

IMPROVING SERVICE QUALITY IN THEME FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS LEADING TO HIGHER COMPETITIVENESS

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INTRODUCTION

The article examines the service processes in the themed dining and entertainment establishments in tourism and how the systematic analytical approach in the production and service phases lead to an increase in the competitiveness of the themed restaurant product. Attention is concentrated on the overall service process on opportunities and prospects for innovation, striving to innovate and improve service standards in order to increase the quality of the product offered. Through innovation, restaurateurs in practice reject traditional methods and forms of service and strive for a new development of aesthetic perceptions (Ribov, 2018). Through the thematic restaurant product, the tourist gets to know the ethnic and authentic features of the regions, the culinary products and their specific technological preparation and service. The themed restaurant product is different, it is unusual, authentic, exciting, impressive and experiential (Ribov, 2017). Here are the innovative possibilities and technologies for creating unique, non-traditional, organoleptic restaurant tourism products. Analysis and self-assessment enable companies to focus on the factors in production processes and to proceed with the renovation of both production facilities and operational organizational phases in order to achieve higher competitiveness.

Нарастващата конкуренция между различните туристически дружества повишава качеството на туристическия продукт. Така се създава среда за надграждане и внедряване на различни иновативни решения за конкурентни туристически продукти (Dimitrova 2023, p. 532 – 535; Tomova et al., 2023). Необходимо е те да се основават на актуален анализ за необходимостта от реновиране и/или иновиране (Dimitrova 2017, p. 406 – 410; Dimitrova 2019a, p. 11 – 39). Фокусът пада върху повишаване конкурентоспособността на туристическите услуги, повишаване на производителността и създаване на нов тип туристически продукт с висока добавена стойност (Dimitrova 2019, p. 89 – 95; Chipeva, 2019, p.22 - 29; Dimitrova et al. 2021, p. 47 – 57). Управленските решения трябва да са гъвкави и гравивни инструменти с потенциал да се обновява и създава здравословен туристически продукт, който да удовлетворява туристите за благополучие и щастие (Dimitrova 2018, p. 23–37). Увеличават се туристическите комплекси, предлагачи Нишови туристически услуги за Уелбийнг (Wellbeing) (Dimitrova et al. 2018, pp. 26–42; Dimitrova et al. 2020, p. 39–47). Ще се търсят индикатори подпомагащи управлението чрез творческо и комбинативно решаване на проблеми при Уелнес операциите в туристическата индустрия (Dimitrova 2019b, p. 11 – 19).

METHODS

The thematic restaurant activity enters a new concept, through innovative methods and technologies for the production of culinary products and service. The new attracts, it rejects traditional notions and seeks to impose a new development based on aesthetic concepts and fashion in culinary art (Ribov, 2017). The main driver of the avant-garde service operations and production of the themed restaurant product is the personnel with their innovative qualities, talent and creative abilities (Dubeva, 2006). In the degree of skills and to a large extent in the differences in training lies the perfection in the restaurant business. Different concepts of a complete themed restaurant product – a skillful ratio and combination of culinary production, staff, service technology, sales room and atmosphere (Buttle, 1993) are the basis of competitiveness. The restaurant industry should be considered in the field of restaurant service, as a set of a heterogeneous system, striving to constantly pass through various technological stages with the aim of producing a restaurant product, striving for a homogeneous system that fully meets the expectations of consumers (see fig. .1). (Polimenov, 2014) The activity in the restaurant business is related to the offered restaurant product and corresponds to different types, categories and forms of ownership of food establishments, in the structure of which the restaurant occupies a leading and prestigious place. Satisfying the needs of consumers is influenced by different factors (social, cultural, economic, etc.), which necessitates rapid modification and adaptation of the qualities of the restaurant product to the new demands and expectations of tourists.



Fig. 1. Heterogeneous system of restaurant activity

The requirements for the categorization of food and entertainment establishments set mandatory standards (criteria) for the objects, and in this context it can be said that the human factor is increasingly becoming the leading distinguishing quality in the competitiveness of the product.

As M. Ribov points out, in the economic sense, the concept of "competition" has three interpretations - behavioral, structural and functional (Ribov, 2019). The behavioral interpretation considers competition as "honest competition between sellers and buyers to achieve the most favorable

conditions for the sale of goods". The secret is in the functional dependence of the factors, in the value of the production process and realization. For the restaurant product, it is healthy food produced at a low cost and a quick degree of realisability, it is also a basis for innovation, creativity and a new approach in the restaurant business. The functional interpretation is aimed "at determining the role that competition plays in the economy". Business entities compete on the basis of theoretical knowledge and practical skills among themselves, where each one of them strives to achieve its goals, independently of the others."

