

Differentiation Techniques, and Competitive Advantage for an African Restaurant Operating in an International Setting (Cyprus).

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Abstract

An African restaurant located in Nicosia, North Cyprus as of late is faced with several challenges, and problems of which it is yet to rectify. The purpose of this project is to first clearly identify these issues, and find solutions to them. The main issues identified in the African restaurant's case are: Competition, delivery, diversification of its menu, supply and suppliers, management and staff, hygiene control, closing distance to schools, advertising, pricing, customer service, meeting customer expectations, and customer loyalty in order of importance. Several solutions have been carved out using business analysis tools such as the SWOT analysis, and both theoretical and practical advice have been offered. Some of which includes focusing on gaining a competitive advantage by being the first to diversify its current menu, and the need to share management responsibilities in order to gain higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency.

Key Words: African Restaurant Management, Competition, Diversification, Differentiation, Supply, Demand.

Introduction

The northern side of the Island of Cyprus has 294 906+ people (as of 2011) with a belated count of 73 000+ individuals living in the Nicosia/ Lefkosa alone, Magusa housing 46 000+ individuals, Girne housing 57 000+, and Lefke 8000+. It has 5 major universities; 2 located in located in Nicosia: Cyprus International University, and Near Eastern University, 2 in Girne including Girne American University, 1 in Lefke: The European University of Lefke, and 1 one in Magusa: Eastern Mediterranean University. All of which have African students as a major part of their student body. In Cyprus International University alone many African students from countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Swaziland, Ghana, Cameroun, Congo and several more can be found, with the Nigerian population of African students being one of the largest. Many of these African students find themselves far away from home, and at the same time very far away from the many African resources such as hair products, cosmetic products, and majorly food products which are tailored to the tastes of the African students, and which they are very much used to.

About the African Restaurant Analysed

It is located in the heart of Nicosia/Lefkosa city 99040, North Cyprus, begun in 2013. It is one of its kind, in that it is one of the very few registered African oriented restaurants offering originally African dishes on the island, and by so doing filling a very important niche on the island, as well as a major need in the market place that all other restaurants combined have not been able to fully fill. Its purpose and mission: is currently to serve the best food from the wonderful land of Africa in North Cyprus capital city Nicosia, bringing African culture to the heart, while offering some of the most popular dishes from Africa and its own created specials. It's Vision: is to be able to offer assorted composition and combinations of all African dishes, while expanding its customer base, and effectively sharing the culture of Africa with others.

Methodology of Research and Business Analysis for the African restaurant

The information used and issues outlines have been gotten from Mrs. Gülsah Anaekwe the main manager and head Chef at the African restaurant. An interview has been carried out with her in order to identify the problems, issues, or challenges experienced at the African restaurant. After this, information was collected in the format of questionnaires in order to apply more quantitative and objective approach to the problem solving steps to be taken. At the same time, some qualitative responses were collected from several African and non- African students to see their opinions on, suggestions for, and probe into their different experiences at the African restaurant.

Raw Material gathered from the Interview with The operations manager

Q. Please briefly respond; what problems or challenges are faced by Mama Africa regarding the following:

1. Regarding the menu (e.g. deciding on what dishes to put on it)

Response: We try as much as possible to spread out the meals to different African areas, however a big portion of the menu focuses on popular African dishes. Some necessary ingredients and spices are hard to come by, thus making supply a bit of an issue, and the menu a bit narrower.

2. Regarding suppliers

Response: Apart from the issue of the government ban of products coming in from Africa and formerly or currently Ebola experiencing countries, there is constant supply of other products such as drinks and other restaurant supplies done by local wholesalers. However the local suppliers wish to be paid instantaneously for all products supplied, and do not run on accounts receivables or debt basis.

3. Regarding competition from other restaurants

Response: Apart from legitimate restaurants like Hangover offering special African dishes, there isn't a lot of very direct and legitimate competition nonetheless, the presence of homemade African meals cooked and supplied at sometimes illegal levels is a threat that cannot be dismissed. Some of the regular customers sometimes move in with their girlfriends or boyfriends, and wind up eating African meals more consistently than if they were on their own.

4. Regarding hygiene control

Response: There are no real Hygiene issues however, the workers may need retraining on this aspect considering one has to keep constant watch, to ensure no mistakes are made. They have a general lack of

5. Regarding the staff members (e.g. need training, hiring them...etc)

Response: Apart from the training aspect, management is a bit hectic only Mrs. Gülsah is in charge of the management of most aspects including the perpetual record keeping at the end of each day. She however works towards fixing any issues that may arise, which keeps her busier than is necessary.

6. Regarding customer service

Response: The customers are much more impatient because they 'at other restaurants, they are willing to wait, however they come in to the African restaurant and see their own people here and find it easier to complain', thus they become impatient. Therefore putting a strain on the service being offered them, and pressure on those actively working towards getting the meal ordered prepared.

7. Regarding customer loyalty

Most times, when the customer comes for the first time, they continue to come. However, due to the occasional lack of finances, they fail to come sometimes. However even when they do not come, I am sure they are still loyal customers at heart.

8. Regarding delivery

Response: The delivery is a difficult issue because there are many aspects that come into direct play depending on the particular delivery. Sometimes, the customers give an incorrect or inaccurate address, making it very difficult to locate them. Also if there is a complication on one delivery, the other deliveries to be made get affected. Thus 20 minutes can easily turn into an hour at times. Above all delivery also depends on the time of day the order is done. At times, things are very busy, and some orders are delayed due to the sheer size of orders being made simultaneously.

Extra comments from Mrs Gülsah Anaekwe

The secondary supply resources are rather expensive, however "I cannot complain since they are selling foods that they do not eat. Thus, they cannot be expected to understand the qualities that make it more appealing."

The food criteria is much higher, and the expectation is much higher as well for the restaurants. "For example, in your house it may not be a problem to overcook your rice, but it becomes a big problem if done at the restaurant. It is understandable nonetheless considering it is an established restaurant." The managing job is quite difficult actually. The drinks, the detergent, the take away packs, the tissue, the finances going out and coming in.

Some Necessary secondary Research

Research shows that there are several similar problems that new and upcoming restaurants tend to face. Some of which include things identified from the case of the African restaurant as well. These include:

- Settling on an appropriate menu to present to the customers.
- Concerning customer service, presenting the right attitude at every moment, considering the first impression always matters to each new customer, and has a large impact on whether the customer will return again.
- Deciding upon and maintaining a unique selling point. There is the realization that even though it is a restaurant, its unique selling point should not necessarily be the food. It needs to be a very original idea most times separate from the food.

