

National legislation for catering services development in the Romanian Universities

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Abstract

The research article goal is to formulate a strategic management in order to determined the implication of the Food Science and Engineering Faculty, in particular The Catering and Agro-Tourism Management Specialisation in the development of complete catering services in the residential area of the Public Romanian Universities. The universities catering services will be created for the students, academically staff, administrative, technical and the secretariat staff. The catering services will have public character, the operation costs will be supported by the administrative local authorities in variable proportion (60-80%), in correlation with the catering services standard (student's cafeteria, academically staff restaurant, buffet for the auxiliary didactical staff, vending machines, convenience stores).

Keywords: Public Romanian Universities, University Catering Department

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Public Health in Romania is responsible for the health policy, regulations, health programs, and investments in public establishments. The main regulatory law in the Romanian for healthy eating in schools is 128/2008, Law about the healthy eating in the pre-university establishments and about the interdiction of fast-food products in schools[1]. In the University field there is no legal regulation of the creation or functioning of any type of catering services, in part, because of the university autonomy. In Romanian Public Universities are still in function the formal canteen with self-service, unattractive decor & ambient condition, without any system of quality assurance and healthy promoting program [2].

A lunch menu cost is about 2-3 Euro (without beverages) and consists in 2 or three courses: soup, plat (main course) and dessert. The canteen is located in the university campus and there is only a convenience shop and a vending beverage

machine in the residential space. A student eats only starch snacks and carbonated beverages in six or eight hours when is daily resident in a public university! All the academically staff ask a high educational performance in the class but nobody explain the direct correlation between the physical & mental performance of the students and them quality of daily feeding style! After only one or two month of the semester the students are unmotivated, with a fatigue figure and a luck of enthusiasm, which is dramatically in the success of the educational process and for them actual and future state of health!

There is no principal break for a lunch or a extended snack and in a 10 minutes break pause between the courses they eat, without breathing, fast food, confectionery, synthetic beverages, in the class or in the fast running between two classes. Only the child and students who choose a specialisation in a food related field have elements of the healthy nutrition principles and are aware about the style and the way of daily eating and have the education about the impact of a correct nutrition in the

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physical & mental welfare. In the last five years, there is a different optical vision of the Universities Management staff about the catering services because it becomes an element of attractively in the educational package presented by the competitor universities in the admission process [3].

There is an important experience of the occidental cultures, which show a very complex process of correct implementation of the catering services in schools and universities, and of good habits of food comportment style of the young's.

In 2005, the UK Government introduced new minimum standards for school lunches[4]. From September 2006 new food standards for school lunches were introduced. In addition, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families with the power to make Regulations on non-lunch food, such as vending machines, breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break and after school clubs.

From September 2007 schools must comply with The Education Nutritional Standards for School Food (England) Regulations 2007. These apply to primary, secondary and special schools. The Regulations divide food into a series of groups and set out how often food in each group must/can/must not be provided [5].

In US a college cafeteria is designed to serve college students at the university. These cafeterias can be a part of a residence hall or in a separate building. School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which state that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.

The present research paper propose a unitary management strategy which will determined the future development of the legal framework & implementation

regulations about the providing of Healthy Catering Services in the Public Romanian Universities.

2. Method of Research

The management strategy involves the following steps:

1. A governmental declaration about the catering policies in public universities and the legal framework regulations for meal provision and education about food and nutrition in public school and universities;
2. The catering policy declaration & development included in the University White Paper of all public higher educational institution;
3. The development of a University Catering Department in all public higher educational institution, co-ordinated by the administrative director of the public Universities;
4. The development of the managerial strategically and operational tools for the University Catering Department;
5. Internal and governmental periodical audit, with control and performance measurement, performance analysis and decision about the future level of public or private operation (privatisation with catering specialised contractors).

The governmental legislation initiative is the first and the most important step in the initiations of the legal procedure for catering policies & management implementation in the autonomy Public Universities. The Romanian Social-democrat Party or a national coalition with the Democrat-Liberal Party and Conservator Party could propose and sustained the legal initiative in the bicameral units of the Romanian legislative rooms, with the powerful sustain of the Public Health Ministry and Educational & Research Ministry. We propose the legislation initiative named "Right Catering Services in Universities", which promote the Law " The development Public Alimentation Services in the Higher Education Institutions".

