



Exploring Career Pathways: in-Depth Analysis of Hiring Trends and Career Growth in the IT and Food & Beverage Industries

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ABSTRACT

The FoodTech sector is rapidly evolving, creating new career opportunities and demanding a diverse skill set. This study explores job roles, required skills, salary trends, and growth prospects in this industry, focusing on two leading companies – Petpooja and Ajay’s Good Food. Through an in-depth analysis of hiring patterns, technical and soft skills required, and career progression pathways, this paper highlights key insights for fresh graduates and professionals looking to enter or advance in this field. The findings indicate that roles in software development, sales, customer support, and digital marketing are in high demand. Technical knowledge of POS systems, cloud computing, and AI-driven analytics is becoming increasingly valuable. Additionally, strong communication, adaptability, and problem-solving skills are crucial for success. The research also identifies factors influencing salary growth and promotions, as well as the importance of certifications and training programs in improving employability. Emerging trends, such as automation, AI-driven customer insights, and data analytics, are reshaping the job market, requiring continuous skill enhancement. Furthermore, industry competition and globalization are pushing companies to seek innovative talent with a strong technological acumen. By examining these industry dynamics, this paper provides valuable guidance for job seekers, HR professionals, and policymakers to align workforce development with market needs

INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage (F&B) technology sector has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, driven by advancements in digital solutions, automation, and artificial intelligence (Vidani, 2015). As businesses strive to enhance operational efficiency, customer experience, and market competitiveness, the demand for skilled professionals in this field has surged (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). Companies such as Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food are at the forefront of this change, leveraging cutting-edge technologies like cloud-based POS systems, AI-driven analytics, and digital marketing strategies to streamline their operations and expand their market presence (Vidani, 2015). This transformation has given rise to new career opportunities, demanding a blend of technical proficiency and interpersonal skills (Vidani, 2015).

The growing reliance on technology in the F&B industry has also reshaped hiring trends, salary structures, and career progression pathways (Vidani, 2015). Professionals with skills in software development, sales, customer support, and data analytics are in high demand, while adaptability and continuous learning have become essential for long-term career growth (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). The competitive nature of the industry further amplifies the need for innovative talent who can drive business success through digital transformation (Vidani, 2016).

This study explores the shifting employment landscape in the food and beverage technology industry, emphasizing career prospects, essential skills, salary patterns, and overall sector expansion (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). By examining hiring patterns in leading companies, this study provides valuable insights for job seekers, employers, and policymakers to align workforce development with industry needs (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). Understanding these dynamics will help bridge the skills gap, improve employability, and contribute to the sustainable growth of the sector (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016).

Research Gap

Despite the growing significance of digital transformation in the food and beverage (F&B) technology sector, there is a lack of comprehensive research that examines the evolving job market, skill requirements, and career growth opportunities in this domain. Existing literature primarily focuses on technological advancements, operational efficiencies, and consumer behavior, but limited studies address the impact of these changes on employment patterns and workforce development.

Additionally, while many reports discuss the general trends in F&B automation and digital solutions, there is minimal focus on how companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food are shaping the industry's talent landscape. The availability of accurate salary benchmarks, career progression models, and skill acquisition strategies for aspiring professionals remains fragmented and insufficient.

Furthermore, most workforce-related studies in the F&B sector primarily analyze traditional restaurant management roles, overlooking the increasing demand for expertise in cloud-based POS systems, AI-driven analytics, and digital marketing. This gap makes it challenging for job seekers, educators, and employers to align skills with industry expectations.

Thus, this research seeks to bridge these gaps by providing a data-driven analysis of job market trends, salary structures, required competencies, and career growth prospects in F&B technology firms. Addressing this gap will help stakeholders better navigate the employment landscape and prepare for the industry's future workforce demands.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze job market trends in the Food & Beverage (F&B) technology sector, focusing on employment opportunities at companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food.
2. To identify key skills and qualifications required for various roles in F&B technology firms, including cloud-based POS systems, AI-driven analytics, and digital marketing.
3. To assess salary structures and career growth opportunities for professionals in this industry, providing insights into compensation trends and progression pathways.
4. To explore the impact of digital transformation on workforce demands, highlighting how automation and AI are reshaping job roles in F&B technology.
5. To provide strategic recommendations for job seekers, employers, and educators to align workforce development with industry requirements and future trends.