- Considering management, posing questions such as how many customers are catered to each day? What are the most profitable menu items? How much is spent on labour? How much loss is involved in inventory? How often is supply covered on time?
- Concerning hiring and training the staff, finding the right team is important, training them and not losing them over slight issues become more important.
- Also, concerning marketing many owners may focus on day to day and overlook the marketing aspect, and encounter several pitfalls.
- Finally, capital tends to pose a big issue and threat for upcoming restaurants despite their USPs.

Addressing the Issues

Considering the many different issues outlined and comments made in the interview extract above, it is important that a SWOT analysis be carried out identifying its strengths, and weaknesses which can be directly influenced, while admitting and looking into its opportunities and threats which can be tapped into, and guarded against respectively considering these are external factors that cannot be directly influenced or controlled.

The next step is to then properly identify the different problems, issues, or challenges seen in the African restaurant, and to then move on to the primary research required.

SWOT Analysis on the African Restaurant

Fig 0.1: Based on information collected from its management.

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USP: Provides jobs to many African students on the Island. - Has a unique internal design, and application - Retains employees - Is a well-recognized point for African food supply - USP: Fills out an important niche on the island that other restaurants do not. - Has strong customer loyalty - Has a good location between the major universities. 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly offers products from its country of origin • - Has difficulty getting resources for other African dishes • - Has an unstable delivery pattern • - Workers may require training in proper restaurant work etiquettes. • - Management is done by one main individual
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - Workers can be trained. • - Contingency: Secondary availability of resources in some North Cypriot local markets. • - Procurement of other African dishes are underway. • - More African students are attending the Nicosia Universities. • - Several African's and Foreigners are getting interested in the African restaurant and what it has to offer. 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - North Cyprus' Government bans on products coming from Nigerian and other African countries. • - Upcoming African homemade dish suppliers. • - More formidable competitors expanding homemade African dish supplying. • Hygiene and other governmental checks can lead to end of entire enterprise.

The problems Identified on, or challenges being faced by the African restaurant

The 7 major issues being faced by the African restaurant has been prioritized and characterized according to their level of challenge and frequency. These issues include:

1. The presence and growth of competition.
2. The ban by North Cyprus government placed on goods coming from Africa due to Ebola virus fears.
3. The challenge of adequate and more efficient supply internationally, and locally respectively.

4. The challenge of efficient and effective delivery
5. The challenge faced with management.
6. The training of its staff and hygiene awareness
7. The challenge of offering the best customer service.

Quantitative Research: Primary Data and Results

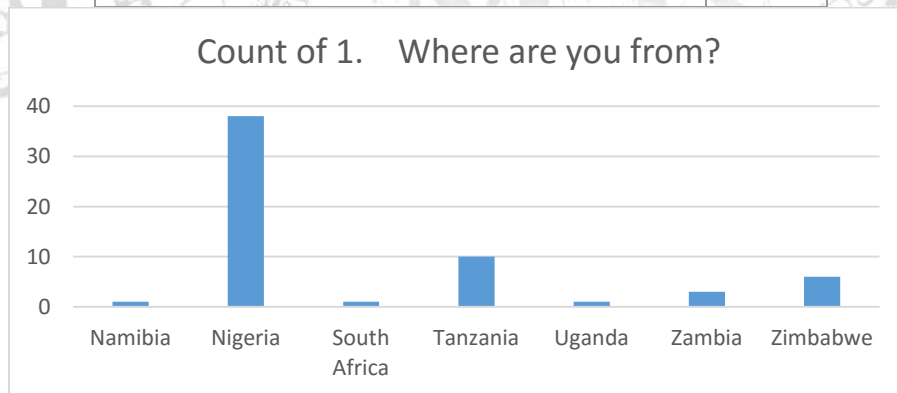
Using the more pragmatic, and objective random sampling quantitative method of research, my primary quantitative data was collected via questionnaires posed to about 100+ African and non-African students, in order to identify where the African restaurant stands from an external point of view regarding the same issues already identified to be an issue, and other aspects that may act as a plus for the African restaurant.

Questionnaire Analysis: Responses and implications of each Response

Responses to the above questions posed to the African students:

Fig 1.1 and 1.2

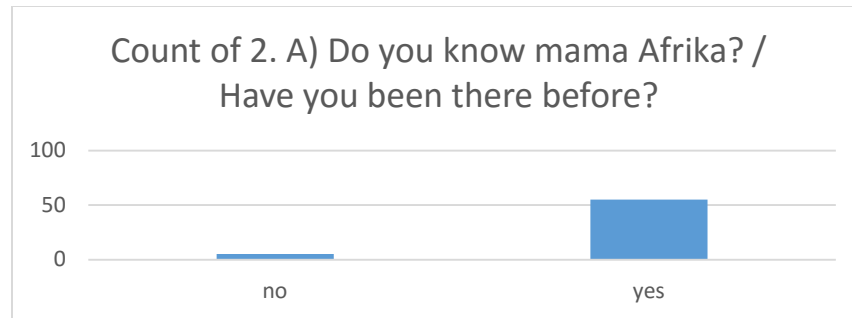
Count of 1. Where are you from?	
1. Where are you from?	Total
Namibia	1
Nigeria	38
South Africa	1
Tanzania	10
Uganda	1
Zambia	3
Zimbabwe	6



Many of the students questioned were Nigerian compared to the other African students. After that, the Tanzanian and Zimbabwean responders were more prevalent than the Zambian, South African, Namibian, Ugandan, or the several other African countries from which the African students (liable to questioning as part of my sample) come from.

Fig 1.2 and 1.3

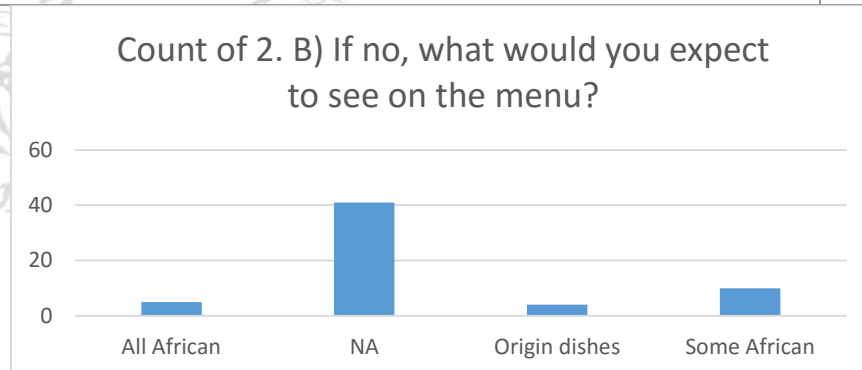
Count of 2. A) Do you know the African restaurant? / Have you been there before?	
2. A) Do you know the African restaurant? / Have you been there before?	Total
no	5
yes	55



For the second question close to 90% of the African responders randomly selected were already aware of Mama Africa whether they had eaten there before or not.

