Analysis of Service Quality in the Restaurant Sector in the State of Tlaxcala Using The Servqual Model

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ABSTRACT: The restaurant industry in Mexico generates a great economic benefit, especially Mexican food that generates a great impact worldwide due to the fact that it was named by UNESCO in 2010 as a cultural heritage of humanity, it is a recognition and an obligation of conservation. It is important to consider maintaining a good quality of service and timely detect areas of opportunity. If you want to improve the Mexican food restaurant sector, you have to start, in the first place, by addressing all the problems that commonly arise in establishments on a daily basis. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the perception and expectations of customers and identify the factors that impact the quality of the service received, taking the servqual model as a reference and thus propose initiatives to improve the quality of service in food restaurants. mexicana from the central zone of the state of Tlaxcala. The research focuses on the analysis of the quality of 4 Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala located in the municipalities of; Apizaco, Chiautempan and Tlaxcala Capital, of which 60 surveys were applied to find out their expectations and perceptions. The research focuses on the analysis of the quality of 4 Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala located in the municipalities of; Apizaco, Chiautempan and Tlaxcala Capital, of which 60 surveys were applied to find out their expectations and perceptions. The results showed negative gaps, the most critical variables regarding the differences between what the client expects and what he really receives are; responsiveness and empathy, however the differences are not so significant since most of the clients interviewed are satisfied with the service received.

KEYWORDS: Expectations, perceptions, customer satisfaction, quality measurement, servqual model, restaurant sector.

I. INTRODUCTION

The quality in the service of a restaurant is a fundamental part to achieve success in the performance of its operations. Corresponds to the degree of satisfaction experienced by a client in relation to the care received, the efficiency of the service received and the way in which the service was delivered. Regarding quality evaluation, SERVQUAL is the most common method to evaluate service quality and can be applied to different research areas, such as airlines, hospitality, travel, real estate, IT services, library, etc.

The restaurant industry is one of the main economic sectors in Mexico. According to data from the National Chamber of the Restaurant and Seasoned Food Industry (Canirac), the country's restaurant industry registered a growth of 2.8 percent during 2017. Mexican food is recognized throughout the world named by UNESCO in 2010 as cultural heritage of humanity is a recognition and an obligation of conservation and heritage that is undoubtedly part of a whole series of initiatives that have to be undertaken now that the Mexican cuisine is in high demand throughout the country and worldwide, which must be preserved and maintained, so strategies are required to increase and/or improve the quality of services. In 2020, restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala have suffered very low sales, reporting a 50% drop due to the pandemic caused by the SARS COV 2 virus, sales have been below expectations and the restaurant industry is one of the most affected according to Canirac (National Chamber of the Restaurant and Seasoned Food Industry). Given the situation, the client becomes more demanding every day in terms of the quality of services, which is why complaints against establishments increase every day according to the database of a home delivery application in the state of Tlaxcala 4 out of 10 customers complain about poor service in restaurants (Food Express 2021).

This research aims to analyze the perception and expectations of customers and identify the factors that impact the quality of the service received, using the servqual model as a reference and thus propose initiatives to improve the quality of service in Mexican food restaurants from the central zone of the state of Tlaxcala.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW.

Quality

It represents a process of continuous improvement, in which all areas of the company seek to satisfy the needs of customers or anticipate them, actively participating in the development of products or in the provision of services (Álvarez, 2006).

Service

It is a means to deliver value to clients, facilitating the results that clients want to achieve without assuming specific costs or risks (Bon, 2008). A service is said to be heterogeneous because, depending on different factors, they rarely coincide with each other and are usually designed and executed serving each client individually. That is, there are no mass production chains as in the manufacture of goods (Sánchez J., 2016).

