

Exploring the potentials and impact of indigenous Ghanaian dishes in the restaurant sector within the hospitality industry

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Abstract

The Ghanaian hospitality industry is far from fully exploring the potential of indigenous cuisines to spur the industry's growth. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to formulate a new model and assess the performance of indigenous Ghanaian dishes in the hospitality industry based on the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) model. The paper focuses on exploring Ghanaian indigenous cuisine's potential, factors affecting the promotion and moderating role of advertisement and location. The explanatory method involved the survey of chefs, cooks, waiters, waitresses and managers sampled through multiple methods. Data collected through a structured questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The inferential statistical methods included confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), correlational analysis, and structural equation modelling (SEM). The study contributes to existing knowledge by coming out with a new model that has the potential to improve the contributions of indigenous dishes to the hospitality industry of Ghana.

Keywords:

Indigenous, Restaurants, Knowledge, Cuisine, Attitude, Hospitality, Practices

1 Introduction

Food is pivotal to the growth of the hospitality and tourism industries worldwide. Food experience is a path to discovering the local culture and traditions and is crucial to the tourism industry (Lai, Khoo-Lattimore & Wang, 2018). In many parts of the world, there is a growing interest in promoting indigenous cuisine or local dishes. Local food is increasingly capturing the attention of destination marketers and researchers due to the authentic cultural experience offered (Savelli, Gregor-Smith, Murmura, & Pencarelli, 2022; Amuquandoh & Asafo-Adjei, 2013). People now travel from region to region and country to country with motives of food experiences (Okumus, Okumus & McKercher, 2007). Thus, the promotion of indigenous or local food has the potency to build a local brand identity that attracts tourists and, at the same time, enhances local pride and employment opportunities for locals (du Rand, Heath & Alberts, 2003). The potential of indigenous food and local cuisine in the hospitality industry is often undervalued by locals (du Rand, Heath & Alberts, 2003).

In many developing countries, indigenous cuisine or local dishes play a crucial role in traditional celebrations, cultural practices and festivals of the indigenes. Still, their presence on the menu of restaurants may be insignificant often due to the westernisation of the restaurant's menu (Bondzi-Simpson, 2015). In developing countries like Ghana, indigenous people rarely hold their cuisine high esteem as local foods are often deemed less sophisticated by many hotels to serve their prestigious guests (Du Rand et al., 2003). Often than not, guests of hotels would have to get out of their premises to purchase indigenous cuisines from street vendors. Nonetheless, the selling environment of local vendors is viewed mainly as unclean and risky. In many less developed countries like Ghana, local dishes are less popular among indigenes than Western dishes (Savelli, Gregor-Smith, Murmura, & Pencarelli, 2022; Bondzi-Simpson, 2015). In Ghana, literature is silent on the factors behind the level of promotion of indigenous cuisine and the development of a model to promote these local dishes. Also, the limited studies have not applied the knowledge attitude practice (KAP) model. However, studies emphasise that hotels and restaurants can churn out higher performances from self-acquired uniqueness through indigenous cuisines (e.g., Aji, Okoro, & Managwu, 2019; Akinola et al., 2020). Performance from a competitive edge emanating from association with local cuisines can be reinforced by applying the knowledge attitude practices (KAP) model, as promotion without emphasis on the location and advertisement will still be inadequate to achieve the required performance. Therefore, this study bridges the research gap by formulating a new model and assessing the performance of indigenous Ghanaian dishes in the restaurant industry.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Patronage of Local Cuisine