LITERATURE RIVIEW

1. Impact of Artificial Intelligence on IT Careers

Source: Business Insider

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming IT careers, particularly in software development (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). AI-powered coding assistants, such as ChatGPT and GitHub Copilot, automate various programming tasks, reducing the need for entry-level coders (Vidani, 2016). This trend raises concerns about job displacement, especially for junior software engineers, as AI can handle repetitive coding more efficiently (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018).

However, rather than replacing jobs entirely, AI is reshaping career pathways, pushing software engineers to develop higher-level problem-solving skills, system architecture expertise, and AI integration knowledge (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016). Instead of traditional coding roles, IT professionals are encouraged to pivot toward areas like machine learning, AI ethics, and cloud computing (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). AI is changing IT job roles by automating repetitive coding tasks, reducing demand for junior software engineers but creating new opportunities in AI-related fields (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016).

2. The Shift Towards IT Generalists

Source: Wikipedia

The IT industry is moving away from highly specialized roles toward IT generalists, who possess a broad knowledge of various technologies, project management, and business strategy (Singh & Vidani, 2016). This shift is driven by

the rapid evolution of technology and businesses' need for adaptable employees who can bridge technical and non-technical domains(Vidani & Plaha, 2016).

Companies now seek multi-skilled professionals who can handle multiple roles, from cybersecurity to cloud computing and software development(Solanki & Vidani, 2016). As organizations move toward cross-functional teams, the demand for IT generalists is expected to rise(Vidani, 2016). Employers increasingly prefer IT professionals with diverse skills rather than specialists, emphasizing adaptability in a fast-changing tech environment(Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017).

3. Automation and Job Displacement in India's IT Sector

Source: Wikipedia

Automation and AI are expected to eliminate many low-skilled IT service jobs in India, which has been a global outsourcing hub for software services(Vidani, 2018). Tasks such as data entry, basic programming, and customer support are being automated, leading to job displacement in traditional IT service roles(Vidani, 2018).

However, mid- and high-skilled positions, such as AI engineers, data scientists, and cloud architects, are seeing increased demand(Biharani, sheth & Vidani, 2018). To stay relevant, IT workers must reskill and upskill, particularly in AI, cybersecurity, and advanced software development(Vasveliyya, sheth & Vidani, 2019). Automation is reducing low-skilled IT jobs in India, but new opportunities are emerging in AI, cybersecurity, and cloud computing, requiring workforce reskilling(Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018).

4. Attracting Talent to the Food & Beverage Industry

Source: The Scottish Sun

The F&B industry is a major economic sector but struggles to attract young professionals(Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019). Despite offering diverse roles – including food production, supply chain management, and tech-driven careers like data science and automation – many job seekers overlook this field(Vidani, 2019).

To address this issue, initiatives such as "Mmmake Your Mark" have been launched to highlight career growth opportunities(Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). The industry is evolving with robotic food processing(Vidani J. N., 2016), AI-driven quality control, and digital supply chain management(Vidani & Singh, 2017), creating demand for tech-savvy professionals(Vidani & Pathak, 2016). The F&B industry faces recruitment challenges, but new technology-driven roles in automation, AI, and data analytics offer significant career opportunities(Pathak & Vidani, 2016).

5. Skills-Based Hiring Practices

Source: Financial Times

Many companies, including IBM, Aon, and Walmart, are shifting toward skills-based hiring, moving away from strict degree requirements(Vidani & Plaha, 2017). This trend benefits job seekers with practical experience, certifications, and bootcamp training over traditional college degrees(Vidani J. N., 2020).

