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## Measuring satisfaction levels of food and beverage establishments, second and third category accommodations

Medición de los niveles de satisfacción de los establecimientos de alimentos y bebidas, alojamientos de segunda y tercera categoría


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**Abstract:** This document encompasses multiple aspects aligned with the analysis of the level of user satisfaction in establishments dedicated to catering, accommodation and tourist attractions. In the present document, various methods effectively employed are presented, which allow obtaining accurate results and, from which, it is possible to clearly observe the panorama and steps to follow for a correct execution of activities that guarantee a good customer experience, regardless of the tourist branch in which they operate. It is important to point out that the results obtained in the multiple investigations that served as a reference axis were carried out in a period prior to the current sanitary emergency caused by the Coronavirus. However, the models used and their instruments are still valid in terms of usefulness and effectiveness, so that, once the activities are developed without restrictions at a global level, they can be adopted in their entirety for their subsequent implementation.

**Keywords:** Tourism, referential axis, health emergency.

**Resumen:** El presente documento engloba múltiples aspectos alineados al análisis del nivel de satisfacción de los usuarios en los establecimientos dedicados a la restauración, alojamiento y lugares de interés turístico. En el presente, se exponen diversos métodos efectivamente empleados y que permiten obtener resultados veraces y, a partir de los cuales, se puede observar claramente el panorama y pasos a seguir para una correcta ejecución de actividades que garanticen una buena experiencia al cliente, independientemente de la rama turística en la que se desenvuelvan. Es importante destacar que los resultados arrojados en las múltiples investigaciones que sirvieron de eje referencial, fueron realizados en un periodo previo a la actual emergencia sanitaria provocada por el Coronavirus. No obstante, los modelos empleados y sus instrumentos siguen en vigencia en cuanto a utilidad y eficacia, por lo que, una vez se desarrollen sin restricciones las actividades a nivel global, pueden ser acogidas en su totalidad para su posterior puesta en práctica.

**Palabras clave:** Turismo, eje referencial, emergencia sanitaria.

## INTRODUCTION

According to the World Tourism Organization, this concept is defined as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon, broadly linked to the movement of people to places outside their place of residence for reasons ranging from personal to business or professional.

For (Gómez & Quintal, 2017, p 108) "Needs, motives and motivations are the drivers of human behavior and, therefore, are vital to activate the mechanisms that move tourism."

At the national level and, considering the situation in different fields of production, the contribution in terms of policies that can be contributed, especially in the field of tourism, is specific. According to Quiles-Izquierdo (2014), Villagómez, (2016) the main purpose of this compilation of research data and information is to see beyond the economic and social adversity that attacks nations. That is why, with a view to a promising future full of possibilities for reactivation in all areas that move countries monetarily, is that it is proposed, in the development of this article, different guidelines that are derived from the previous study of the needs and expectations of users of hotels, food and beverage establishments and tourist attractions. The area that delimits this study is the city of Guayaquil, which is the most important economic center of the country and concentrates a wide variety of the elements studied. Spina et al., (2013, p. 111)

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

For Melo et al., (2009) the present study, the research approach is mixed since it is carried out from a combination of two approaches. This is based on the data collected from food, beverage and second and third category lodging establishments in the downtown area of the city of Guayaquil, which are the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The mixed approach is a method that collects, analyzes, and links quantitative and qualitative data in the same study to answer a question. In his study Obando (2014) states that the quantitative approach is applied to determine numerical results using the survey research technique. And the qualitative approach to explain, describe and explore information from food, beverage and lodging establishments of second and third category in the downtown area of the city of Guayaquil.

The orientation of this research will be quantitative and qualitative. According to Céspedes & Martínez (2016) and Gil et al., (2010) say that the quantitative research process is based on the measurement of information by means of numbers, it observes the process in a way that collects data and analyzes them in order to provide an answer to the question posed in the research. Next, we will explain each of the approaches and how they are applied in the research: graphs or tables can be made to represent the tabulated results of the surveys. This is a quantitative data collection tool that focuses on obtaining information on a predefined topic.

In accordance with the above, in order to carry out a quantitative study, surveys were conducted to collect data provided by customers of the establishments, in order to subsequently carry out evaluations using statistical methods.