Food is now a fundamental component of the hospitality industry. Many luxurious hotels in the developed world are tapping into the opportunity, uniqueness and competitive edge of indigenous cuisines to improve performances. In the study of the level of food and beverage patronage by local and international tourists in the New Juaben Municipality of the Eastern Region of Ghana, Adanse, Antwi-Boasiako, Atinga, and Yanga (2015) surveyed 144 respondents and reported that the majority of Ghanaians patronised local foods as compared with continental foods in the various restaurants likewise the international tourists also have high affection for local foods. Although this study assessed the level of performance and patronage of local dishes in Ghana among local and international tourists, less emphasis was accorded to the promotional activities of the hospitality industry to enhance the patronage of local dishes and beverages. This study did not look at how promoting local dishes in restaurants can enhance the firms' performances in the hospitality industry. This study rarely mentioned the interaction effect of promoting local dishes on restaurants' performances in Ghana. In another study in the sub-Saharan Africa region of Nigeria, Aji, Okoro, and Managwu (2019) studied 20 selected hotels and showed that most hotels in Aba serve mainly continental cuisine more than the indigenous cuisine. Therefore, this study encouraged the branding of indigenous cuisine since it boosts our local economy, attracts tourists, and is more nourishing than continental cuisine. This study was carried out with hotels in Aba; little is mentioned of the factors behind the level of patronage of local dishes in the restaurants and the consequence on the restaurants' performances.

In the survey of menu decision-makers from 184 small and medium-sized hotels, the study of Bondzi-Simpson and Ayeh (2017) explored the factors affecting menu decision-makers' attitudes and intention to place more variety of indigenous dishes on the hotel menu and reported intriguing insights into the role of antecedents like normative beliefs, perceived benefits to business, perceived difficulties in production and service of indigenous dishes as well as customer patronage. The study showed that normative belief is critical in shaping hotel menu decision makers' intention to augment the variety of indigenous dishes. Also, the attitudes of menu decision-makers appear to be irrelevant to behavioural intention, whereas perceived customer patronage represents an important consideration for menu decision making. The benefit to restaurant businesses was also reported to drive the intention of menu decision-makers, yet no significant influence on attitudes was observed. The perceived difficulty in the preparation and service negatively influences attitudes despite having no significant effect on intention. Although Bondzi-Simpson and Ayeh (2017) study were more advanced as it looked at the factors affecting hotels' placement of indigenous dishes and beverages on their menu, the study failed to look at the factors affecting the promotion of indigenous dishes on the performance of the restaurants. This research gap will be examined in the current study. Also, in the pursuance of interventions related to local

dishes promotion in restaurants being knowledgeable about the handling of food is crucial, as the attitude of the food handler and practices, thus the implementation of the acquired information. , The application of the KAP model is very relevant in this study. None of the reviewed studies touched on the interactive role of knowledge, attitude and practices in the relationship between local dishes and restaurant promotion and performance, a research gap that will pursue.

In a survey conducted with 406 respondents, the study Kwol, Eluwole, Avci and Lasisi (2020) looks into the knowledge attitude practise (KAP) model for food control: an investigation of the mediating role of food handler's attitude in Nigeria. This study looked into how food handlers pay attention to hygienic-sanitary standards for food safety. The data was used to ascertain the impact of food handlers' safety knowledge on their hygienic practices and disease control measures. The study further observed the mediating role of the food handler's attitudes and the link between food safety knowledge and hygienic-sanitary practices. The study revealed that food safety knowledge had a positive effect on food handlers' attitudes, and also, the attitude has a direct link to the adherence to hygiene-sanitary conditions for food safety. Furthermore personal hygiene of food "handlers' attitude partially mediates the effect of knowledge on kitchen hygiene and disease control measures. However, the study failed to look at handlers' culinary and nutrition knowledge. Furthermore, it did not focus on the hygienic knowledge level of food handlers to the performance of restaurants. Therefore, this study seeks to apply the KAP model to local dishes promotion in restaurant performance.

2.2 The Knowledge, Attitude, Practise (KAP) Model

The model knowledge attitude practises (KAP) survey was developed in the 1950s (Badran, 1995). Still, the survey began to catch the attention of several researchers in the year 1960 and has since been used in many countries extensively in health-related studies. The model will be used as the theoretical underpinning for developing hypothesis relationships. The KAP model argued that knowledge positively influences an individual's attitude, which influences practices. Knowledge has to do with comprehension of acquired information and retaining and understanding the meaning of the information. Knowledge could be acquired from education as well as experience. Knowledge acquired by the food handler will be based on the handler's level of education and experiences and, under this context, culinary skills and hygiene. Thus, understanding culinary skills and hygiene practices and how to put them into practice could help improve the restaurants' performance in delivering indigenous dishes. Katz and Stotland (1959) described the attitude as having three basic components: cognition, affect, and behaviour. Attitude evaluates a particular entity with a degree of favour or disfavour based on psychosocial tendencies (Rav-Marathe, Wan & Marathe, 2016). Under this context, this could be explicit behaviour or attitude that may occur without any conscious awareness. The food handler will be willing to perform or practice all the dimensions of knowledge (culinary and hygiene). However, there are also inner battles against some restrictions from knowledge to practice. These are also known as implicit