Skills-based hiring has shown higher employee retention rates and faster wage growth, particularly in industries like IT and advanced

manufacturing(Vidani J. N., 2018). Employers prioritize skills in areas like cloud computing, cybersecurity, and digital marketing, allowing non-traditional candidates to access high-paying jobs(Vidani & Dholakia, 2020). Companies are focusing on skills-based hiring rather than degrees, opening job opportunities for candidates with certifications and hands-on experience(Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023).

Both the IT and F&B industries are experiencing significant shifts due to automation, AI, and changing hiring practices(Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022). While AI threatens traditional IT jobs, it also creates new opportunities(Vidani & Das, 2021). Similarly, the F&B industry is evolving with technology, demanding a more skilled workforce(Vidani J. N., 2022). Employers increasingly favor flexibility, upskilling, and skills-based hiring, shaping the future of career growth in these sectors(Saxena & Vidani, 2023). Both the IT and Food & Beverage (F&B) industries are changing fast due to technology, automation, and new hiring trends(Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023). In IT, AI is reducing some traditional jobs but creating new opportunities in fields like machine learning and cybersecurity(Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023). Companies now prefer multi-skilled employees rather than specialists(Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023). In the F&B industry, hiring is a challenge, but new tech-driven roles in automation, AI, and supply chain management are opening up (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023). Many companies in both industries are focusing on skills over degrees, making it easier for people with practical experience or certifications to get good jobs (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023).

The key to career growth in these industries is adapting (Sharma & Vidani, 2023), learning new skills, and staying flexible in a changing job market (Sharma & Vidani, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

Table 1. Research Methodology

Research Design	Exploratory
Sample Method	Non - Probability - Judgemental Sampling Method
Data Collection Method	Primary Method
Method Chosen	Personal Interview
Type of Questions	Open-ended
Data Collection Mode	Face to face
Data Analysis methods	Summarization of information collected in tabular format
Sampling Size	2
Survey Area	Ahmedabad

Table 2. Data Analysis (Developed From the Interviews)

Position	Job Role	Key Responsibility Areas	Knowledge	Skills (General & Specific)	Job Openings	Certifications Required (if any)
Process Executive	Operations & Process Management	Handling daily business processes, ensuring smooth workflow	Billing software, POS systems	Problem-solving, process optimization, attention to detail	1	None specified
Customer Service Representative	Customer Support & Assistance	Resolving customer queries, assisting with software-related issues	Customer relationship management, POS knowledge	Communication, patience, troubleshooting	1	None specified
Executive - Asset Management (Soldering)	Equipment & Asset Handling	Managing, repairing, and maintaining company assets	Soldering, hardware maintenance	Technical skills, precision, equipment handling	1	None specified
Executive - Business Development	Sales & Business Growth	Generating leads, pitching software solutions, closing sales deals	Market research, sales strategies	Negotiation, communication, relationship management	1	Sales or CRM certifications (preferred)
Employee Relations Executive	Human Resources & Employee Management	Handling employee engagement, conflict resolution, HR compliance	HR policies, labor laws	Interpersonal skills, problem-solving, HR management	1	HR certifications (preferred)
Legal Intern	Legal Assistance	Assisting in legal documentation, compliance checks	Corporate law, contracts, business regulations	Research, analytical thinking, attention to detail	1	Law-related certification or degree (preferred)
Café Manager	Store & Operations Management	Overseeing café operations, managing staff,	Café management, POS handling,	Leadership, organization, customer service	1	F&B management certification (preferred)