Quality in the service

Hoffman and Baeston (2011) define service quality considering it as an attitude formed through the long-term general evaluation of a company's performance, since they see customer satisfaction as a specific measure of short-term operations. of a company Viewed from an organizational perspective, service quality is the orientation followed by all the resources of a company to achieve customer satisfaction, including all employees and not just those who deal directly with the customer (Kotler & Keller, 2012), since all the activities carried out by an employee of the organization will have an impact in some way on the real or perceived level of quality by the consumer. However, Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry defined quality from the consumer's point of view in 1988 as "a general judgment or attitude related to superiority of service".

Importance of quality in service

The quality of customer service is one of the essential points that must be met within each of the companies; Regardless of the size, structure and nature of their operations, they must demonstrate their ability to perform in this area, as being the first image they give to customers helps maintain their preference, and if you get angry you can become a threat. However, on many occasions it can be used by organizations in an incorrect way, affecting both their development and their growth, so, mainly, the importance of such customer service must be defined, in order to properly structure the most optimal way to carry out. (Parra, 2013)

Models to measure service quality

Quantifying the quality that the client perceives of a service is not easy; It is necessary to use an instrument that supports organizations to understand the meaning of value for the client and diagnose if the activities carried out are aligned with the fulfillment of their needs. Faced with this need, various techniques and methodologies arise to measure customer satisfaction (Sánchez & Sanchez, 2016). Such as the Grönroos service quality model, SERVQUAL Model, SERVPREF and the model of the three components, which measure different factors and/or dimensions and will be adapted according to the sector and objectives of each investigation.

For this research, the servqual model is chosen because previously analyzed research indicates that it is one of the most used models according to Vera & Trujillo (2017). In addition, compared to the other models, Servqual is one of the main sources of information since it promptly detects the dimensions in which quality is deficient, which makes it one of the most accurate models for service companies to know the level of customer satisfaction, locate areas of opportunity and propose and/or implement improvements to have satisfied customers. (Monrroy & Urcadiz, 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

The data collection for the research is through a questionnaire based on the Servqual model proposed and designed by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1988) whose purpose is to improve the quality of the service offered by an organization. Servqual consists of 5 dimensions and a total of 22 items. However, an adaptation was made to the model and the instrument to be applied added two extra variables that are Hygiene and Advertising, in addition to adding items in the security variable related to the hygiene measures that the restaurant has regarding Covid 19, this due to the change that has been suffered today in the face of the pandemic that is being experienced throughout the world and that have been important factors that the client considers when going out to eat in restaurants, in addition, the advertising variable is also considered due to technology changes that have taken place. increased in recent years, especially due to the change in digital marketing and the importance of new home delivery applications, which also represent great importance for the customer when purchasing a service and, of course, being evaluated . The model used is shown in Table I.

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Table I. Adapted Servqual Model

Variable	Item
Answer's capacity	1. Employees offer fast service
	2. Consider that employees are willing to help
	3. Employees are available to correctly answer any questions you may have.
	4. How do you consider the restaurant's home delivery service?
	5. How do you consider the reservation service of this restaurant?
	6. Employees have trustworthy behavior
	7. You feel confident with the service the restaurant offers.
	8. Employees have a friendly demeanor
Security	9. Employees have sufficient knowledge in service.
	10. The facilities are with adequate distribution of spaces.
	11. They take your temperature when entering the restaurant
	12. The restaurant has sanitizing gel
	13. The restaurant has soap in the bathrooms.
	14. Employees use mouth guard correctly
	15. The restaurant has modern-looking equipment
	16. The restaurant has visibly attractive facilities
Tangible items	17. General restaurant facilities are clean
	18. The restaurant's work materials are attractive (menu, advertising, social networks, etc.)
	19. You receive individualized attention
	20. You are satisfied with the restaurant's service hours
Empathy	21. Employees offer you personalized attention
	22. Employee care about meeting your needs
	23. The restaurant service cares about your interests and / or wishes
	24. The restaurant fulfills the promised service
	25. If you have a problem related to the restaurant service, show interest in helping to solve it
	26. Restaurant service is done right from the first time
Reliability	27. The restaurant concludes its service in the promised time
	28. The restaurant does not make mistakes in terms of service (taking orders, collecting tickets)
	29. The restaurant has all the foods described in its menu
	30. The restaurant offers a wide variety of dishes on its menu
	31. In general terms, how do you consider the quality of the restaurant?
Hygiene	32. The restaurant manages adequate hygiene in its food
	33. The restaurant offers fresh food
	34. It is important for the restaurant to advertise its social networking services
Publicity	35. It is important that the restaurant has home delivery service through the new mobile applications
	36. It is important that the restaurant is advertised through printed advertising (banners, brochures, etc.)