Fig 1.4 and 1.5

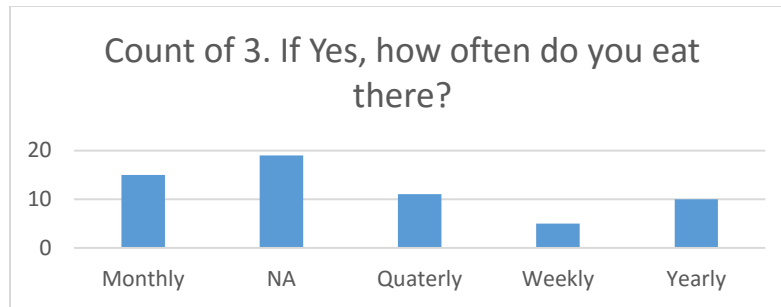
Count of 2. B) If no, what would you expect to see on the menu?	
2. B) If no, what would you expect to see on the menu?	Total
All African	5
Not Applicable to responder	41
Origin dishes	4
Some African	10



Among the responders that did not know about the African restaurant, it was important to learn that perception of what the African restaurant as a restaurant has to offer. Majority of them felt that the African restaurant as a restaurant will offer not all but some African dishes, not just from its country of Origin which in this case is Nigeria.

Fig 1.6 and 1.7

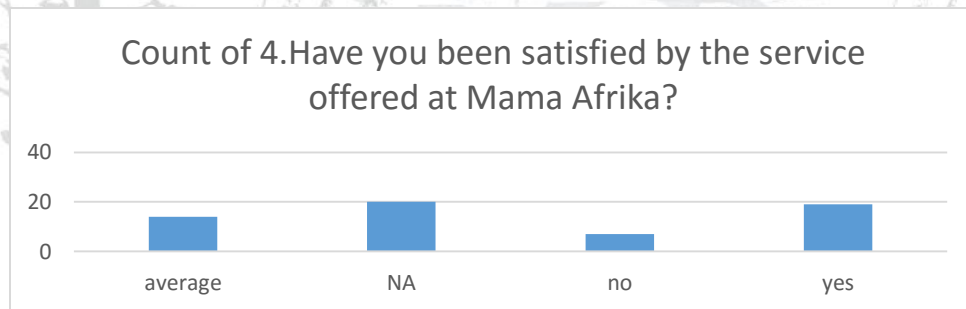
Count of 3. If Yes, how often do you eat there?	
3. If Yes, how often do you eat there?	Total
Monthly	15
Not Applicable to responder	19
Quarterly	11
Weekly	5
Yearly	10



Outside of the responders who have not eaten at the African restaurant before, we find that the African responders questioned randomly eat at Mama Africa monthly or quarterly, with a few eating there weekly, and none daily.

Fig 1.8 and 1.9

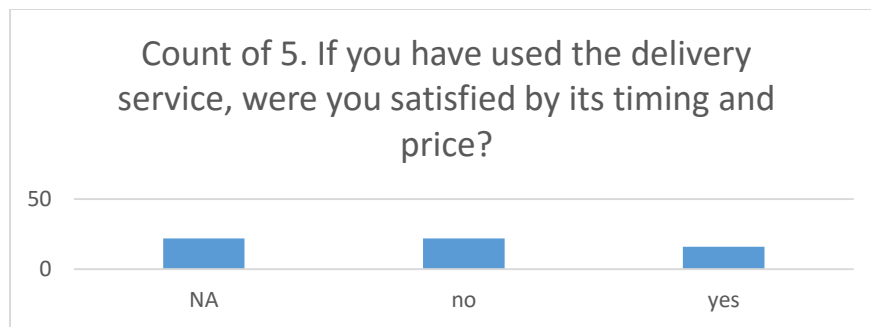
Count of 4. Have you been satisfied by the service offered at the African restaurant?	
4. Have you been satisfied by the service offered at the African restaurant?	Total
average	14
Not Applicable to responder	20
no	7
yes	19



Many of the African responders who have eaten at, and do eat at the African restaurant, who were questioned considered the all-round service offered at the African restaurant to be good and satisfactory. However, many others considered it either average, or not satisfactory at all. If the percentage of 'no' and or 'average' responses are combined, we see that there is a considerable percentage of student customers who are not very impressed by the all-round service being offered them as customers.

Fig 1.10 and 1.11

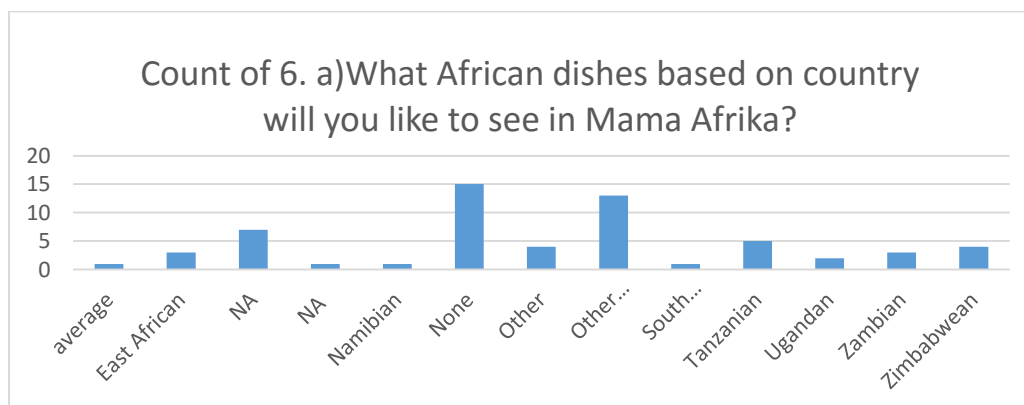
Count of 5. If you have used the delivery service, were you satisfied by its timing and price?	
5. If you have used the delivery service, were you satisfied by its timing and price?	Total
Not Applicable to responder	22
no	22
yes	16



The African responders who have used the delivery service offered by Mama Africa are much more dissatisfied with the delivery's timing and pricing than they are satisfied with it.

