INTRODUCTION TO FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

NTD 226
BOWEN UNIVERSITY, IWO, OSUN STATE
ADENIJI A. O.
FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

• A food service system can be defined as "an integrated program in which procurement, storage, preparation, and service of food and beverages and the equipment and methods required to accomplish these objectives are fully coordinated for minimum labor, optimum customer satisfaction, quality, and cost control”

• It can also be defined as an interconnected web of activities, resources and people that extends across all domains involved in providing human nourishment and sustaining health, including production, processing, packaging, distribution, marketing, consumption and disposal of food.

• Simply put, it means the provision of food and drink ready for consumption away from home.

• The system in food service is classified according to the manner of food distribution. It could be classified as:
FLOW OF FOOD IN A FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

• Food product flow: The alternate paths within foodservice operations which food components and menu items may follow, initiating with receipt of food items and ending with service of food to the client.

• There are 8 stages in the flow of food:
  • Purchasing and receiving
  • Storage
  • Preparation
  • Cooking
  • Cooling
  • Hot and cold holding
  • Reheating
  • Serving
CLASSIFICATION OF THE FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

1. CONVENTIONAL FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

• It is the traditionally used method. Food is prepared and cooked in the kitchen and immediately served in the adjacent dining room (e.g. school cafeteria). The conventional foodservice system is the most common of the food system. In conventional foodservice systems, ingredients are assembled and food is produced onsite, held either heated or chilled, and served to customers. It is usually found in restaurants.

• Food prepared in the conventional system may be distributed for service directly to a nearby serving area such as cafeteria, dining room etc.

• In an hospital or other healthcare facilities, food may be served on trays using a centralized or decentralized service approach. In centralized service, the individual patient trays are assembled and set up at some central point in or close to the production area. Trays are then distributed by carts or conveyors to patient floors, where they are delivered to patient rooms. In decentralized service, food is distributed in bulk quantities to another area in the facility where trays are assembled.

• Food procured for conventional systems vary from those with no processing, to those with a limited amount of processing, to those processed completely.
ADVANTAGES OF THE CONVENTIONAL

- High degree of perceived quality: this system makes people think of fresh and homemade food products, which people often equate with quality.
- Food is served soon after preparation: which means that most often freezing, chilling, or reheating typically does not impact the quality of the food product.
- Quick service is possible
- Equipment and space requirements are minimal
CONVENTIONAL FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM CONT’D

DISADVANTAGES

• Labor intensive: with conventional systems, preparation is timed in relation to when the food will be served and eaten; thus, this system is more affected by the peaks and valleys of demand for food than any of the other systems. More labor will need to be scheduled during peak times, making the cost of labor higher for this system than for any of the other food service systems.

• Consistency: There may be great variability in food quality, portion sizes, and food costs due to unskilled labor. For example, all cooks might not follow the same standardized recipes, and some might have a better cooking techniques than others.

• Higher food costs: higher costs could result because there is less control of portion sizes, more deliveries (drops) are required by the vendors, and waste may be greater.

• Food safety: there is less control over food safety in conventional foodservice systems compared to other foodservice systems. It is difficult to provide the supervision necessary to ensure consistency in how staff follows the standard operating procedures.
CENTRALIZED/COMMISARY SYSTEM-

• The commissary systems are characterized by a centralized food procurement and production facility, with distribution of prepared menu items to several remote areas for final preparation and service. The centralized production facilities are often referred to as food factories, and the service units as satellite service centers (e.g. fast-food restaurant).

• Labor costs are lower because of the centralization of food preparation. This food service system takes advantage of economies of scale, so it is most effective when mass food production is required. One of the best examples can be found in airline food service, where the commissary system has been applied for many years. Menu items for airlines are produced in ground level facilities according to specifications of the various airlines, portioned into individual meals for passengers, and distributed in on site. Prepared using large sophisticated equipment

Advantages

• Cost of process is less
• Quality can be maintained in all outlets
• Sophisticated equipment makes work easier
CENTRALIZED OR COMMISSARY FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM CONT’D

• Waste reduction
• Less time of staff
• Lower food and supply costs

DISADVANTAGES
• High initial capital investment for building and equipment
• More technically skilled employees are required
• High transportation costs
• Food safety problems can affect many customers
• Chances of theft is more
• Food must be loaded and transported in correct temperature for safety and quality
• High cost of purchase, maintenance and repair of equipment
READY AND PREPARED

Food is prepared, then chilled or frozen for future use (e.g. large hospitals, large colleges or universities). The ready-prepared foodservice system has been in use for many years. In ready prepared food service systems, food is produced onsite, held chilled or frozen, reheated, and served to customers on site. Food production can be scheduled at any time, since food is prepared and stored frozen or chilled for later reheating and service. This system also allows multiple-day production to be done at one time. For example, if rice is on the menu two times in the next 30 days, the total amount of rice can be made at one time, which reduces labor costs.

A key difference between ready prepared and conventional systems is that menu items are not produced for immediate service in ready systems. Cook-chill and cook-freeze are two variations of ready prepared systems.

In cook-chill food service operations, most menu items are maintained in the chilled state for various periods of time. In cook-freeze systems, menu items are stored in the frozen state for periods generally ranging from two weeks up to three months.
ADVANTAGES
• Flexibility in scheduling food preparation: if food is prepared and stored frozen or chilled for later use, there is a great deal of flexibility in the scheduling of food production.
• Lower labor costs: large quantities of food can be prepared at one time and stored for later reheating. For example, spaghetti sauce could be prepared in large enough quantities to last a month rather than preparing it three times during that same time period.

DISADVANTAGES
• Menu variety may be limited as some food items might not be suitable for the chilling or freezing process.
• High initial capital investment for equipment
• Perceived loss of quality
• Food safety problems can affect many customers
4. ASSEMBLY FOOD SERVICE SYSTEM

also referred to as convenience food. Pre-prepared foods are purchased from food processing units and reconstituted in premises. It is used in fast food industry usually health care institutions, hospitals and restaurants, The primary objective of assembly systems is to provide food ready for service while minimizing the amount of the food service operation. Food products are brought into the system with a maximum degree of processing. Only storage, heating and service functions are commonly performed.

• Food served are generally convenience foods which are purchased, stored and reheated/reconstituted for service. The assembly food service system traditionally has been the least common, although that is changing due to the current operating environment. In today’s environment, labor is scarce and expensive. Also, there are many choices in foods that can be purchased that only require heating and serving. The purchased food is stored either frozen or chilled for later use. It is then portioned, reheated, and served to customers
ADVANTAGE
Lower labor costs: food is purchased that is almost fully prepared, requiring little labor for production.

DISADVANTAGES
• High food cost
• Menu variety may be limited
• Perceived loss of quality customers often view “homemade” products as having a higher quality than prepared items.