The law includes the following legal aspects:

1. Concepts: catering, customer, catering department, catering policies, nutritional standards, HACCP hygiene regulation, performance measurements, and audit;
2. Basic principles and fundamentals;
3. Principal Regulation: public in charge institutions, legal advises;
4. Additional Regulation: The National Educational Program in Nutrition and Healthy Eating in the Public Establishments, The National Program of Formation and Continue Education in Universities, The National Companies of Promoting Healthy Eating in Universities;
5. Punishments legal regulations;
6. Final regulations-deadline application in term of 30 days after the law is published in the Official Monitor of Romania.

We propose a period of 30 days of public consultation of the law draft on the both sites of Public Health Ministry and Educational & Research Ministry and then, after review, the final form of the law will be presented in the legislative rooms of Romania.

3. Results&discussions

The methodological regulation for the implementation of the law will include the elements of catering operation following below:

- Type of meals offer in the universities
- Nutritional & Hygiene standards. Food allergens.
- Dining environment and facilities
- Commercial Buffet, Convenience stores and Vending machines
- Catering events in Universities (conference, meeting or workshop, social events)
- Food, drinks and water supply
- Contractors
- Students Councils with a structure responsible with the implementation of catering policies in specialised department
- Curriculum for nutritional education in Universities

- Performance analysis system.

At the time of law publication in the Official Monitor of Romania, all the Public Universities will include in the University White Paper the imperative of catering services providing for the students and academically staff as well as for the administrative, technical and the secretariat staff, as a strategic university policy. The local authorities with educational in charge will sustain the implementation of the governmental disposition, in terms of infrastructure, budgeting and audit.

The Universities Senate and by the directive of the University Rector will create the University Catering Department in all public universities, with an director of catering, direct co-ordinates by the administrative director of the University or by the Rector of University himself.

The main strategically objectives of the University Catering Department are the following:

1. The providing of adequate catering facilities for all catering operations (canteens, buffet, coffee-shop, vending machine, banqueting service, conference & meetings room) and all catering groups of the public universities market;
2. The providing of a complete, efficient and modern catering routine for preparing and serving the daily menus in-house, in a en-partie cuisine with cook-serve or cook -chill catering production method and specialised trained operational staff;
3. The implementation of the Nutritional Standards in the menu planning, menu rotation, policy of promoting healthy meals, food and beverages in-house sustained by a solid policy of National Nutritional Standards & Education Policy;
4. The developing of an efficient controlling system of the following aspects: purchasing of in-goods, portion control (size, form, weight), processing routine control (standard procedure of storing, preliminary preparation, cooking, chilling, serving); Stocks control (good-in and catering products) by the standard specification of conservation,

manipulation and stocks conditions; Cost control (fix & variable costs elements, profit margins, actual and forecast cost) in accord with the budgeting policy.

5. The development of a efficient and performance policy of departmental staff, with the training, motivating and controlling procedure;
6. The development & implementation of a permanent improving quality system, in terms of nutritional & hygiene standards and customer satisfaction, measurements of operating & financial performance, audits.

The strategically objectives will be included in the University Codes of Good Practice for all relevant aspects of catering management:

- suppliers selection and purchasing standard procedure and specification of quality;
- guide of operation standards for selected suppliers & contractors;
- standard procedure of delivery to catering departments.
- return of goods
- temperature control and measurement procedures in catering operations
- storage specification for good in, ingredients, additives, ready-to-eat products & snacks & beverages
- catering methods procedure (cook - serve, cook- chill) and catering facilities for water, fuels, energy, compressed air supply
- sampling procedure for meals & beverages
- standard procedure for catering products manipulation & serving
- high risk catering products or recipes ingredients (GMO, additives, pesticides etc)
- food allergies/special diets
- cleaning and disinfecting procedure – storage, production and service areas and catering equipment
- technical maintenance of premises
- pest control
- waste management
- food hazard analysis and systems auditing

- personal & food hygiene
- guidelines of health & safety at work
- customer complaints
- food safety training
- guide to standards of operation for contractors
- performance analysis and audits.