Fig 1.12 and 1.13

Count of 6. A) What African dishes based on country will you like to see in the African restaurant?	
6. A) What African dishes based on country will you like to see in the African restaurant?	Total
average	1
East African	3
Not Applicable to responder	7
Namibian	1
None	15
Other	4
Other Nigerian dishes	13
South African	1
Tanzanian	5
Ugandan	2
Zambian	3
Zimbabwean	4
Grand Total	60

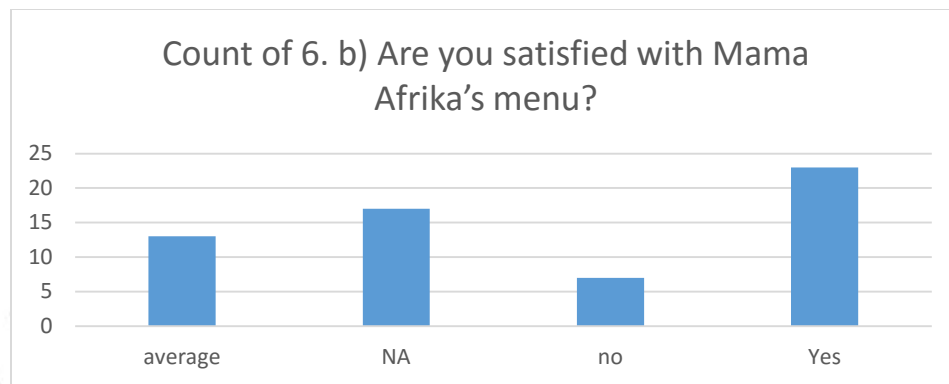


Most of the African responders made requests for the African restaurant to offer more often than not, their own country's dishes, at least the popular ones most said. They felt that since the name is the African restaurant, it raises the expectation of the amount and types of African dishes being offered. It is necessary to note that this graph corresponds to extents with the first one (See fig 1.1 and 1.2) showing the responses

of where the respondent is from. We noted that in that graph many of the African responders were mostly Nigerian. Thus it is understandable that for the dishes requested, more local Nigerian dishes are being requested, followed by Tanzanian and Zimbabwean ones.

Fig 1.14 and 1.15

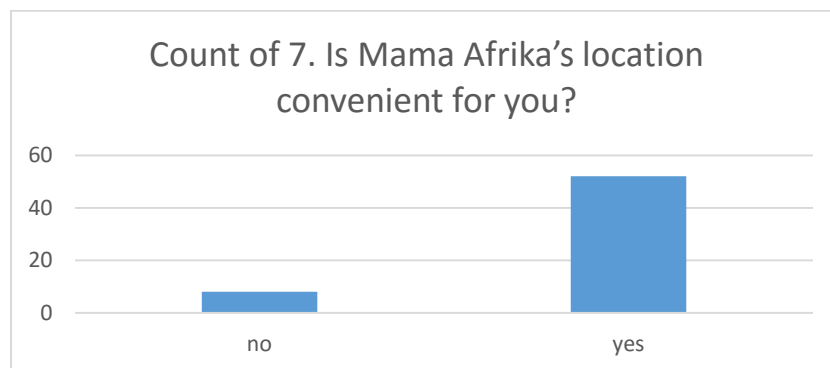
Count of 6. b) Are you satisfied with the African restaurant's menu?	
6. B) Are you satisfied with the African restaurant's menu?	Total
average	13
Not applicable to responder	17
no	7
Yes	23



Many of the responders are indeed satisfied with Mama Africa's menu as it currently is. Several consider it to be average, or are not satisfied with the menu as it currently is, with some commenting on it not being 'African enough'. Nonetheless, though there are many satisfied with it, when we add the responses for 'average' and 'no', it is clear that the menu may require some revision.

Fig 1.16 and 1.17

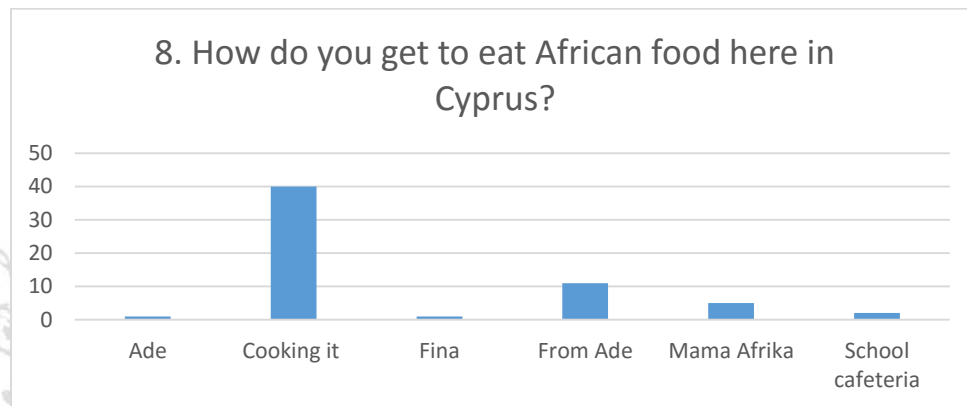
Count of 7. Is the African restaurant's location convenient for you?	
7. Is the African restaurant's location convenient for you?	Total
no	8
yes	52



After considering all the other challenging results, the African restaurant's location appears to be an aspect that may have generated a considerable selling point for it in that the responders consider the location to be quite convenient, with a few others regarding its location as inconvenient in comparison to other factors which will be highlighted in the primary qualitative research.