The following analysis seeks to know the opinion of the evaluated clients of the establishments. The methods of this type of research are focused on improving knowledge about a topic using semi-structured and unstructured questions that allow the respondent to have freedom at the time of answering.

In the present work, due to the naturalness of the subject, it was decided to take the exploratory and descriptive type of study.

For the exploratory part, to identify the development of the activity in a selected area, thus being able to provide real and accurate information and to evaluate how it could change in the future using the proposed measures.

Descriptive study, in order to know which the preferences and the characteristics were to be reviewed and implemented, that the higher-ranking stores have in comparison to the lower-ranking ones.

In addition, Denegri et al., (2016) indicates that being able to provide a concept of tourist perception to provide a basis for future development of strategies within the industry to generate greater profitability and improve customer satisfaction levels.

## RESULTS

To know exactly what improvements will be implemented, it is necessary to know the different perspectives that surround the business, which can be summarized in three: environment, service and product. These are subdivided into other variables such as loyalty and behavior. The previously evaluated studies achieved a common result, which was to implement an improvement plan for the establishment(s) in question. The study conducted of the Traditional Huecas from Guayaquil participating in the International Gastronomic Fair of Ecuador Raíces 2017 created a compilation of seven conclusions reached.

Among these is, as point number one: the implementation of a measurement plan, to know the customer satisfaction at the time of being in the establishment in question.

Point number two: the variables to be evaluated, among which we find a) The environment and ambience of the establishment; b) Service; c) Characteristics of the food; d) Loyalty and experience; and e) Waiting time of the diner. Based on these variables, methodological tools were developed, such as the survey to evaluate the results of the establishment's customers, which, when tabulated, give us a result of the level of customer satisfaction in terms of the quality of service, to establish improvements.

Point number three: with the established variables to be evaluated, a result was obtained, which was the sample of the shortcomings found within the traditional Huecas. Among which we find the cleanliness of the employees and the establishment, the perception of security of the establishment, the service received during the visit and the waiting time of

the diner. Likewise, a recurring problem was evidenced in terms of: service time, waste of time of workers in getting change for orders, in addition to the non-existence of an operations manual or business strategy and standard recipe applied for the traditional Huecas.

Point number four: it was decided to implement an operating manual, because the errors perceived in point number three are factors that should and can be improved by the establishments.

Point number five: it was determined that the Huecas Tradicionales organization does not have a format on how to relate to a diner, so visual material was created to show personnel how to treat customers correctly.

Point number six: it became evident that at the end of the gastronomic fair, the publicity granted by the fair's organization was no longer visible as it used to be, therefore, the Huecas were not receiving the same capacity that they maintained while the fair's publicity was there. Therefore, a YouTube channel was created in which the winning Huecas could show their products to the public, thus maintaining a greater permanence in the customers.

Points number seven: in addition to the YouTube channel, accounts were created in different social networks, Instagram, Facebook and even a web page, to promote information about these Huecas, as well as advertising the Raíces gastronomic fair.

The study conducted at Boloncentro was a proposal to improve the food and beverage processes for the Boloncentro cafeteria. In which an exhaustive study of the classic cafeteria is evidenced.

The purpose of the study was to produce significant improvements in the food and beverage area of the cafeteria, as well to better deploy the time and energy of the establishment's employees. The result of the study was that the areas were in disarray and caused the work areas to look disorganized, causing slowness at the time of performing a job. By implementing the methodologies, we would begin to see a significant improvement in customer service.

The study called "Analysis of the satisfaction levels of customers attending food and beverage establishments of second and third category in the city of Guayaquil, Tarqui area, Urdesa "created an in-depth investigation of the perception and acceptance of customers, concluding:

- The most optimal process to proceed is to analyze the levels of customer satisfaction, so you can know their likes, dislikes and what measures to take, this is extremely useful for establishments because they can offer the first-class service that their customers request.
- The survey is the best methodology that establishments could offer, to know specifically what to modify, whether it is the lighting or the ambiance of the premises, in order to tabulate specific information to evaluate, thus creating an improvement plan.
- Strategies were established to improve the areas of shortcomings to solve the problems faced.