IV. INSTRUMENT VALIDATION

The data collection instrument was validated through Cron Bach's alpha using SPSS version 21 software and the results are shown in Table II.

Table II. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's alpha	No. of elements
0.917	36

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The reliability result of Cronbach's alpha corresponds to 0.917, which according to Table III can be interpreted with excellent reliability.

Table III: assessment of item reliability according to cronbach's alpha coefficient

Interval to which the Cron Bach alpha coefficient belongs	Evaluation of the reliability of the items analyzed
[0 ; 0,5]	Unacceptable
[0,5 ; 0,6]	Poor
[0,6 ; 0,7]	Weak
[0,7 ; 0,8]	Acceptable
[0,8 ; 0,9]	Okay
[0,9 ; 1]	Excellent

V. RESULTS

The data collection instrument was applied to 60 people, each one was given the same instrument twice, once before entering the restaurant (expectation) and another after receiving the service (perception) with a total of 120 surveys in 4 different Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala. Of which 38.3% of the respondents were men while 61.7% were women, aged between 14 and 59 years of age from the municipalities of Tlaxcala Centro, Chiautempan and Apizaco. The Mexican food restaurants under study are shown in Table IV.

Table IV. Restaurants Under Study

Name of the restaurant	Address	Size	No. of expectations surveys	No. of surveys perceptions
Restaurante Mandinga	Porfirio Díaz 10-Planta Alta, Centro, 90000 Tlaxcala de Xicohténcatl, Tlax	Small	15	15
Honorina el gran sabor de Tlaxcala	Blvd. Mariano Sánchez 57, Centro, 90000 Tlaxcala de Xicohténcatl, Tlax.	Small	15	15
Taquería "La gran avenida"	Gabino A. Palma 103, Ocotlán, 90030 Tlaxcala de Xicohténcatl, Tlax.	Small	15	15
Restaurante Tres Cuartos	Calle Zaragoza 302 Centro 90300, Apizaco, Tlaxcala.	Small	15	15

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The data matrix for each item was elaborated. Subsequently, the items were grouped for each variable to be measured. Once the grouping of items by variables is obtained, the data exploration sequence of both expectations and perceptions is carried out by calculating averages according to (Hernandez, Fernandez, & Baptista, 2006). Subsequently, the median and range of expectations and perceptions shown in Tables IV and V are obtained.

Table IV. Statistical Expectations

		Anwser Capacity	Segurity	Tangible Items	Empathy	Reliability	Hygiene	Publicity
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Lost	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000
Rank		.40	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

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Table V. Statistical Perceptions

		Anwser Capacity	Segurity	Tangible Items	Empathy	Reliability	Hygiene	Publicity
N	Valid	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Lost	21	21	21	21	21	21	0
Median			4.6667	4.5000	4.6000	4.5000	5.0000	5.0000
Rank			2.00	2.75	2.80	2.75	2.00	2.00

Once the analysis of the information of each one of the variables of the surveys carried out on 60 clients in 4 Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala, considering home delivery and reservations, the following results are obtained regarding the analysis of gaps showing global averages by variable, and are observed in Fig. 1 and Table VI.