Fig 1.18 and 19

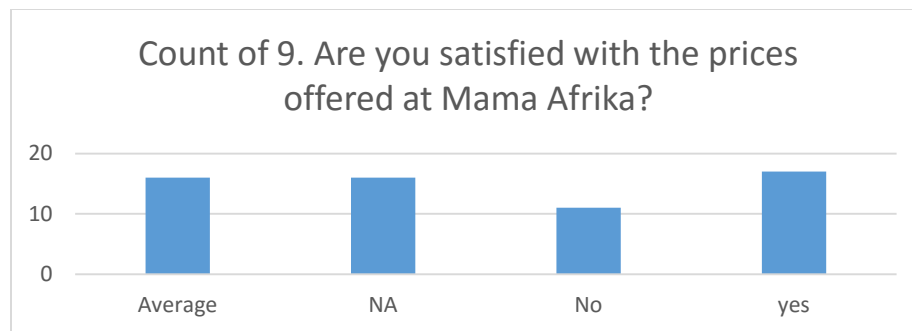
Count of 8. How do you get to eat African food here in Cyprus?	
8. How do you get to eat African food here in Cyprus?	Total
Ade	1
Cooking it	40
Fina	1
From Ade	11
the African restaurant	5
School cafeteria	2
Grand Total	60



One main challenge the African restaurant may be facing which has not been necessarily analysed is the result that this question poses. It shows that many of the students cook African dishes for themselves here instead of going out often to eat it. Apart from that, several other responders questioned, outside of the African restaurant patronise an African dish server here in North Cyprus, who is in fact in the same position as the African restaurant in most ways known as **Ade's kitchen** which was not thriving so well in the past. Now however, Ade's kitchen has moved into the campus 3 days out of 5 working days, in collaboration with a restaurant already established on the campus grounds known as 'The Kitchen'. This poses a considerable threat, and as was already mentioned in the swot analysis (see fig 0.1) stands very strongly as a threat and competition for the African restaurant.

Fig 1.20 and 1.21

Count of 9. Are you satisfied with the prices offered at the African restaurant?	
9. Are you satisfied with the prices offered at the African restaurant?	Total
Average	16
Not applicable to responder	16
No	11
yes	17

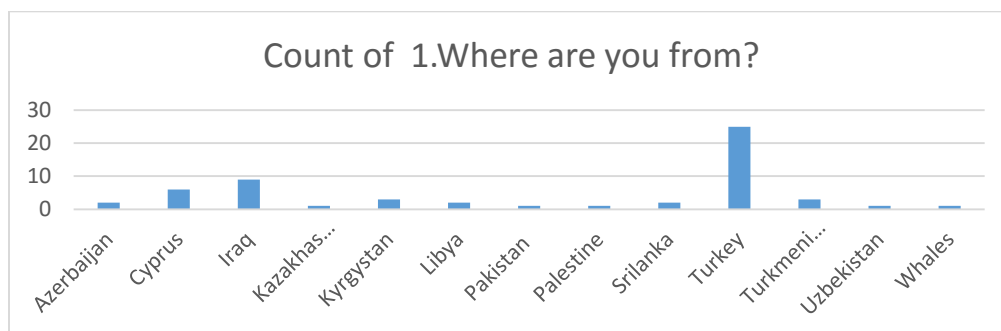


Amongst the students questioned who have eaten from, and do eat from the African restaurant, we find that a slightly higher amount of them are satisfied with the price, while a larger amount combined either find it average, or not satisfactory, and in essence too expensive.

Analysis of Responses from Non- African student respondents

Fig 2.1 and 2.2

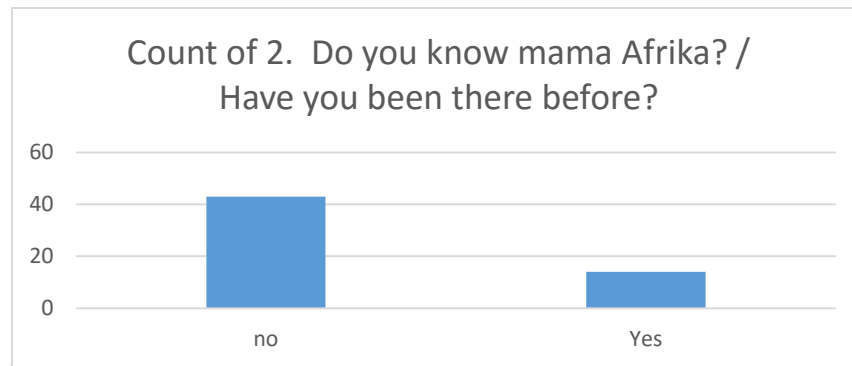
Count of 1.Where are you from?	
1. Where are you from?	Total
Azerbaijan	2
Cyprus	6
Iraq	9
Kazakhstan	1
Kyrgyzstan	3
Libya	2
Pakistan	1
Palestine	1
Srilanka	2
Turkey	25
Turkmenistan	3
Uzbekistan	1
Whales	1
Grand total	57



Among the Non-African students questioned, the responders were prevalently Turkish, then Iraqi, and then Cypriot.

Fig 2.3 and 2.4

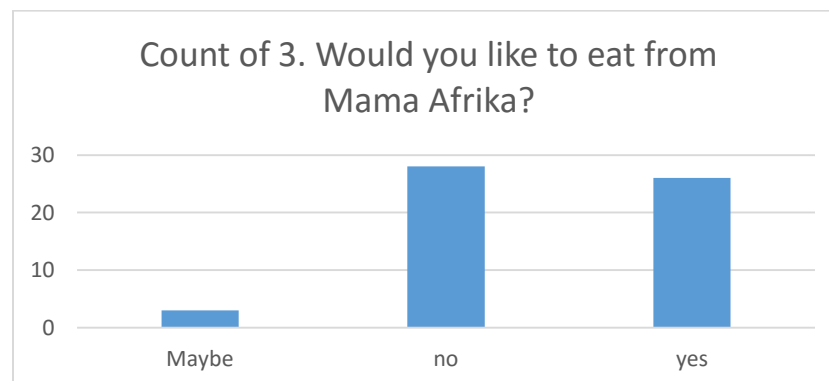
Count of 2. Do you know the African restaurant? / Have you been there before?	
2. Do you know the African restaurant? / Have you been there before?	Total
no	43
Yes	14



Compared to the responses for this same question posed to the African students, many of the non-African responders are unaware of Mama Africa in general, as opposed to knowing about it, and its location. This points out to the lack of adequate advertising on the part of the African restaurant as regards the non-African students.