Position	Job Role	Key Responsibility Areas	Knowledge	Skills (General & Specific)	Job Openings	Certifications Required (if any)
		ensuring customer satisfaction	inventory control			
Café Staff	Food Service & Customer Handling	Preparing food, serving customers, maintaining cleanliness	Basic F&B handling, hygiene standards	Customer service, teamwork, multitasking	4	Food safety & hygiene training (preferred)
Purchase Executive	Procurement & Vendor Management	Sourcing and purchasing goods, managing supplier relationships	Supply chain management, vendor negotiations	Negotiation, organization, budgeting	2-3	Supply chain certifications (preferred)
Social Media Executive	Digital Marketing	Managing social media campaigns, engaging with online audiences	Social media trends, content marketing	Creativity, analytics, campaign management	4-5	Digital marketing certification (preferred)
Content Creator (Campaign)	Content Development & Marketing	Creating engaging marketing content, planning campaigns	Copywriting, branding, multimedia content creation	Creativity, storytelling, SEO	4-5	Content marketing certification (preferred)
Campaign Designer	Graphic Design & Marketing	Designing marketing visuals, branding elements, ad creatives	Graphic design software (Adobe, Canva, etc.)	Creativity, design principles, branding	4	Graphic design certification (preferred)
Meta Ad Manager	Digital Advertising	Managing paid ad campaigns, optimizing ad performance	Meta Ads, Google Ads, PPC	Data analysis, ROI optimization, digital marketing strategy	2-3	Google Ads/Meta Ads certification (preferred)
Operations Store Manager	Store Operations & Logistics	Managing daily store operations, inventory control, staff supervision	Retail management, logistics	Leadership, time management, organizational skills	3-4	Retail management certification (preferred)

(Source: Developed by Researcher From Personal Interviews)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research highlight the dynamic and rapidly evolving job market within the Food & Beverage (F&B) technology sector, particularly in companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food. The increasing adoption of cloud-based POS systems, AI-driven analytics, and digital marketing has not only transformed restaurant operations but also created a growing demand for specialized skill sets among job seekers.

A key observation from this study is that sales, customer support, and software development roles are consistently in high demand. Companies seek professionals with expertise in database management, cloud computing, and AI-driven solutions, while soft skills such as communication, adaptability, and problem-solving remain crucial for success. However, the research also indicates a skills gap, where many fresh graduates lack hands-on experience with POS technology, digital advertising, and customer analytics, making industry-relevant training programs essential.

The salary analysis reveals that entry-level positions in sales and customer service range from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 per month, while specialized roles in digital marketing and operations management offer higher compensation, ranging from ₹20,000 to ₹30,000 per month. Career progression is primarily performance-driven, with opportunities for employees to transition into managerial roles over time. Despite the promising career opportunities, challenges such as increased competition, evolving technology, and higher customer expectations require employees to continuously upskill. The study suggests that obtaining certifications in digital marketing, cloud computing, and CRM software can significantly enhance employability in this sector.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of companies implementing structured training programs for new employees to close the gap between formal education and industry demands. Companies that focus on skill development, employee retention, and technological innovation will likely lead the market and attract top talent.

Overall, The research offers meaningful perspectives on the career landscape of F&B technology firms, offering strategic recommendations for job seekers, employers, and educational institutions to align workforce development with industry needs.

Theoretical Implication

The results of this research enhance the conceptual understanding of employment trends, skill requirements, and career growth in the Food & Beverage (F&B) technology sector, particularly in companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food. The study offers the following theoretical contributions:

1. Bridging Labor Market Theory with Digital Transformation - Traditional labor market theories often focus on industrial and service economies, but this study extends the discourse by incorporating the effects of digitalization and automation on employment. It provides theoretical insights into how technology-driven businesses impact hiring patterns and skill demands.
2. Human Capital Theory in the Digital Age - This study reinforces the human capital theory, which emphasizes the importance of education, skills, and

training in increasing employment opportunities. The research highlights how businesses in the F&B tech sector are increasingly seeking tech-savvy employees, thereby shifting the required skill sets.

