

INTRODUCTION

Food service management is the art of providing food and beverages

Aesthetically and scientifically to a large number of people, in a satisfactory and cost effective way. It requires a professional approach along with

special skills, knowledge and vigilance at each and every stage in food service operation. Foodservice industry may also be referred to as 'catering'

industry. Whenever a person leaves his/her home for more than a few hours, s/he has to seek hospitality elsewhere. Often it may be a

snack, a drink or even a meal because his/her home is too far away to go to and eat. In a long work day, even if a person takes a packed

lunch, s/he may want to drink some beverage—it may be tea, coffee, juice or an aerated drink. Thus, we require services

that will supply food whenever and wherever necessary. These services are performed by the catering industry. The catering industry provides,

to varying extents, a substitute for food that one would have got

at home. In ancient times in India, dharmshalas catered to travellers who

went on pilgrimages. Even today, such dharmshalas are in operation,

offering an economical place to stay and have meals. Besides this, at

religious places, it is traditional to give Prasad or langar to the devotees.

Similarly, during the month of Ramzan, food is provided to all people

when they break their fast. All of these foods are prepared in very large amounts, by persons who have the expertise to do so.

With changes in the socio-economic scenario, food service and catering has evolved into an industry that is expanding, as there is much greater demand for food outside home which is tasty, hygienic, healthy and aesthetically served. In some situations, there is a demand for food with longer shelf life. Scientific and technological advancement has helped those involved in mass production of food to streamline their activities, be more effective, improve the safety and quality and yet make it less tiring. Use of computers has also contributed tremendously- not just for maintenance of records, accounting systems, but also for on-line ordering of food, information about equipment manufactured in different parts of the world and recipes for various preparations.

S I G N I F I C A N C E

Today with increasing migration, urbanisation, globalisation, international

travel, tourism, exposure to various cuisines and advertisements, as well

as increasing interest of local people to try out new foods, there is demand

for variety of cuisines and typical ethnic foods. Fig. 4.1 shows the factors

influencing development of food services.

Food needs to be provided to people of all ages, in

all walks of life, at any and all times in a 24-hour period. One thing is common to all — the need for food to be cooked and served well. Besides, providing food at the workplace, institutions providing care for different target groups, such as hospitals, old age homes, orphanages, hostels, have developed. Other institutions where food is routinely provided are school/college/office, prisons, feeding programmes undertaken by the Government or voluntary sector to improve the health and nutrition of specific groups