Fig 2.5 and 2.6

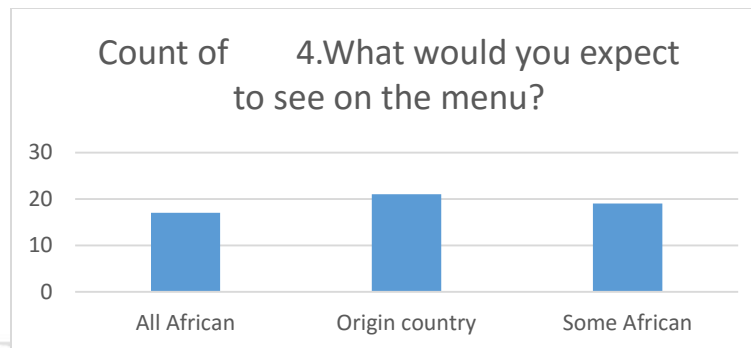
Count of 3. Would you like to eat from the African restaurant?	
3. Would you like to eat from the African restaurant?	Total
Maybe	3
no	28
yes	26



In order to identify if there is indeed an urgent need for advertising on a more grand scale to get the attention of the non-African students in the area, the above question was posed, and more of the responses were no than yes. Nonetheless, if we add the responses for 'no' and 'maybe', we can see that it becomes a 50-50 situation that should be carefully thought out.

Fig 2.7 and 2.8

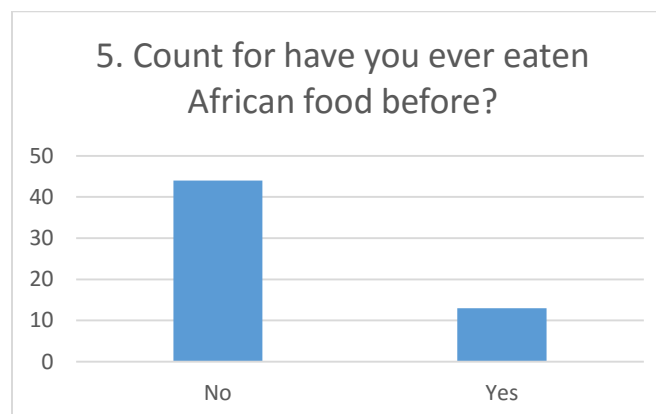
Count of 4. What would you expect to see on the menu?	
4. What would you expect to see on the menu?	Total
All African	17
Origin country	21
Some African	19



In order to get an accurate understanding of the perception the title 'the African restaurant' evokes in the non-African respondents, it was important to pose this question their way. Many of them actually considered that it will offer meals from its country of origin which in its case is Nigeria, while many more others combined expect to see All African dishes or some variety of African dishes being served at Mama Africa when and if they do visit the African restaurant .

Fig 2.9 and 2.10

5. Have you ever eaten African food before?	
No	44
Yes	13
grand total	57



Considering that many of the non-African students have not eaten any African dishes before. Their general reluctance to actually try it can be understood considering for all of them, it is a completely new experience.

Fig 2.11 and 2.12

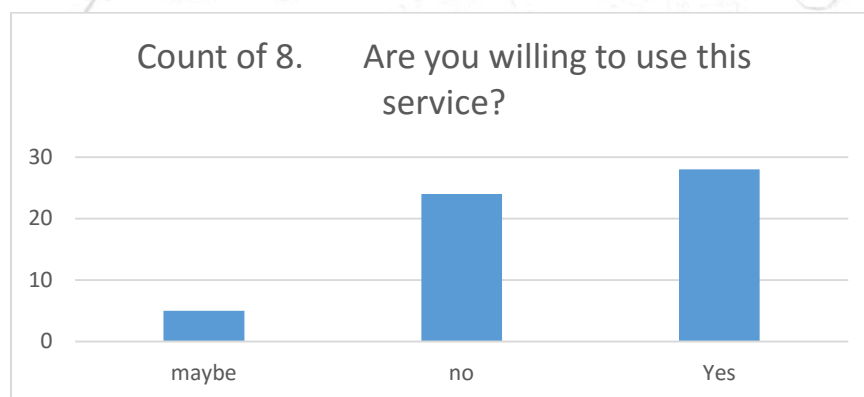
Count of 7. Are you aware of the African restaurant's delivery service?	
7. Are you aware of the African restaurant's delivery service?	Total
maybe	2
no	43
Yes	12



Considering that a lot of the non- African students are no aware of the African restaurant, it is understandable that they are not aware of the delivery service either as opposed to the African students to whom the African restaurant directly to some extent caters to. It was important however to identify how many are aware of such a service, and how many are willing to make use of it.

Fig 2.13 and 2.14

Count of 8. Are you willing to use this service?	
8. Are you willing to use this service?	Total
maybe	5
no	24
Yes	28



Perhaps this response from the non-African responders shows an avenue by which the African restaurant can market to the non-African students here in Nicosia North Cyprus. Considering that many of them although not aware of the African restaurant, and not necessarily willing to try it out, will more times than not be willing to try out the delivery service. Although this may put a large strain on the African restaurant, the issue of delivery must be revised, upgraded, and made much more efficient considering the service can be patronized not just by the African students but also the non-African ones who are in more abundance.

Observations Made

Several observations have been made from the start of the project, from perception level, to the physical visits made to the African restaurant, and on to collection of data, and finally the analysis of the data collected. These include:

Based on the African students responses

1. Most students consider that the African restaurant's name raises the expectation for the variety of dishes being offered.
2. The Nigerian students questioned want more local Nigerian meals to be offered at Mama Africa outside of the standard.
3. Other African students want their own popular meals to be offered at the African restaurant and find that the meals offered are predominantly Nigerian ones.
4. More than 90% of the African Students randomly questioned are satisfied with the African restaurant's current location.
5. Several of the students who were not satisfied with Mama Africa's location explained that they are not always chanced to travel with the bus to town, or are not interested in waiting for the school bus to come back around.
6. Many students not satisfied with the location explained that Ade's kitchen currently in school is much closer to them than the African restaurant as a source of African food.
7. Ade's Kitchen is key competition for the African restaurant so far.
8. Many students who have yet to eat from the African restaurant are encouraged by its location.
9. Mainly the Nigerian students, or their friends are aware of Ade's kitchen. Thus she is yet to truly diversify her dishes as well. This is an opportunity for competitive advantage for the African restaurant. To become the first to diversify.
10. None Nigerian students are generally satisfied with the prices offered.
11. Several Nigerian students consider the prices offered to be too high.
12. The Tanzanian's, Ugandan's, Kenyan, and other East African students are interested in seeing similar meals on the menu. E.g. all mentioned Ugali.
13. Students who are yet to eat from the African restaurant explain that they have yet to be advertised to.
14. The Nigerian students go to the African restaurant more often than the non-African students.
15. The northern Nigerian students were more dissatisfied with the menu, explaining that northern Nigerian meals are not found on the menu.
16. Most students not eating from the African restaurant, cook for themselves, or have someone who cooks it often for them.
17. Many non-African students are anticipating to see at least one or two of their own country specific meals on the African restaurant's menu.
18. Several of the non- African students understand and expect that their country specific materials will be hard to come by.
19. The top most requested dishes are more Nigerian dishes, Tanzanian, and Zimbabwean dishes.
20. A great majority of Nigerian students who do not eat frequently from the African restaurant, cook for themselves.
21. The students satisfied with the service offered at the African restaurant, go weekly and frequently.

