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The Five Aspects Meal Model, FAMM From Michelin Guide to public meal sector

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Abstract

Background: The fundamental didactic base of the discipline *Culinary Arts & Meal Science* at Örebro University, Sweden is the theoretical model of culinary meal experiences, the *Five Aspects Meal Model*, FAMM. The model was originally inspired by the Michelin Guides assessment criteria.

Aims and methods: The aim of this descriptive paper is to list to what extent the FAMM model appears and to map out how and where the model is presented. The material has been collected by means of a database search using the keywords FAMM and Five Aspects Meal Model and sorted and categorized according to type of publication or document and year of publication.

Results: In total 108 documents were found. These contained 26 reviewed articles, the first in 2002, and also seven doctoral theses, as well as material from thirteen book chapters. Twenty-one undergraduate theses were also found. There was one official document from 1997 and from 2010-2012 a total of eleven official documents. FAMM is used both as a theoretical framework and support for practical application in meal planning in the public and private meal sector. In 2011-2012 the FAMM model was used in several official documents from local authorities, county councils, government departments.

Discussion and conclusion: There is now a focus on how to create a dining experience, in the same way as in the restaurant sector, and how to achieve happy and satisfied guests. Maybe this has something to do with “the gastronomic revolution” in Swedish society? It might also be a sign that the development of university education in the gastronomic sphere has been an important factor in changing the focus away from nutritional aspects and towards pleasant experiences in the context of public meals in Sweden.

Key words: FAMM, Guide Michelin, public meal sector, gastronomic revolution in Sweden

Introduction

The multidisciplinary curriculum *Culinary Arts & Meal Science* at Örebro University is based on science, practical skills and the aesthetic design of the meal. The fundamental didactic base of the discipline is the theoretical model of culinary meal experiences, the *Five Aspects Meal Model*, FAMM¹ and it's a meal experience model comprising five aspects related to the meal. The FAMM model was founded in the early Nineties when educational training on an academic level started. The curriculum was further developed ten years later when Culinary Arts and Meal Science became a research discipline².

The FAMM model simplifies the planning of creative and aesthetic meals. From the five aspects a series of questions can be raised based on the meal experience. The main question is: what is the quality of the meal experience as related to *the room, the meeting, the product, the control management system* and *the atmosphere*. All aspects have a common goal: to provide guests with the best possible experience, something beyond their expectations. However, guests are also individuals with different identities².

The model was originally inspired by the Michelin Guides assessment criteria³. The basic ideas, later developed into the model FAMM, came at first from a narrow area, where the Michelin Guide assessed restaurants in terms of their customers, people who travelled by car, using Michelin tyres. In the 1930s the Michelin brothers introduced the first nationwide French restaurant listings and introduced the Michelin star system for ranking food, and this was later extended to the rest of the world. The guide awards one to three stars to a small number of restaurants of outstanding quality. Later on the fork and spoon designation was added to the assessment criteria, this being a subjective reflection on the overall comfort and quality of the restaurant³.

The theoretical FAMM model developed at Örebro University is based on restaurant meals outside the home, and shows the complexity of a meal experience when eating out. *The meeting* implies all kinds of interpersonal relations that take place in eating establishments. *The room* represents the setting for the meal, i.e. the facilities and the interior, and the fact that there are many small rooms in the big room. *The product* consists of food and beverages. *The control management system* includes the regulations, rules, laws and economic aspects as well as the human relations factors. *The atmosphere* is the overall experience, the comfort of the meal^{1,4,5,6}. The model was from the beginning strongly associated with restaurant meals and fine dining, but has taken different forms over the years. This is the latest model scientifically published.

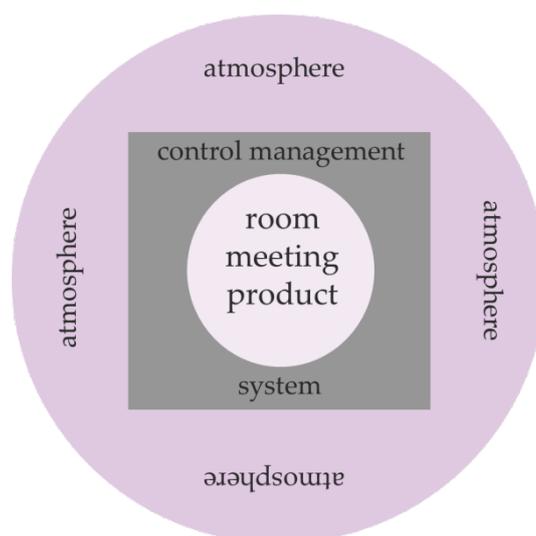


Figure 1. The Five Aspects Meal Model, FAMM⁵

The Culinary Arts in Society

Traditionally cooking and the professionals who practise cooking have had low status, but in recent years there has been a shift, observed in many countries. In Sweden the trend has been particularly marked, although as recently as in the 1980s Sweden was generally regarded as a country of scanty and underdeveloped food culture and restaurant industry. Fifteen years later the situation had completely changed, with Swedish chefs competing for several of the finest chef awards in the world⁷. Sweden, together with the other Nordic countries, is now in the top layer of the gastronomic field.