We propose a three courses table d'hôte type menu (entrée, main course, dessert) with weekly rotation and 4 different menu in which week of the month. The nutritional program offers daily balanced way feature meals, desserts and snacks that meet the current nutritional science recommendations for a well-balanced diet. By using whole grains, lean proteins, more fruits and vegetables and less fat, sugar and sodium the favourite menu is healthy, without restriction and appetising.

The University Catering Director will create an Action Plan for the implementation of the strategically & operational objectives, with clearly activities, persons in charge and deadline for all the elements of management plan.

The controlling procedure is applied periodically and in a perfect transparent manner, with corrective action and monitoring of the performance improving.

The monitoring of catering services is made by the senior management team of University Catering Department, in terms of:

1. standard of efficiency;
2. standard of nutritional & hygiene quality of catering product and customer satisfaction;
3. overall performance of catering operation (production & service).

The monitoring items for Catering Service Quality are the followings:

1. Intrinsic Quality of ready-to-eat meals: appearance, taste & flavour;
2. The size of portion in accord with the catering declaration included in menu;
3. Quality of presentation and service (type of plate, arrangements of the meal components in the plate, temperature of serving, quality of the plate decoration,

a professional service system, the timing in service routine, the quality of menu planning-number of menu acts, the mise-en-place of the menu, the association of food with quality beverages).

Periodical internal audits are organised and the reports are presented in the public manner (the University site, the Annual financial Report) and to the local authorities and governing body.

We propose the following checklist of the auditor's report:

- Implementation of best practice by University Catering Department
- Frequency of serving meals in the University facilities versus commercial services
- Students and customers satisfaction surveys
- Career development of University Catering Department staff
- Financial performance.

If the actual performance is under 50% of initial imposed level of management performance the managerial team of the University Catering Department will be fired and is necessary to examine and adopt a policy of catering services privatisation.

After 5 year of catering management system consolidation we propose a frame-strategy for privatisation and private contracting with specialisation contractors in academically catering, under a 4 year of contract. The public invitation to tender to provide the University Catering Services will include the following aspects:

- Actual University catering facilities and performance
- Period of contract
- Type of catering services contracted
- Nutritional & Hygiene Standards and Quality required
- Type of menu planning for students and general customers of the University
- Meal Booking for daily use or special events
- Equipment's and special supplies

- Security and insurance
- The monitoring procedure and methods of quality assurance system
- The contract costs and the management fee
- Other legal aspects

The catering contractors are individual, group, company, voluntary organisation or other body supplying catering services or any other service which may include the provision of beverages, food or alcoholic liquor on any premise or property owned by The University.

Contractors have a duty to ensure that their employees and those of their sub-contractors conform to the requirements of all-relevant Health & Safety legislation, Food Safety legislation, The University Food Safety Policy and associated Guidance Notes. Cafeterias, cafés, restaurants, bars, or even fast food chains located on campus may accept the meal plans created in terms of Health & Safety Romanian legislation.

In Romania we proposed a well known in the high services providing catering firm which is Eurest. Eurest has introduced a modern catering system, which ensures that students obtain healthy nutrition with any food combination.

4. Conclusion

On the national level we present a strategy for creation and development of Quality Catering Services in the Public Romanian Universities for all the segments of customers: students, academic staff, auxiliary and non-didactical staff. The article propose a Law Project entitled "The development of Public Alimentation Services in the Higher Education Institutions" and present the procedure step-by-step for a successfully management implementation by the local authorities and autonomy Public Universities. The Law imposed the imperative of provide catering services in the residential area of the universities, at a unitary level of nutritional & hygiene quality, at a good quality/price rapport, in an a standard quality environment of cafeteria or student

restaurant. In addition, we propose a support Law about the lunch break in the public educational establishments, eventually between 12-13 p.m. or 12-13.30 p.m. The creation of the catering facilities & services is the obligation of the Government, local authorities and public educational establishments, which are responsible for the public health and the correct nutritional educational of young's and academically staff. The feeding system, in professional and authorised manner, is an obligation and must be imposed in all level of public school institution from Romania

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