Based on the Non-African Students responses

1. Are generally indifferent about the price of the dishes.
2. The non-African students are generally indifferent to the meal's nationality. As long as it is African they are interested or disinterested.
3. Many of the non- African students anticipate or are worried that the meals offered will be too spicy for their tastes.

4. Many of the students who do not know the African restaurant have not been adequately advertised to.
5. Many of the students are interested in using the delivery service even though they may not go there in person.

Qualitative Approach: Responses to open ended questions posed to the students African Student's responses

10. What comments, opinions, and changes will you like to make and see at the African restaurant?

- Expensive, and delivery is late
- Would love to eat Ugandan dishes from there but expertise needed may be lacking.
- Understands that materials may be hard to find.
- Brand name causes one to have a high expectation
- Meat price reduction should be considered
- Would love to see a popular Tanzanian meal when I go
- Better advertising is necessary
- Menu expansion is necessary
- Understands they may not have Namibian dishes material
- waiting to catch the bus back is a long trip back to school
- Bad location for none mobile students
- Expectation is raised due to its name.
- the African restaurant may have no knowledge of Zimbabwean food
- It will be good if they can move into campus from time to time
- The Chicken tasted off
- The locations is perfect at the moment
- Better advertising strategies should be employed
- Should offer other African dishes not just Nigerian
- the African restaurant should introduce some none African dishes and reduce its African dish prices
- It is the African restaurant , not Mama Nigeria
- Would like to see other African dishes on the menu
- would love some Suya
- Would like some Ugali and Tanzanian Sea food
- Would like some Tanzanian sea food.
- quicker service
- Would love some Amala and Ewedu
- more meat being served, and maize meals
- Have a place closer to, or within CIU
- Should offer other African dishes not just Nigerian
- The food quality and price were not on par. Seemed expensive
- Quality customer service should be revised and provided
- the food was good but the customer service was unimpressive

- Should offer other African dishes not just Nigerian
- have heard it is nice will eventually go there
- if price is reduced, more of us will go very often
- They should consider opening more branches
- Order was misunderstood, plus it felt expensive
- customer service should be upgraded

Non-African Students responses

6. Do you have any opinions or suggestions for the African restaurant?

- would love to try some spicy meals
- food may be too spicy for me
- I am vegetarian so I may be unable to eat any of its meals.

Business Solutions/Advice: based on problems outlined by Mrs Anaekwe, Personal observation made, SWOT results, and results from data collected

Adding on to the secondary research done, and the solutions identified there (see 'Secondary research' and 'The problems Identified on, or challenges being faced by the African restaurant ') Based on the interview with The operations manager the general manager of the restaurant the African restaurant , as well as the information collected from the external stakeholders, and the SWOT analysis approach carried out, several workable business solutions and advice have been generated to help the African restaurant move forward, and generate a competitive advantage regarding the following:

Solution for Competition

Currently, the main competition that the African restaurant has as a unique product provider in North Cyprus, is Ade's kitchen which is mobile, and serves similar dishes (Nigerian based) to the African restaurants.

The solution is for the African restaurant to diversify first, to be the first to branch out into other highly demanded African dishes. By so doing, the African restaurant can get a competitive advantage, or a first mover's advantage. It will also gain customer loyalty, and a larger customer base compared to what it currently has. This is because Ade's kitchen after investigations, offers very similar dishes. Also, using the bench marking approach, the African restaurant can imitate Ade's current strategy of selling within the schools, and thereby being closer and more accessible to its customers who are predominantly university students. It can like Ade's kitchen form an alliance with the Turkish restaurants functioning on the different campuses in Nicosia.

Solution for Diversification and Menu

Still capitalizing on the issue of diversification, as pointed out in observation made; no 19. "The top most requested dishes are more Nigerian dishes, Tanzanian, and Zimbabwean dishes."

Solution: The African restaurant would need to first contract some students, or cooks that have thorough knowledge of their countries popular foods, and would need to go about getting the supply needed for one night a week per country.

Solution for Delivery and Packaging

The area of delivery is one section where both the management and the stakeholders, the customers agree that there is an issue. From the survey done, the results showed that many of the current customers are not satisfied with the delivery service when they did make use of it. On the other hand, the non- African students questioned were willing to make use of the delivery service even if they may not be willing to go to the shop in person.

Solution for Delivery

The African restaurant will first need to employ at least two more people whose focus is on delivery and delivery alone. These individuals will need to have a thorough knowledge of the North Cyprus Nicosia's geography and housing locations. Plus an employee on ground who will monitor orders made, and give feedback to waiting customers.

Next: a worker to worker phone communication system needs to be employed, and the delivery individuals would need to have phones that have enough credit to not just communicate with the staff member at the restaurant, but all the customer to whom delivery will be made. This will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery, as well as customer loyalty and satisfaction

Solution for Packaging

On the same note, several of the customers questioned were dissatisfied with the packaging. The African restaurant would certainly need to improve its packaging material, and make use of more solid wrapping so the appeal of the food does not reduce at the point of delivery.

Solution for Supply and Suppliers

Concerning the issue of supply, the ban and the distrust of local suppliers. The issue of a government issued ban due to paranoia is not something that the African restaurant as an individual organization can change, it is better for the African restaurant to look for its best alternative instead of maintaining reliance on one particular chain of supply. The African restaurant will need to shift its priority delivery source towards a more local or international point of view. In essence, it can get a better deal of the students whose main business is to bring in goods from Nigeria, and resell. Also, there are many Nigerians in Istanbul for instance with the same purpose. If the African restaurant can connect to one or two of the above stated, it may be more sustainable, and become less affected by such governmental bans. On the other hand, there are other African countries such as Ghana, and Cotonou who eat similar foods as Nigeria.

Concerning the Local Suppliers

A trust alliance needs to be built. Most supply relationships rely solely on trust and consistency to be efficient. If this is not still possible, the African restaurant can offer them a deal. Based on advertising for them, or expanding their supply base, it can request one chance where in it buys on credit, and pays on or before the precise date agreed upon.