After ten years with restaurant education at university level Jönsson and Tellström⁸ studied the outcome for the restaurant and hospitality business. They drew attention to the development of a new gastronomic area with many different gastronomic staffs and opportunities for work. In their opinion restaurant education has given rise to persons working with gastronomy whose training is based on a new form of knowledge, the reflective learning process rather than traditional master-apprentice learning.

Later on Jönsson⁷ highlights the shift as a kind of revolution, as indicated in the title of his book *Den gastronomiska revolutionen/The Gastronomic Revolution*. The most important factor, according to the author, is that during recent years Swedish chefs have been transformed into media personalities. This has particularly happened thanks to the large number of competitions that now take place within the restaurant business. In Sweden the “Chef of the Year” competition is the most important annual event for raising a chef’s social status and media impact. Of great importance also is the vision launched by the government: *Sweden - the new culinary nation*⁹. The action plan for achieving this has five focal areas, in which the public sector, primary production, processed food, food tourism and restaurants are also addressed. The vision for the public meal is:

*The meals served to our children in schools, to the elderly and to sick people are an important part of the vision of Sweden as the new culinary nation. These meals should be characterized by quality and the joy of food, and be served in a pleasant environment. The Swedish model of free school dinners for all children in compulsory school is unique in the world. It is in school that we learn to eat healthily– and this stays with us throughout our lives*⁹.

Aims and methods

The overall aim of the project is to reflect on how the FAMM model has been developed and used. The aim of this descriptive paper is to list to what extent the FAMM model appears on a yearly basis, and to map out how and where the model is presented.

The material has been collected by means of a database search using the keywords FAMM and Five Aspects Meal Model. Material from departmental documents and oral information has also been added.

Results

The results of the mapping were initially sorted and categorized according to type of publication or document and year of publication.

In total 108 documents were found (Table 1). These contained 26 reviewed articles, the first in 2002, and also seven doctoral theses, as well as material from thirteen book chapters. Twenty-one undergraduate theses were also found. There was one official document from 1997 and from 2010-2012 a total of eleven official documents.

The next step was to sort the documents into three main groups. These are presented under the following headings: *Restaurant education at university level*, *Forming and setting a research curriculum*, and *The application of the FAMM model*.

Table 1. FAMM. Number of appearances in different forms of presentation found in databases 1997-2012

| Appearances of FAMM | 1997 | 2000 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | Total |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Reviewed articles | | | 1 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 2 | | 2 | | 26 |
| Doctoral theses | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | | 7 |
| Conference papers | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Books and chapters in books | | | | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | | | | 13 |
| Bachelor- Masters- and Licentiate theses | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 21 |
| Popular Science | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 5 | 9 |
| Official documents ¹ | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 6 | 4 | 12 |
| Public Lectures and Education | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 8 | 10 |
| Home Pages and Blogs | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 19 | 8 | 5 | 19 | 27 | 108 |

1. Local authorities, county councils, government departments

Restaurant education at university level

The creation of restaurant education at university level has been described by Hedberg¹⁰ and Ulmander¹¹. It was seen as a revolutionary idea when the restaurateur and entrepreneur Carl-Jan Granqvist in the late Eighties first initiated the concept of involving chefs and waiters in higher education. The thought of an academic training for restaurant staff created reactions among the public. Hitherto there had been next to nothing in the way of education in the Swedish restaurant business. Traditionally the profession had been taught by learning from others, by imitating what others did, or by means of a master-apprentice relation. The Swedish Hotel and Restaurant sector underwent an establishment boom in the 1980s and the demand for trained professionals increased, particularly the need for people with economic skills^{10,11}.

Plans for restaurant education at a higher level began to take shape in the late Eighties and had progressively been developed in the early Nineties. At first, the department of restaurant education was named Grythyttte Academy; its name indicated that it was an initiative with ambitious plans. The starting point for structuring education was to take inspiration from the Michelin Guide assessment criteria. The initiator Carl-Jan Granqvist clearly stated that it was not just a matter of foods and drink. Equally or even more important was the reception of the guests, i.e. the hospitality shown towards them, but also the structuring of the environment, laws and regulations and the economic perspective as related to the restaurant business. It was decided that the curriculum would be based on a restaurant visit. The restaurant meal was divided into five parts, which became the “five different moments of the restaurant visit”. The idea of the *Five Aspects Meal Model* was born. In documents relating to the basic education programme during the Nineties, these aspects were called *moments* or *themes*^{10, 11}. In 1990 the first education programme started, almost as a trial run, in which eighteen students took part. They were accepted for the educational course "Higher education for waiters". Three years later the Swedish Parliament decided that the programme should be permanently established at higher education level at Örebro University^{10,12}. The decision from the Parliamentary Committee on Education 1992 states that *The Department of Restaurant and Culinary Studies at Grythyttan is to be responsible for the aesthetic configuration of meals*¹³.