It can be concluded that the studies previously evaluated agree that the correct way to proceed is to make an evaluation of what customers expect or want from the establishment, being a much talked about problem, the order and punctuality at the time of receiving their products. Studies agree that evaluating the opinion of customers would be of benefit to them because it would make customers happier and more satisfied when they are in an establishment. In the food and beverage area, the customer is always right and always the best way to proceed, will be knowing their opinion, the benefit is not only for them, but for the establishment, to know what is required or expected of them.

As far as lodging is concerned, a variety of information was obtained, including several suggestions from guests and employees of the establishments. Three dimensions were considered, which form an essential part of the responses collected: personnel, facilities and organization. The point on which those who stay in the establishments studied (second and third category) converge is the alliance and joint work that should exist between the Municipality of Guayaquil and the Ministry of Tourism in terms of cadasters and inspection of infrastructure and service. Another relevant point is the Wi-Fi service inside the hotels as a fundamental service, since nowadays it is an imperative need for personal and professional life. As a last point, and with better opinions, is the service, which in most cases is satisfactory for the guests. However, the training provided must be constant to always guarantee a quality service, starting with the staff. To gather information that accurately reflects the position of tourists with respect to the tourist attractions in the downtown area of Guayaquil, it was necessary to establish a baseline with specific information on the hierarchy to which they belong and their zoning. The Malecón Simón Bolívar, Cerro Santa Ana and Palacio de Cristal were included in the barometer, since they are significant points within the city's tourist market. The level of satisfaction of the visitors who visited these spaces does not reach the estimated 50%, but multiple solutions are also established that can enhance and attract more attention to them. Through investment plans that include public and private companies, it is possible to improve the experience in terms of accessibility, security, human component and other elements that strengthen the good impression of the moment. An important factor is the maintenance and security that is provided in these representative places, so that the staff working in them and visitors both domestic and foreign insist that should seek the good condition of drinking fountains, resting places, internet connection, charging and information points; all this they consider that it should be in conjunction with government authorities.

## DISCUSSION

Regardless of the activity being executed and its alignment: food and beverage, lodging or tourist attractions; the common factor on which guests, visitors and diners agree is the importance of good service, the offer



of a good product, the importance of the organization and processes that govern the activities and the final experience once the above points are satisfactorily completed. It is unthinkable to obtain a good result if one of the axes underpinning the total is not firmly entrenched, so that, with the examples studied in the specified areas, a clear vision can be obtained of what needs to be worked on. Many of these aspects are clearly visible, which leads us to question why actions are not being taken or why the agencies involved and that should intervene are still not doing so. By having plans for improvement, it is a matter of bringing to the competent authorities mentioned options that are supported by the opinions and studies of capable professionals committed to providing excellence in the various services.

## CONCLUSIONS

According to the analysis of each item studied and the information obtained, it can be concluded that there are many aspects that, when aligned, can guarantee that a customer, whether he/she is a customer of a food and beverage establishment, an accommodation or a visitor to an attraction, fully enjoys a good product and obtains a pleasant experience.

The first measure of quality will always be the diner and the guest, who assimilates the different impressions of the experience, observing the environment, the service, the product, cleanliness, attention and other details that later determine their satisfaction. As the main judge, it is important to take suggestions into account and constantly carry out evaluations to know what improvements can be applied. Additionally, it is important to emphasize that what is projected is the clear image of how the processes are handled internally, so having a specific manual detailing the actions to be taken by the staff is a help and necessity that will not only improve the experience to be delivered, but will facilitate many steps and the resolution of problems, if they arise.

In addition to the individual procedures of each establishment and its policies regarding the processes to be followed, there is a relevant role for municipal and governmental authorities, which, as regulatory bodies, must constantly carry out reviews to ensure compliance with regulations. In addition, free training courses that contribute to the professional growth of all those who are part of the tourism industry should be promoted. Even though the times we are living in are not encouraging, it is appropriate to emphasize that eventually it will be possible to put into practice the improvements proposed based on all the analysis carried out and with the knowledge we already have about the aspects that can be enhanced to meet the main objective, to provide a memorable experience and to boost the tourism industry and all the actors linked to it.

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