Solution for Management and Staff

Based on the issue of management, it is very much agreeable that there is an issue for the African restaurant in this aspect. This is because the operations manager is the main person overseeing everything and everyone. This is not an efficient strategy. She not only oversees most things, but also works first hand in the kitchen alongside her kitchen staff. It is only understandable that she is strained, and may also miss some things as time goes by seeing as she is very occupied at all times. The operations manager would

certainly need to employ a trusted assistant managing staff member. This person's role would be to oversee aspects such as staff training, customer service quality being offered by the staff to the customers, the cleanliness of the area, checking with suppliers, making instant book records as is required, and generally being on top of things especially when the operations manager is occupied. This will not only benefit the operations manager but help her to be more focused on each activity more. This also will sharpen the awareness of the staff members regarding all the important issues already mentioned.

Solution for Hygiene Control

The operations manager pointed out that the staff may need some retraining on this issue. This is because any little problem that could make the African restaurant suspicious concerning hygiene is a big threat to its customer base, and customer loyalty incidentally. In order to avoid this issue, the African restaurant would need to take on the 'better safe than sorry' approach. This would entail the African restaurant carrying out a monthly training and awareness program for its current staff. If possible an accredited process that involves professionals. Such exercises go a long way in building customer trust, and even customer forgiveness if any slips are made. Also with a certification, the African restaurant has proof of its hygiene control in the incidence that official hygiene control individuals come for inspections.

Solution for Closing Distance to Schools and Advertising

The African restaurant at the moment is at a disadvantage due to the presence of Ade's kitchen on the campuses. At the same time a large amount of students questioned who have yet to visit the African restaurant explained qualitatively, that they were not advertised to, or have not been informed. This indicates that the African restaurant's current strategy is not as efficient as it can be.

The African restaurant will need to invest more into its advertising, and focus on its main Target, the African Students. With the introduction of other African country specific nights as have already been explained, it will become an attractive point.

The African restaurant will need to send people out to the universities more often to advertise, not just by passing out fliers, but to get these marketers having conversations with the students about what is offered. In this way the marketing strategy is more assertive and memorable. This of course applies to both the African and non-African students where in a Turkish person can be contracted to discuss the delivery service opportunities, and the menu and such with many of the non-African students who may be interested already.

Solution for Pricing, Customer Service, Customer Loyalty and Meeting Customer Expectations

Solution for Pricing

Since the African restaurant's main customers are students, and students are not particularly known to maintain their monetary status, or have periods where they cannot afford to spend on luxury, it will be better for the African restaurant to introduce a sort of discount, or gifting system based on customer loyalty. This system can forgive the any other pricing issues that may be felt by the customers.

Solution for Customer Service

Based on personal observation this is one aspect I will confess that Mama Africa may be lacking in, and may be performing sub standardly at. Apart from The operations manager herself who is more friendly and welcoming, the other staff members at their different position do not give off the feeling of cheer. The African restaurant will need to carry out a sort of training for its staff members. It will need to carry out some job enlargement to some extent where in some same level responsibilities will be added to the staff

members. This will include job rotating in itself where in at different days of the week, the individuals responsible for one thing or the other shift to focus on other things. This will improve the thorough knowledge held by the staff. The food will need to be served directly to the customers. This will boost customer satisfaction, and improve customer loyalty.

Solution for Meeting Customers' Expectations

Once again the staff members would need to take on the roles of an actual waitresses and waiters when it is their turn. They will be responsible for serving the meals, for directing the customers as they come in, for taking the order, and for maintaining organization at all times. There should also be a snack or bread or chin chin (Nigerian snack) for instance that is offered on the house to keep the customer busy and patient.

Short Comings of the Research

There was a lack of sufficient time to go more into the details on how the African restaurant can go about its improvement. Also, the data collected is not a clear representation of the African restaurant's true customer base.

Conclusion

Conclusively, several issues were identified by using business tools such as the SWOT analysis, observation, an interview with management, and primary data collection and analysis. These issues, problems, or challenges identified include: Competition, delivery, diversification of its menu, supply and suppliers, management and staff, hygiene control, closing distance to schools, advertising, pricing, customer service, meeting customer expectations, and customer loyalty. The solutions offered range from employing at least 3 new staff members as well as introducing contract staff members at particular days of the week. Other solution involve diversifying the meals, improving packaging, spreading management responsibilities, and generating customer loyalty point taking systems.

All of the solutions offered are mainly targeted at improving staff performance, and quality of customer service, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of work at the African restaurant, and as a result, improving customer loyalty, retaining customers and improving customer base, and generating higher sales, and profits in the short run. If the African restaurant follows through with majority of the advice offered, not only will it gain another ground for competitive advantage, it will also solidify its knowledge as a first mover, and by so doing its life span as an organization.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire posed to African Students

1. Where are you from?
2. A) Do you know this African restaurant? / Have you been there before?
- Yes - No
B) If no, what would you expect to see on the menu?
- All African dishes, - Some African dishes - Dishes from country of origin
3. If yes, how often do you eat there?
- Weekly - Monthly - Yearly - Quarterly
4. Have you been satisfied by the service offered at the African restaurant?
- Yes - No - Average
5. If you have used the delivery service, were you satisfied by its timing and price?
- Yes -No
6. A) What African dishes based on country will you like to see in the African restaurant?
6. B) Are you satisfied with the African restaurant's menu?
- Yes - No - Average
7. Is the African restaurant's location convenient for you?
- Yes - No
8. How do you get to eat African food here in Cyprus?
- Cooking it yourself
- Ordering it from _____ (Give name)
- Ordering from or going to the African restaurant.
9. Are you satisfied with the prices offered at the African restaurant?
- Yes - No -Average
10. What comments, opinions, and changes will you like to make and see at the African restaurant?

Appendix 2

Questionnaire posed to Non-African students

1. Where are you from?
2. Do you know the African restaurant? / Have you been there before?
- Yes - No
3. Would you like to eat from the African restaurant?
- Yes - No
4. What would you expect to see on the menu?
- All African dishes, - Some African dishes - Dishes from country of origin
5. Have you ever eaten African food before?
- Yes - No
6. Do you have any opinions or suggestions for the African restaurant?
7. Are you aware of the African restaurant's delivery service?
- Yes - No
8. Are you willing to use this service?
- Yes - No