The Department of Restaurant and Culinary Arts at Örebro University has been working since 1993 with the *Five Aspects Meal Model* as a means of planning, preparing and producing meals in the Bachelor degree programme for cooks, chefs and waiters⁴. The lack of educational facilities was solved when *The Swedish Pavilion* from the World Exposition in Seville from 1992 was moved and permanently set up at Grythyttan. Måltidens Hus i Norden/The Nordic Culinary Arts Building was inaugurated in 1994. Henceforth the building became the venue for restaurant education¹⁴ and was equipped with classrooms, a kitchen of modern standard for methodological cooking, a “gastronomic theatre”, and a library with books on meals and cooking etc.¹². This Måltidsbibliotek/Culinary Arts Library has been developed in accordance with the five aspects in the FAMM model. The library follows the same educational thematic structure and its literature is arranged after the five aspects. This means that there are five small libraries in the Måltidsbibliotek¹⁵. The basis of the education curriculum at The School of Hospitality, Culinary Arts & Meal Science at Örebro University, Sweden is *Science, Practical Skills and Aesthetics*. These three forms of knowledge comprise the fundamental basis of the subject as a university course. The educational training is based on a holistic approach to the meal, where teaching focuses on the five different themes. The meal is here defined as a public meal commercially produced, and this in its turn can be divided into different categories: canteen meals, ceremonial meals and à la carte meals. Each of these food types is treated in accordance with the five aspects identified¹¹. The aim of the curriculum was to increase the knowledge and status of the professionals in the restaurant business and to improve the restaurant sector. The

purpose was also to lay a foundation for research. Today the FAMM model forms the educational basis and is also the structure and the didactic concept for the university curriculum^{5, 16}.

Forming and setting a research programme

Already in 1997 a seminar was conducted at Örebro University to discuss the content and development of Culinary Arts & Meal Science as a future scientific research topic. The group consisted of a mix of people from different areas; scientific, practitioners and artists with an interest in meals, and people from the food and restaurant business¹⁷. In 2001 Culinary Arts & Meal Science was accepted as a research subject at Örebro University, and a professorship was established². In Swedish the subject is known as Måltidskunskap/Meal Knowledge with the emphasis on skills rather than a more academic approach: i.e. the name of the subject shows the importance of practical knowledge and craftsmanship^{5, 16}. The first professor in Culinary Arts & Meal Science (2002) Inga-Britt Gustafsson² underlined in her professor's installation speech the craftsmanship and significance of art emphasized in the curriculum, and also highlighted the aesthetic approach to the meal. She used the FAMM model to explain the content of the course, believing that the idea of the Five Aspects Meal Model might also constitute the framework for research topics. The concept of skills rather than a more academic approach is deliberately chosen to unite science, practical skills and aesthetic presentation in the education and research carried out². The English term coined for both the basic education programme and the research curriculum was Culinary Arts & Meal Science.

When Culinary Arts & Meal Science became a research discipline the five themes or moments of the meal/restaurant visit were developed into a theoretical model now known as the *Five Aspects Meal Model*. Professor Inga-Britt Gustafsson, who has a background in nutritional science, initiated the FAMM-model as the theoretical framework for the research and she has also been the driving force in developing the model throughout the years¹⁶. Over the years the FAMM model has been used in different ways in research projects, mainly those pertaining to Culinary Arts & Meal Science^{1, 4, 5} but also to other disciplines such as Business Economics¹⁸, Audiological Research¹⁹, Nutrition²⁰ and Food Service^{21, 22}, just to mention a few.

Publishing in international scientific journals for gaining international recognition and acceptance within the research community was important for the newly established curriculum. The PhD students had to write a thesis comprising a number of internationally published scientific articles. This approach was launched by the first professor in the subject² and the initial batch of doctoral students was the intake 2004-2008. To date, eight completed doctoral dissertations and one academic essay on the research topic Culinary Arts & Meal Science have been presented and published. The FAMM model was not used as a theoretical framework for the first dissertations published by the department, but has been used and discussed in different ways^{23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28}. The first published scientific article on the theoretical FAMM model is from 2006¹. It is the one most cited and can be seen as a breakthrough for the model. *The Five Aspects Meal Model* formed the basic theoretical framework for an international PhD Conference held in Grythyttan in 2007. During the conference the FAMM model was used as

