a Customer Feedback System. - Train Staff in Customer Service Best Practices. - Implement a Loyalty Program. | - Customer retention rate increases by 15% within a year. - Positive customer feedback improves by 30% within six months. |
| 4. Implementing Safety and Security Measures | Ensure safety of customers and staff. | - Install Comprehensive Surveillance Systems. - Employ On-Site Security Personnel. - Conduct Safety Training for Employees. | - Reduction in incidents of theft or vandalism by 40% within a year. - Improved employee and customer perception of safety as measured by surveys. |
| 5. Utilizing Online Sales Strategies | Expand market reach and drive additional revenue. | - Develop an Online Shopping Platform. - Leverage Social Media for Promotions. - Offer Click-and-Collect Services. | - Online sales contribute to 20% of total revenue within one year. - Increase in new customer acquisitions through online channels by 25% within six months. |
| 6. Effective Space Management | Optimize store layout for customer flow and product visibility. | - Redesign Store Layout. - Conduct Regular Space Utilization Assessments. - Enhance Product Displays. | - Increase in average basket size by 15% within six months. - Improvement in sales per square foot by 20% within a year. |
| 7. Adjusting Pricing and Promotions | Stay competitive while maintaining profitability. | - Conduct Market Analysis. - Implement Dynamic Pricing Strategies. | - Gross margin increases by 10% within one year. - Increase in customer footfall during promotional periods by 25%. |

| | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| | | - Create Time-Limited Promotions. | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|

Figure 1

Research Paradigm

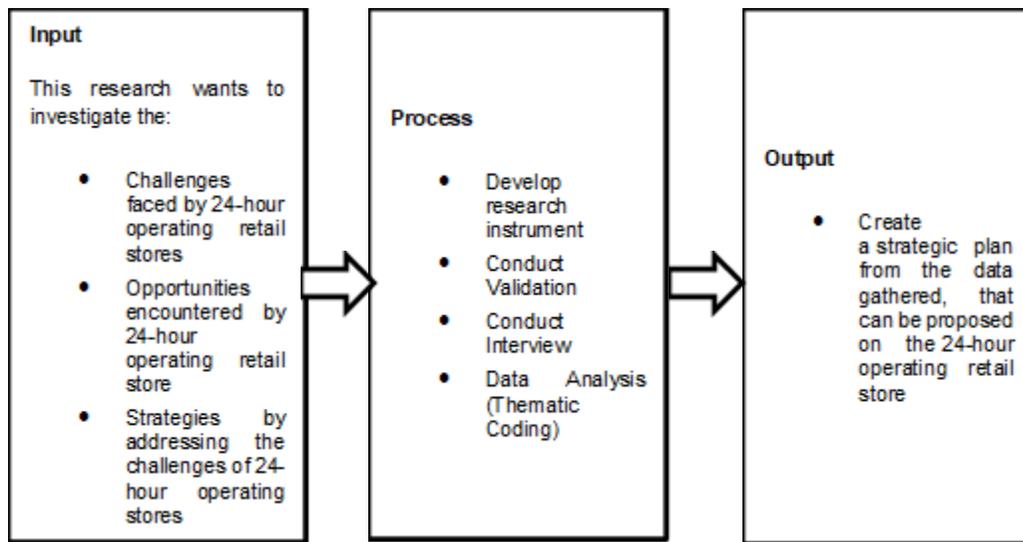


Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. The first box in the diagram highlights the inputs of the study, including both the challenges faced by 24-hour operating retail stores, such as operational, logistical and regulatory and the opportunities they encounter, including increased consumer demand and market expansion, and the strategies used by 24-hour stores.

The outlined process for the research involves several key steps. To achieve this, the development of research instruments is crucial for gathering relevant data. Following this, a validation process is undertaken to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research instruments. Subsequently, research interviews are conducted to collect data directly from the respondents. The collected data undergoes comprehensive analysis using a thematic coding approach.

Finally, the findings are interpreted, leading to the output of a proposed strategic plan aimed at enhancing the operational efficiency and customer engagement of 24-hour operating retail stores

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn regarding the challenges, opportunities, and strategies faced by 24-hour operating retail stores in Batangas.

CHALLENGES FACED BY 24 – HOUR OPERATING STORES

The main challenges of 24-hour retailing operations occur across three areas: staffing, inventory, and regulation compliance. Constant management of employees to fulfill the clock requirements can lead to burnout and health problems, and overall morale and quality of service suffer. Logistically speaking, overstocking while having

a presence of stock levels at all times requires proper planning most especially when controlling money does not yield more purchasing power. Moreover, the regulatory requirement for safety and security poses further challenges to the stores when implementing measures such as CCTV and emergency procedures because these need to create an environment that will be safe at late hours when the risk is intensified.

OPPORTUNITIES ENCOUNTERED BY 24 – HOUR OPERATING STORES

Despite these challenges, the 24-hour model carries special opportunities for growth and competitive differentiation. This allows such a store to attract very diverse demographics, be it night-shift workers, travelers, or someone needing products in an emergency. Personalized service, by listening to and acting on customer requests, can foster loyalty and make the store a preferred choice within the community. This implies community engagement through partnerships or event sponsorship, further strengthening customer relations, while flexible pricing and operating promotions during off-peak hours boost sales and optimize foot traffic during the day and night.

STRATEGIES BY ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF 24 – HOUR OPERATING STORES

Targeted strategies that find a balance between operational demands and customers' needs are the way forward to tackle these challenges and opportunities. The enhanced use of inventory management through real-time tracking and flexible stock planning helps meet the demand with lesser waste of resources. Use of adequate lighting as well as integration of security measures like CCTV improves safety at night time for customers as well as staff. Also, adaptive pricing and promotional strategies ensure that the products are competitive and stimulate off-peak shopping. By following the resultant operational orientations like customer interest, operational resiliency, and community involvement, 24-hour stores can sustain growth as retail loyalty develops within the competitive environment.

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