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Rating street restaurants for consumers' choices of food attributes and marketing services on the campus of University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin

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Statement of the Problem: Since the closing of the public restaurant of the University of Abomey-Calavi for irregular services, high service costs and embezzlement, one should ask whether private street restaurants on the campus are meeting students' demand for food. Which food attributes and marketing services are highly rated and how do street restaurants compare with the reference restaurant Agro Maquis?

Aim: The purpose of this study is to reveal the importance of consumer choices of marketing services and food attributes, as a critical driver of food demand in street restaurants, especially among students on the Campus of University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Street restaurants were rated for their food services against those of Agro Maquis Restaurant taken as a reference. A typology of street restaurants was realized using main component/cluster analysis. Then dominant street restaurants were identified and tested for conformity with the reference restaurant, using mean values of 13 service attributes.

Findings: Consumer ratings show that 60-70% of street restaurants comply well with cleanness and attractiveness of the place, about 90% for servicing time/duration and only 50% for hygiene. Three main types/clusters of restaurants were revealed, covering 71.4% of survey restaurants, with main components among service attributes being fast servicing, attractiveness/tidiness and availability of change money.

Conclusion & Significance: While price accessibility is important, actually the total quality of marketing services is valued. Three types of restaurants were revealed according to fast servicing, attractiveness/tidiness and easiness of payment/availability of change money as main clustering axes components among 13 service attributes. Only 40% of street restaurants provided food marketing services as good as those of Agro Maquis. With these findings, we raise the Government's attention on food services outsourcing to independent private restaurants in universities and state organizations.

Recommendations: Public-private partnerships will be useful to cost-effectively improve the quality of food services provided to students, teachers and public agents.

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