a means of exploring different aspects of the meal and a special issue of the Journal of Foodservice, with FAMM as the theme, was published in 2007. From the national research database DIVA one can see that the model is a frequently used tool in a number of undergraduate theses, mostly from the School of Hospitality, Culinary Arts & Meal Science and, the Department of Education, Örebro University, but also from, for example, the Department of Food, Health and Environment and the Department of Nutrition and Sports Science, Gothenburg University; also from the Department of Health and Care Science, Uppsala University and the School of Business, Lund University. In the anthology *Tid för måltidskunskap/Time for Meal Science*⁴ the chapters are named after the five aspects in the FAMM model. The model is also mentioned in several chapters in the book *Den medvetna måltidskunskapen/The Conscious Meal Science*²⁹, this being a “tribute” to Professor Inga-Britt Gustafsson.

The application of the FAMM model

In recent years (2010-2012) the FAMM model has become more generally known and used in a broader perspective, employing a more popular manner. It has progressed from being treated almost only as a theoretical framework for scientific writing to being a practical and useful tool for people working in the meal sector.

The Five Aspects Meal Model appears in blogs, and also occurs frequently in educational contexts and in lecture materials for staff working in the public sphere FAMM is also used in several official documents, such as policy documents and guidelines. The model is used in a number of Swedish municipalities as a tool for planning and documentation of public meals, especially in care of the elderly. The mapping points to the fact that there are several different interpretations of the model, both textually and visually.

The model has been used as an analytical tool in at least four different highly regarded official documents and has also been used as the theme of a conference:

- Statens Livsmedelsverk, SLV/National Food Agency (2011). *Vetenskapligt underlag till råd om bra mat i äldreomsorgen/A Scientific Basis for Advice on Good Food as Related to Care of the Elderly.*
- Socialstyrelsen/The National Board of Health and Welfare (2011). *Mat och måltider inom hälso- och sjukvården/Food and Meals in Healthcare and the Medical Service.*
- Stockholms läns landsting/Stockholm County Council (2011). *Mat och måltider med patienten i centrum/Måltidsutredning. Food and Meals with the Focus on Patients, the Meal Commission.*
- Kost & Näring, Sveriges kostchefers och dietisters organisation/Swedish Association of Dieticians (2012) *Bästa sjukhusmaten – så höjs måltidskvalitén vid svenska sjukhus/The Best Hospital Food – how to raise the quality of meals in Swedish hospitals.*

The Swedish Association of Dieticians held a two day conference with FAMM as the theme of the annual members’ meeting in 2012. The speaker at the opening ceremony was Göran Hägglund, Minister for Social Affairs. All the lectures over the two days were about the FAMM model seen in different perspectives. The discussion was about

how to implement and apply the model in working with public meals. Swedish expertise from the field of the public meal sector participated in the meeting.

Discussion and conclusion

FAMM is used both as a theoretical framework and support for practical application in meal planning in the public and private meal sector. The FAMM model can be used as a framework for meal planning and as an analytical tool for public and private meals. The application areas for the use of FAMM are in academic work, including thesis projects, essays, dissertations, and research questions, but also as a tool for the development of public and private meals at community and county council level, a didactic structure in education at university level, and in lectures and training for staff working in the public and private meal sector.

During the past two years there has been a marked increase in users and FAMM-inspired materials, where the model is implemented in different interpretations (Table 1). Before 2010 the FAMM model figured most often in academic contexts such as scientific articles, theses, and dissertations related mainly to gastronomy, restaurants and meal service. Recently there has been a marked increase in the occurrence of FAMM in other contexts, mostly those connected with meals in public places. After 2010 the model has also begun to be used frequently in education and lectures on the meal sector given by professionals in the meal sector. FAMM is also mentioned and discussed in blogs and on homepages on the internet related to the public meal sector. In 2011-2012 the FAMM model was used in several official documents.

FAMM is discussed more often in connection with meals served in schools, and in health and social care contexts. The model has also been used in official documents in Sweden concerning the public meal sector by National Food Agency, The National Board of Health and Welfare, and The Swedish Association of Dietitians as mentioned above. Meals in schools and in health care contexts have often been treated as a service and distribution issue, with various food supply and nutritional aspects in mind. In broadening the perspective of the meal and looking at individual needs, preferences, and circumstances, the use of and demand for new tools for meal planning will increase.

There is now a focus on how to create a dining experience, in the same way as in the restaurant sector, and how to achieve happy and satisfied guests. Maybe this has something to do with “the gastronomic revolution” in Swedish society⁷? It might also be a sign that the development of university education⁸ in the gastronomic sphere has been an important factor in changing the focus away from nutritional aspects and towards pleasant experiences in the context of public meals in Sweden.

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