behaviours or attitudes, which could affect the level of practice. Practice is the actions or behaviours that can help improve the performance of the various restaurants. Thus, the practice has to do with the demonstration of knowledge that has been acquired. When food handler comprehends the knowledge about culinary and hygiene in the production of indigenous dishes, they will be able to implement them. This could be used as a tool to help improve upon the performance of the restaurants in terms of preparation, cooking and serving and hygienic aspects of local dishes and the promotion of the local cuisine to local customers and tourists. The developed framework of the paper is based on the KAP model shown in Figure 1.

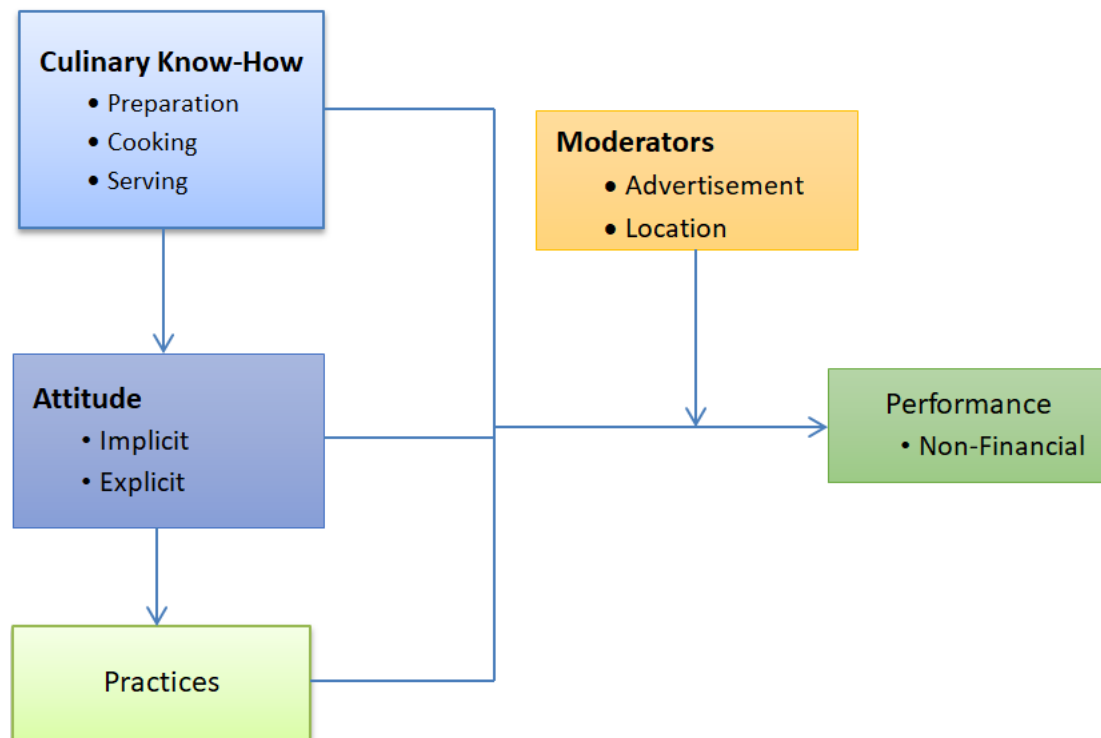


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

3 Methodology

This study will be largely explanatory in design but will also employ some elements of descriptive studies. The primary description of the study as explanatory is because this study will seek to test developed hypotheses based on existing theories of consumer behaviour in decision making. Thus, this study will also rely on a positivist paradigm philosophy, quantitative approach and survey strategy. The population of this study will constitute all restaurants licensed with the Ghana Tourism Authority since 2012. The Ghana Tourism Authority has a published list of all grades of restaurants in Ghana, which was last updated on 10th May 2019. The regional distribution of the restaurants shows