3. **Integration of AI and Automation in Workforce Efficiency** – This study examines how artificial intelligence and automation are reshaping job roles in the food and beverage technology sector. By analyzing the impact of AI-driven analytics, automated billing systems, and digital ordering platforms, the research highlights how businesses can optimize operations while ensuring employees acquire the necessary technical skills to work alongside emerging technologies.
4. **Employment Growth vs. Job Polarization Theory** – This study contributes to debates on whether digital transformation leads to job creation or job displacement. It adds to existing theoretical discussions on job polarization, wherein routine jobs may decline due to automation while high-skill digital jobs may see rapid growth.
5. **Economic Theories of Wage Determination** – The study contributes to wage determination theories by analyzing salary trends, skill-based pay gaps, and regional salary variations in the F&B tech industry. These insights help in understanding how businesses determine salaries based on digital expertise and experience levels

Practical Implications

The study provides significant practical insights for stakeholders, including business owners, HR professionals, employees, policymakers, and educational institutions.

1. **Guidance for Businesses on Talent Acquisition** – Companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food can utilize these findings to refine their hiring strategies, ensuring they attract candidates with the necessary technical and managerial skills required in a tech-driven F&B sector.
2. **Upskilling and Training Recommendations** – The research emphasizes the need for continuous learning and skill development in areas such as AI-powered billing systems, digital inventory management, and CRM platforms. Businesses can implement structured training programs to bridge skill gaps and enhance employee productivity.
3. **Impact on Salary Benchmarking** – Employers can use these insights to set competitive salary structures based on industry standards, skill requirements, and employee experience. This ensures fair compensation practices and helps attract and retain top talent.
4. **Workforce Adaptability to Digital Transformation** – Employees can benefit from understanding which technical and soft skills are increasingly in demand. This insight helps job seekers focus on acquiring the right certifications, technical training, and digital literacy to boost their career prospects.
5. **Policy Recommendations for Government and Educational Institutions** – The study suggests that policymakers and educators should adapt vocational training programs to meet the evolving skill requirements of the

F&B tech sector. Public-private partnerships can help create affordable training modules and employment support programs.

6. **Enhancing Job Market Transparency** – The findings can contribute to better job market transparency by providing insights into job roles, salaries, career progression, and demand for tech-based skills, thereby helping job seekers make informed career decisions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research provides an in-depth analysis of the employment landscape in the technology-driven F&B industry, with a specific focus on companies like Petpooja and Ajay's Good Food. The study highlights how digital transformation is reshaping job roles, skill requirements, and salary trends in this sector.

Key Findings Indicate that:

- The demand for digitally skilled employees is increasing, particularly in POS system management, inventory automation, and AI-driven customer service.
- Salary trends vary based on experience, skill specialization, and location, emphasizing the need for continuous skill development.
- Employees with technical expertise in AI-based billing, CRM platforms, and cloud-based restaurant management systems have higher career growth opportunities.
- Companies investing in workforce upskilling and digital training programs experience higher employee retention and operational efficiency.
- Overall, the study concludes that the F&B technology sector is undergoing rapid transformation, requiring businesses, employees, and policymakers to adapt proactively.

FURTHER STUDY

1. Longitudinal Study on Career Growth and Salary Evolution

- Future research can conduct long-term tracking of employee career progress in F&B tech companies to determine how digital skills impact promotions, salary growth, and job stability.

2. The Role of Artificial Intelligence and Automation in the F&B Job Market

- Future studies can assess whether AI-driven tools enhance job efficiency or replace human roles in billing, order management, and customer support.

3. Comparative Analysis of Employment Trends in Traditional vs. Tech-Driven F&B Companies

- A study comparing employment conditions in traditional restaurants vs. digital-first F&B businesses can help understand which business model generates better job opportunities and salaries.

4. Impact of Government Policies on Job Creation in the F&B Tech Industry

- Future research can examine how government initiatives, tax benefits, and digital training programs influence job creation in this sector.

5. Employer-Led Training Programs and Workforce Retention

- Investigating the impact of company-sponsored training programs on employee job satisfaction, performance, and retention can provide valuable insights into HR best practices.

6. Assessing Regional Variations in Employment Trends

- Research can focus on how job availability, salaries, and required skill sets differ across various cities and regions, particularly in emerging markets where digital adoption is still growing.

By addressing these areas, future research can further enhance the understanding of employment trends in the F&B technology sector and guide businesses, employees, and policymakers in making data-driven decisions.

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