

## **Benchmarking in Independent Full-service Restaurants**

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**ABSTRACT** The success of a restaurant depends on whether the entire restaurant team can deliver a service that meets the expectations of the customer. A possible course of action is for restaurant managers to use benchmarking to identify performance gaps. The primary objective of this study was to describe the role of restaurateurs' perceptions of benchmarking in independent full-service restaurants in South Africa. A quantitative research approach using a questionnaire to collect data from 116 restaurateurs was followed. Analysis of data was done using IBM SPSS V20. Benchmarking perceptions were analysed using factor analysis. Results revealed that one third of the respondents had never done a benchmarking exercise, although at least two thirds rated benchmarking as very to extremely important. Maintaining a competitive advantage was ranked as the most likely outcome of benchmarking. Benchmarking should become a priority in the restaurant industry to ensure successful restaurant operations.