a specific number of restaurants registered with the Ghana Tourism Authority within the various regions in Ghana. The study will select a number of restaurants from the regions base on the De Vaus formula. From the study population, this study will rely on a proposed sample size of 400 restaurants (deduced from the De Vaus formula), which will further be distributed regionally using the Krecjie and Morgan (1970) formula. The restaurants will be sampled through a multistage sampling method to cater to the sampling units' heterogeneity. The registered restaurants will initially be stratified using a stratified sampling method based on regional location. Then, the restaurants in each region will further be stratified based on their grades through the stratified sampling method. Restaurants within each stratified grade will be selected through simple random balloting. All managers, chefs, and head waiters/waitresses will be surveyed in the final stage.

In terms of data collection, primary data will be collected using a structured questionnaire. The designed questionnaire will be piloted to ensure reliability and validity. Validated data will be administered through multi-methods, including self-administration, online and face-to-face. Data collected will go through a vigorous editing process. Edited data will be coded and entered in Microsoft Excel. Data in Microsoft format will be exported to the Statistical Software Program for Social Sciences (SPSS). The analyses will involve both descriptive and inferential methods. The descriptive statistical methods will include frequency (per cent) and measures of central tendencies. The inferential statistical methods will consist of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), correlation, multiple regressions and structural equation modelling (SEM).

4 Findings

The application of the KAP model is expected to help this study develops a new model to improve upon the patronage of indigenous cuisine in Ghana. The KAP model suggests that people with high positive attitudes towards behaviour and knowledge will effectively practice. The findings of this study will explain the relationships between the main constructs: knowledge, attitude, practice and performance used in the study. This model has proven to be a useful model used worldwide in predicting practices from the perspectives of attitude and knowledge. The focus is to design an intervention model on changing explicit attitudes and improve upon knowledge level of culinary and hygiene to promote and improve indigenous Ghanaian dishes on performance in the areas of customer satisfaction, on-time delivery, customer retention, new customer development, innovation, restaurant's reputation and the like within the restaurant sector.

5 Conclusions

The restaurant is a vital component within the hospitality sector and a major source of income generation medium for all nations, including Ghana. The restaurants are expected to focus on issues relating to the fundamental culinary skills required to

produce tangible products (dishes). Also, the hygienic aspects of the food render the food safe for consumption so that the restaurants could perform better and take due competitive advantage. Knowledge and practice of culinary skills and hygiene could assure the promotion of indigenous cuisine, improving the reputation of restaurants customer satisfaction and retention. This study aims to develop a new mathematical model that will be used to improve the restaurant sector in Ghana and assess the performance of indigenous Ghanaian dishes. The outcome of the study will be recommended for the implementation within the restaurant sector in the hospitality industry by the Ghana Standard Authority and all other important stakeholders. Application of knowledge attitude practice and performance (KAP-P) model in an ongoing and tested study in the restaurant sector could help reveal whether the hypotheses raised by the causal model link with the data collected. Structural equation modelling (SEM) with causal analysis can test the causal hypotheses regarding the direct and indirect causal effects of culinary and hygiene educational intervention on knowledge, attitude, practice, and the expected results of non-financial performance such as customer satisfaction and retention.

6 About the author

Akua Serwah is a registered PhD candidate at the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. She is a full-time tutor at Kumasi Anglican Senior High School, Home Economics Department. She obtained a cookery for the catering industry certificate (Cat. 8121) in (1998) from the Kumasi Technical University. She further received Higher National Diploma in Hotel Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM) from the Sunyani Technical University in (2001). In addition, she obtained a certificate in education (2005), Bachelors of Education degree in (Voc/Tech) Catering and Hospitality option (2007), as well a Masters of Technology in Education, Catering and Hospitality option (2011), all at the University of Education Winneba, Kumasi campus.

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