

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Food service is a highly competitive industry in the business globally where the eating out has become a daily activity. The statistic portal latest research has reached almost 1.6 million food service number in Europe Union by 2015. France is the most contributed country in food service industry after Italy and Spain. Food service is divided into several categories from formal to informal (Soekresno, 2002) such as restaurants, café, bistro, bar and so on. Each type of them has the characteristics which is distinguished by the way of service (services types) and management method. However, the main product that provided by all different food service are food and drink.

Food and drink are majorly emerged as a menu which is displayed in a book, screen display, pamphlet, board, etc. The utilization of menu display depends to how the management prefer and types of food service use. Generally, the definition of menu is a list of food and drink prepared and appeared as an attractive tool to acquire customer interest which included the price as the value (Kinton and Casrani, 2004). Furthermore, menu become one of the main products while running a food service business (Soekresno, 2010). Besides the role as the main products and attracting the customer, menu has the purpose for all parties who takes on in food service industry. To be simply understand, the purpose of menu is commonly used as a communication tool, information resources about the details ingredients, recommended and special offer, and guidelines tool. Pellapart (1967) has defined the purpose of menu into 2 parts which are enterprise and food service runner (cooks, waiters/waitress, steward, customer). Menu for the enterprise is useful as a communication and promotion media. Meanwhile for the food service runner, it is beneficial as a guideline to determine number of equipment and supplies uses for the service including the kitchen equipment and cutleries, to determine table set up as well as a media to guide the customer on selecting foods and drinks by presenting a well-structured design menu.

The structure of menu has many kinds of category depends on the concept of the restaurant. The basic of menu structure according to Jones and Mifflin (2001) are *table d'hôte* and *à la carte*. Both of menu types can be combined and adapted each other then becomes the new types of menu for example, cycle menu, seasonal menu and sometimes both of menu are offered in a restaurant, bistro or café.

As menu has been an important role on the food service, menu involves all parties in food services to be considered while planning and creating the menu. The chef has to collaborate with restaurant manager while planning the menu in order to gather the information about customer interest and strategy that should be applied in menu. This practice has been applied in most of the food services business over the world, including *Le Bistrot du Potager #2* which is located in Boulevard Stalingrad, Lyon, France. A well and interesting menu offering is essential in Lyon, since Lyon is appointed as International Gastronomy City on 2013 until now. The city has more than 4000 restaurants spread all over Lyon (Only Lyon Tourism). Almost half of restaurant number in Lyon used the concept of Bistro since, most of them selling the alcohol drink in the same time. This become a culture in France that people enjoy the food with wine, beer and others alcohol drinks. This also the concept that has been applied at *Le Bistrot du Potager #2*. This restaurant has also the concept of sharing plates as well as manage to change their restaurant menu in high frequency which are still rare exist in Lyon.

The changing of restaurant menu at *Le Bistrot du Potager #2* has influenced the business to become successful until now. The determination to change the menu is mainly because the weather and season in Europe is changing all over the years which means that the ingredients supplies has always changing seasonally. In order to get a fresh and good quality of ingredients, the menu change following the availability of materials. This has been agreed by Walker (2004) which one of consideration that should be take on is the seasonal availability of menu ingredients. Moreover, the capability of cooks, equipment, concepts, pricing, menu design and soon are important to be considered as well. The menu changing is part of menu planning and engineering that has a great impact to the business. A menu planning and engineering theory has been taught educationally in the institution and school of hospitality. However, the implementation in real industry could be not easy to be realized especially for the changing that are frequently happens. In fact, the successful of the changing menu

system in *Le Bistrot du Potager #2*, there are many parties are involved doing the planning which is an interesting challenge and has the impact of it. The menu planning might be start from the chef and then cooperating with restaurant manager or even include the owner, cooks and server.

Moreover, the changing menu may have a great impact to the restaurant operational while it has been set. The changing menu may be an interesting point as well as given even more variation of food selection for the customer eating experience (Jones and Miflin,2001). So as, it is expected to attract the customer as well as meet the customer needs and appetite (Kotler and Keller,2009).

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

As mentioned in the background that the changing menu is an interesting challenge for all parties involved in it, the process of planning the menu and details might be appealing to be discovered especially when the frequency of changing is high. The problem that might be happened on this system is while doing a communication about the changing both from the managerial level which are the chef, restaurant manager and restaurant owner to the waiters/waitress and cooks and then from the waiter/waitress to the customer. If there is a miscommunication in just one direction, the effect could be a negative impact. For example, there is an error information about an ingredient in a dish which might be an allergic for some customer such as seafood or offal and cause the customer to fall sick after enjoying the food. The impact might be several possibilities, where the customers might give a bad review in social media while the social media also has a great impact nowadays or the worst the customer will issues the restaurant.

Other than that, the changing menu also bring a positive impact for the restaurant as the chef can explore and develop their techniques to handling many more ingredients as well as utilize more fresh ingredients available. The restaurant might save the cost of ingredients while they do not need to look for the ingredients that are not exist in several seasons. The customer also can taste a better quality of food while the ingredients provided are also a top quality and many variations of food are served for them. Yet, this system might not give a good impression for all customer, some of customer could ask for the dish with the same formula as the last time they ate. Then,

it back to the operational personal which is waiter/waitress to communicate with the customer to give the recommendation for any other selection.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. How does the impact of changing menu to the staff performances in level of restaurant leader (manager and executive chef)?
2. How does the impact of changing menu to staff performance in level of staff (waiter/waitress, cooks)?
3. What is the reaction of the customer to the changing menu in *Le Bistrot du Potager #2*?

### **1.4 Limitation of Research**

The selection of the case study site is limited in just the first chain of *Le Bistrot du Potager #2* which is located in Lyon, France The City of International Gastronomy that has a great history about food and former restaurant in the world. It assists the study to give better understanding about the problem and solution of the changing menu problem. The independent variables in this study are the changing menu applied in *Le Bistrot du Potager #2*, as well as the restaurant operations which includes the staff and customer.

### **1.5 Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to discover and analyze the depth process of menu changing that brings a positive impact and successful to the restaurant *Le Bistrot du Potager #2* and find out as well as aware of customer experiences through the restaurant menu changing, so the restaurant could use the information to improve the performance in the future.

The result of this study is expected to be a resource for the future researcher in doing the study about menu changing. The data collection incorporated in depth interview and observation and through-out field observation by the researcher.

### **1.6 Advantages of the Research**

According to the purpose of this study, the study is expected to give advantages for future study or in educational aspect. As for the advantages of this study is to give the information about changing menu system in depth for the future entrepreneur or

as an information about the system. Furthermore, the study could be used as a resource for future research according to restaurant menu or restaurant operation especially Europe style restaurant.

In addition, this research also gives the researcher and any restaurant business a whole picture about the process of running the restaurant with bistro style both operational and managerial. It may give knowledge and awareness about the menu planning as well as improving skill in food service industry.

