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### **PRIORITY DIRECTIONS OF IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS OF RESTAURANT SERVICES**

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#### **Abstract**

This article gives information about role and importance of the service sector in the country's national economy. Issues of improving the competitiveness of restaurant services have been studied. In this regard, advanced foreign experience is studied and the factors of ensuring competitiveness in catering enterprises are shown. There are also suggestions for improving the competitiveness of restaurant services.

**Key words:** service industry, competition, competitiveness, quality, restaurant, market, diversification, modernization.

Competitiveness includes a set of economic characteristics that determine the position of the enterprise in the network market. It may also include the characteristics of complex services, as well as factors that form general economic conditions for the effective operation of the enterprise in the service market.

The fact that competition is an integral part of the market economy ensures its existence in all areas of entrepreneurship, commerce and other types of activity. The problem of increasing the competitiveness of service sector enterprises reflects almost all aspects of society's life and is constantly in the focus of management and business circles of the countries of the world[1].

The competitiveness of the enterprise and the competitiveness of the provided services are inextricably linked to each other as a part and as a whole. The ability of the enterprise to compete in a certain product market directly depends on the competitiveness of the offered services and economic methods affecting the competitive results of the enterprise.

The main trend in the development of the modern economy is to increase the share of the non-production sector, to qualitatively change the material and technical base of the production sector through active information cooperation,



including the development of information technologies, and the general globalization of socio-economic processes.

The rapid development of the restaurant business today makes it essential for entrepreneurs to plan long-term survival strategies and adapt to the rapidly changing environment. In view of the fact that competition is an integral part of the market economy, the main characteristic of an economic entity is its competitiveness. In the conditions of the market economy, the problem of maintaining and increasing its competitiveness is extremely important for any enterprise.

Due to the emergence of new ideas for the development of the restaurant business, the demands of consumers and the development of modern information technologies, the management of the competitiveness of the catering enterprise is becoming particularly important.

Thus, in the modern conditions of the market economy, the competitiveness of the enterprise, product or service is the most important indicator of the organization's efficiency, and the market position and financial status of the enterprise depend on it. Therefore, ensuring the competitiveness of the enterprise should be of primary importance in the strategy and tactics of business development.

The market of food services as a part of the market of services, in addition to being characterized by features, characteristics of this market, there are also specific aspects of this market. Competition in the food service market differs from that in other service markets based on the specifics of the network. The difference between the food services market and other service markets is that the object of trade in this market is not services, but meals, and services are traded along with meals[2].

The short shelf life of foods (or the impossibility of storing some of them at all) also leads to differences in the criteria and indicators of competitiveness in this market.

The criteria of competitiveness in the catering services market are divided into complex and private criteria. Complex criteria of competitiveness are also divided into two parts: group and generalized criteria.

In the catering services market, criteria such as “quality level”, “innovation level”, “informativeness”, “social orientation”, “image”, “consumer price” are also used to evaluate competitiveness.



Researchers Cheymetova and Seteneva studied the activities of catering enterprises and cited the following criteria for ensuring their competitiveness:

1. Location;
2. Quality of service;
3. Average income per person;
4. Number of seats;
5. Working hours, regime;
6. Menu;
7. Interior;
8. Car parking;
9. Recognition;
10. Additional services[3].

The quality and competitiveness of services provided in restaurants through these criteria. Each criterion has its own weight, and by summarizing them, the competitiveness of the enterprise is evaluated.

Also, many factors influence competitiveness in various literatures. In particular, Orlov distinguished 3 groups of factors that ensure competitiveness:

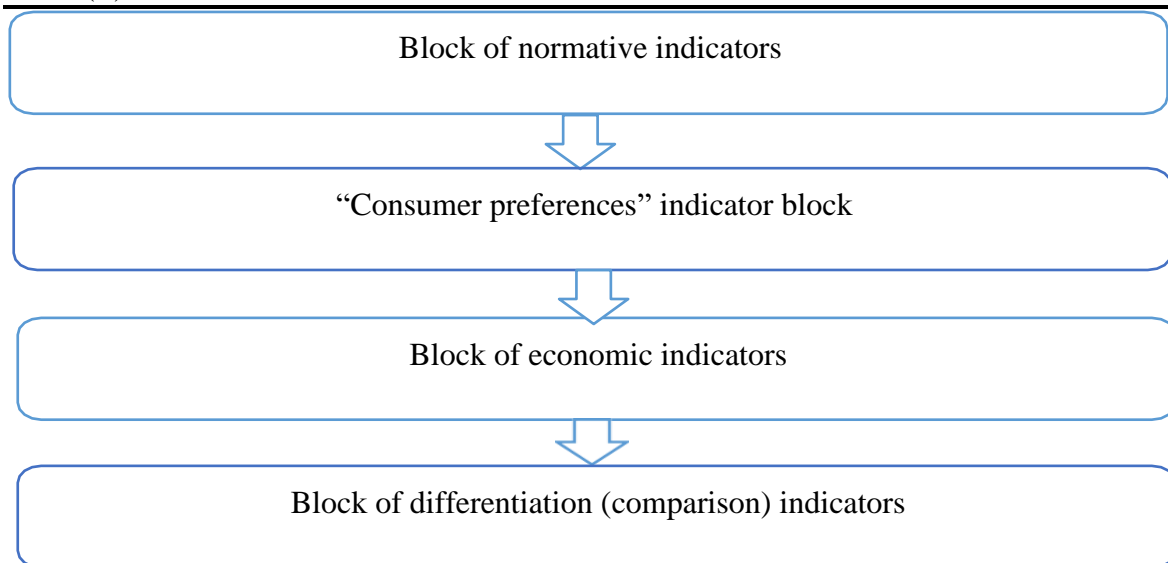
1. Technical and economic;
2. Commercial;
3. Normative- legal[4].

Internal, external and mixed factors of ensuring competitiveness are also distinguished.

Based on the analysis of industry literature and scientific research results, a list of the main groups of indicators of competitiveness of restaurant services was formed (Figure 1).

The block of normative indicators includes a system of indicators that allows evaluation. In this case, the compliance of the provided services with the established standards and requirements is evaluated.

The block of indicators “Consumer preferences” mainly consists of indicators describing the quality of service and its value from the point of view of consumers.



**Figure 1. The main groups of indicators of competitiveness in the market of restaurant services**

The block of economic indicators includes financial, economic and efficiency indicators in the service process.

The block of “Differentiation” indicators will consist of indicators that evaluate the features of the service that differentiate it among existing competitors in the market.

This block of indicators may not accurately and perfectly assess the competitiveness of restaurant services. This shows how complex the problem of increasing the competitiveness of enterprises and maintaining their position in the field is.

In our opinion, the indicators of the “Consumer preferences” block are considered the most important among the above indicators.

Because the assessment of the provided services from the point of view of the consumer is the same term. After all, one of the main principles of marketing is “The consumer is the king”. Through this block of indicators, it is possible to improve the quality of the services provided. As a result, competitiveness will be increased.

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