Internationally, the restaurant industry will develop progressively due to the fast-paced lifestyle. When comparing the different types of restaurant services as well as the Philippines, it can be seen that until 2029, the restaurant business has a rapid rise (see Fig. 2).

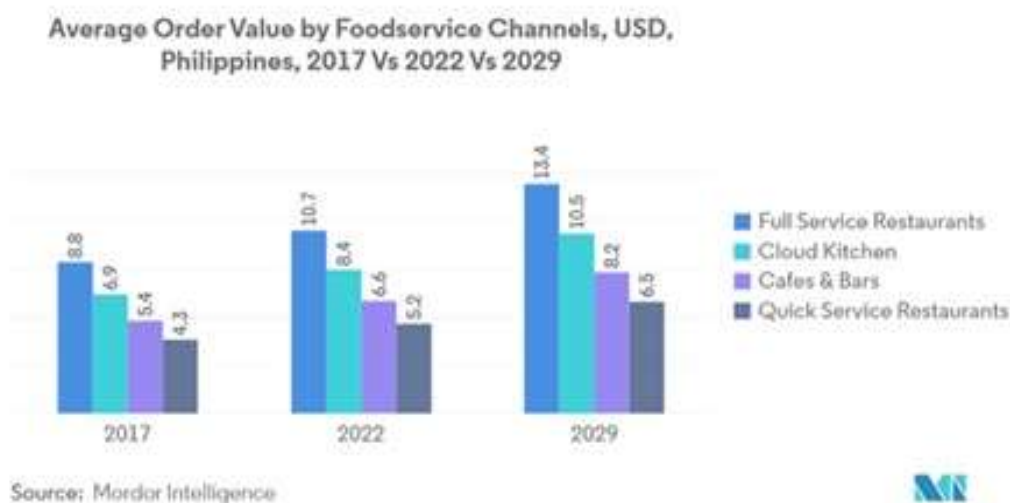


Fig. 2. Foodservice Market USD Philippines Channels, 2017 vs 2022 vs 2029
Source Mordor Intelligence™ Industry Repots

This means that the themed restaurant products and especially the themed national culinary production will be in demand. This will also determine the level of competitiveness of the different themed products and their level of service quality. The competitive struggle between restaurateurs is "in relation to the assortments, their quality, the organoleptic indicators of the culinary production, price and sales conditions". This struggle is an external expression of the contradiction between use value and product value, a struggle also of the contradiction between abstract and concrete labor in the labor process. Competition resolves the stated contradictions "in the interest of those restaurateurs who offer a higher quality culinary product, with better organoleptic indicators, for the production of which minimal costs have been incurred." At the microeconomic level, M. Ribov (2019) considers competitiveness as the attractiveness of two similar products. For customers, the criterion is in comparison with similar restaurant products offered by different competitors. The orientation to

competitive advantage is when comparing the characteristics or properties of a restaurant product, where superiority is evident over the organoleptic culinary products and service technology offered by competitor restaurants. A distinction is made between economic competitive advantage and axiological competitive advantage. In the restaurant industry, it is economic in relation to the cost of the restaurant product, and quality is a comparison according to the organoleptic culinary indicators of the product and the ability to satisfy certain gastronomic needs, tastes, interests and aspirations of the client (Ribov, 2018).

RESULTS

The above-mentioned factors for the competitiveness of the themed restaurant product can be adjusted and improved through innovations in culinary production and service technology (Polimenov, 2018). The main innovation factors that lead to an increase in the competitiveness of the thematic restaurant product are:

- ❖ Innovation factors that do not interrupt technological processes and do not change consumer habits. The innovations in culinary production are in the skillful application of mechanical and heat treatment of the products, the combination of tastes - sweet, sour, salty, bitter and the harmonization of the sense of smell with a certain characteristic for each dish. The arrangement is also important, which should correspond to refinement, tidiness, freshness, color harmony, thermal features and aromas. Compliance with technological requirements preserves the quality of culinary products. High-quality technological processing spares the nutritional and biological value of the nutrients in the products and does not lead to contamination with mechanical impurities, chemical substances and microorganisms. Production in which there are no undesirable organoleptic, physico-chemical, microbiological and enzymochemical changes leads to an increase in demand from the market.
- ❖ Innovation factors that change consumer habits and are directly related to the technological process, the smell and taste reception of consumers and the new techniques and forms of service. Implementation of new technologies for heat treatment, with the aim of preserving nutrients and moisture in the product, as well as technologies during service aimed at speeding up the process and preserving the arrangement and temperature of the dishes.
- ❖ Innovation factors that underlie new consumer habits. They arise on the basis of the previous two innovative factor relationships in direct connection with molecular cuisine and avant-garde in the restaurant industry and are the basis of new solutions for changing the specific form of the specific restaurant product.