Table VI. Gap Analysis

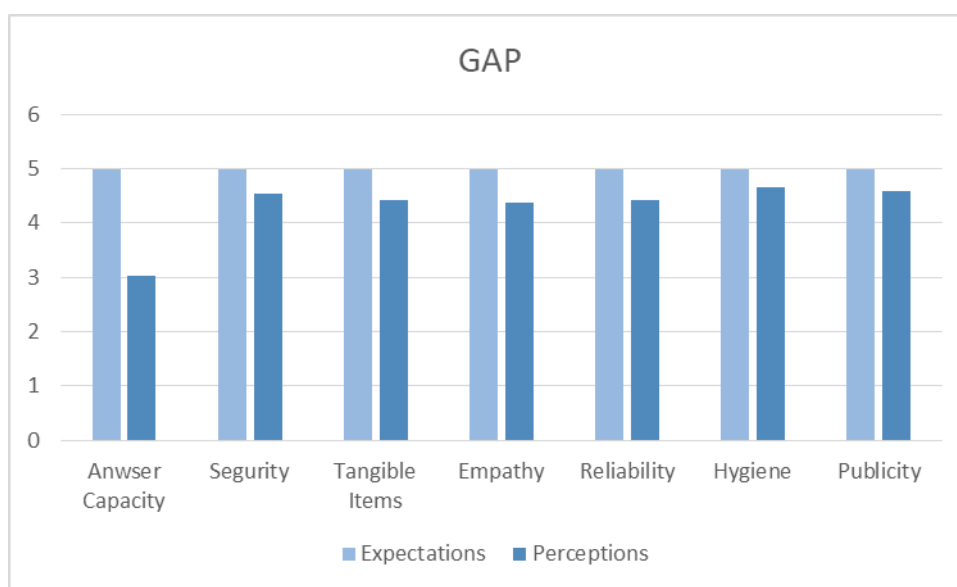| Variable	Averages		
	Expectations	Perception	GAP (P-E)
Answer's capacity	4.98666667	3.02	-1.96666667
Security	5	4.55233333	-0.44766667
Tangible items	5	4.43333333	-0.56666667
Empathy	5	4.37666667	-0.62333333
Reliability	5	4.41383333	-0.58616667
Hygiene	5	4.66666667	-0.33333333
Publicity	5	4.58316667	-0.41683333

Fig. 1. GAP Analysis.

It is observed that the 7 variables have negative results, that is to say that the expectations of the clients are not being met 100%, but with a very insignificant difference. The most critical variables are responsiveness with a global difference of -1.966 and empathy with a difference of -0.6233.

Hypothesis test using a sampling distribution of proportions
A hypothesis test is performed using the distribution of proportions to find out how the variables with the most significant gaps, which are responsiveness and empathy, impact.

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Answer's capacity.

In the study, 76% of clients answered "Yes" to agree with the service received. Use these results to test the hypothesis that most customers, despite differences, are satisfied with the service received on this variable.

H_0= Customers are not satisfied with the quality of the service received in the responsiveness variable

$H_1 : p$ Customers are satisfied with the quality of the service received in the responsiveness variable.

Then the null hypothesis is obtained symbolically represented as follows:

$H_0 : p = 0.5$

$H_1 : p > 0.5$ (original statement)

Formula 1 is used to obtain the z test statistic.

$$z = \frac{\hat{p} - p}{\sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}}$$

$\qquad$ (1)

Substituting data we have:

n= 60

p= .50

q= (1-0.5) = 0.5

$p\hat{} $ = 0.76

α= 0.05

$$z = \frac{0.76 - 0.5}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5 * 0.5}{60}}} = 4.02$$

Since this hypothesis test is in the right tail with a test statistic z=4.02, the P-value is the area to the right of z=4.02. In Table A-2 we see that the cumulative area to the left of z= 4.02 is 0.9999, so the area to the right of that test statistic is 1 - 0.9999= 0.0001. We obtain the value P= 0.0001. Because the P-value of 0.0001 is less than or equal to the significance level. 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion: Since we reject $H_0 : p$= 0.5, we support the alternative hypothesis that p>0.5. It is concluded that there is sufficient sample evidence to support the statement that customers of Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala are satisfied with the quality of the service received in the responsiveness variable.