The innovation model in thematic restaurants in tourism is related to the study of the factors of culinary production, service technology and the influence they have on the competitiveness of the

thematic restaurant product and its consumer values, quality and price, which are formed by the general relative share of the themed restaurant product. What can be innovated in the themed restaurant product is in terms of:

- Innovations in the technological production part in themed dining establishments and how they affect, as factors in culinary production and service technology in the trading hall in the different phases of production
- Innovations in the implementation of the thematic restaurant product - related to the market and how the quality and cost of culinary production and service technology affect the thematic restaurant product.

This model provides an assessment of the state of the factors and their possibility for innovation in themed dining establishments, as well as of the state of the themed restaurant product and its supply based on quality and price. Research is focused on themed restaurants with national cuisine. Information about innovations in themed dining establishments is collected from the professional assessment of managers, as well as information about the quality and price of the restaurant product in themed dining establishments is obtained from consumers, expert assessment by independent experts from the tourism industry is also taken into account. In our view, the degree of innovativeness of a themed restaurant product is a function of factors in the culinary production and in the restaurant's sales floor. The material and technological state of the technological and production processes in themed dining establishments is determined by various factors. The evaluations of the factors form an indicator of innovation/ P_i / in a specific production block. Coefficient of innovation/ I_i / is a function of the production processes in the culinary-production block/ I_{kpb} / and in the sales hall of the restaurant/ I_{tz} /, and for precision in the calculations, a weighting coefficient/ K_i / of industry experts is also taken. Each indicator participates with a different relative share depending on the specific conditions and type of the theme restaurant (Buttle, 1993). The innovative factor in themed dining establishments is determined by a number of factors and is a value expression of the potential state of the production process in the themed dining establishment. The value of the factors in the different functional blocks is characterized by quantitative characterization of the properties of the factors in the different themed dining establishments. The evaluations are strictly specific and depend both on the subjective factor and its microbiological and organoleptic criteria, as well as on the objective conditions of the specific object. Ratings reflect the specific innovative status of the themed dining establishment and represent a relative share of the themed restaurant product offered. All indicators are obtained by method (Osborn, 1963). of characterizing the state of the restaurant business in the specific thematic catering establishment, corrections are also possible based on the data and analysis. Formation of the state of the specific object of the specific problem

also leads to the generation of creative ideas, to which a solution is sought. The different factors investigated have different degrees of importance and innovation in the production process. The coefficient of innovation li is calculated from the factors of innovation in the culinary production unit $li/kpb/$ and the factors of innovation in the sales hall of the thematic restaurant $li/tz/$, or:

$$li = li/kpb/ + li/tz/;$$

$$li = K1i P1i + k2 p2 + k3 p3 + k4 p4 + k5 p5 \dots\dots\dots + kn pn$$

Ki - weight coefficient for evaluating innovations in thematic catering establishments in tourism - /by experts in the industry/.

Questionnaire cards for the indicator of innovation are processed according to the following formula.

$$Pi = Qn=1 : Rn$$

Pi – average criterion indicator for evaluation of innovation

$Qn=1$ – sum of the average value of the ratings

Rn – number of ratings

Workflow standards enable rapid analysis, and information criteria drive decisions.

DISCUSSION

By developing a thematic restaurant product methodology, it is possible to innovate the thematic restaurant activity, which at any moment provides information about the thematic restaurant product in the form of calculations, graphs, schemes, tests. Innovative changes in the restaurant industry are related to the quality of organization of culinary production and the quality and organization of the service technology of the restaurant product (Polimenov, 2019). It can be seen that the changes are complex and depend on all production phases and binding of all factors in the production process. Restaurants compete solely in providing a valuable innovative product in terms of managing customer demand. More valuable and more cost-effective is this themed restaurant product, where creativity and talent in culinary production, service technology and animation are focused on lasting memorable experiences for customers. The basis of profitability is the Law for the effective increase of costs (Ribov, 2017), which are also part of the formation of the cost price of the restaurant product.

CONCLUSION

The trends are in the improvement of the offered thematic culinary product and organization of work in the kitchen unit, to the improvement of service technology and the organization of work in a sales hall, as well as to the improvement of design, interior and atmosphere in national themed restaurants. The service technology, the thematic attraction program and the atmosphere are decisive for the competitiveness of the thematic restaurant product. The competitiveness of the themed restaurant product is a function of the innovation of the themed restaurant business. The recommendations for determining a formula for the success of a themed restaurant business are to the traditions, talent, hospitality and competence skills of the team directly involved in the production process.

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