Confidence intervals

Confidence intervals are estimated at a 90% level (corresponding to a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, the margin of error is calculated using the following formula:

$$E = Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} \frac{\sqrt{\hat{p}\hat{q}}}{n} = 1.645$$

$\qquad$ (2)

Substituting data we have:

$\quad$ Data

$Z_{\alpha/2}$ = 1.645

$\hat{p}$= 0.76

$\hat{q}$= 0.24

N= 60

$$E = \sqrt{\frac{(0.76)(0.24)}{60}} = 0.055136$$

Once the margin of error is obtained, the confidence interval is constructed only by substituting the values

$\hat{p} - E < p < \hat{p} + E$

0.76 - 0.055136 < p < 0.76 + 0.055136

0.704 < p < 0.815

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We finally have 90% confidence that the interval from 0.704 to 0.815 really contains the true value of the population proportion p. This means that if we select many different samples of size 60 and construct the corresponding confidence intervals, 90% of them would actually include the value of the population proportion.

Empathy

In the study, 90% of the clients answered "Yes" to agree with the service received. Use the results to test the hypothesis that, despite the differences, most customers are satisfied with the service received on this variable.

$H_0 =$ Customers are not satisfied with the quality of the service received in the empathy variable

$H_1 : p$ Customers are satisfied with the quality of the service received in the empathy variable

Then the null hypothesis is obtained symbolically represented as follows:

$H_0 : p = 0.5$

$H_1 : p > 0.5$ (Original statement)

Formula 1 is used to obtain the z test statistic.

$$z = \frac{\hat{p} - p}{\sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}}$$

(1)

Data:

N= 60

p= .50

q= (1-0.5) = 0.5

$\hat{p}$ = 0.90

α= 0.05

Substituting the data we have:

$$z = \frac{0.90 - 0.5}{\sqrt{\frac{0.5 * 0.5}{60}}} = 6.19$$

Because this hypothesis test is in the right tail with a test statistic z=6.19, the P-value is the area to the right of z=6.19. In Table A-2 we see that the cumulative area to the left of z= 6.19 is 0.9999, so the area to the right of that test statistic is 1 - 0.9999= 0.0001.

We obtain the value P= 0.0001. Because the P value of 0.0001 is less than or equal to the level of significance. 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis.

Conclution: Since we reject $H_0 : p = 0.5,$ we support the alternative hypothesis that p>0.5. It is concluded that there is sufficient sample evidence to support the statement that customers of Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala are satisfied with the quality of the service received in the empathy variable.

Confidence intervals

Confidence intervals are estimated at a 90% level (corresponding to a significance level of 0.05). Therefore, the margin of error is calculated using the following formula

$$E = Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} \frac{\sqrt{\hat{p}\hat{q}}}{n} = 1.645$$

(2)

Data:

$Z_{\alpha/2}$ = 1.645

$\hat{p}$= 0.90

$\hat{q}$= 0.10

N= 60

Substituting data we have:

$$E = \sqrt{\frac{(0.90)(0.10)}{60}} = 0.03872$$

Once the margin of error is obtained, the confidence interval is constructed only by substituting the values:

$$\hat{p} - E < p < \hat{p} + E$$

0.90 - 0.03872 < p < 0.90 + 0.03872

0.861 < p < 0.938

Finally we are 90% confident that the interval from 0.861 to 0.938 really contains the true value of the population proportion p. This means that if we select many different samples of size 60 and construct the corresponding confidence intervals, 90% of them would actually include the value of the population proportion.

VI. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS.

After an exhaustive analysis for the investigation, two variables were detected; response capacity and empathy with more significant negative gaps than the others, which although they do not represent a 100% poor quality service, it is important to attend to improve and reduce negative values. As well as areas of opportunity were detected in the Advertising variable in which customers highlight the importance of the inclusion of new technologies. Table VII shows some improvement proposals that are adapted to the 4 types of Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala.

Table VII. Proposed Improvements

Variable	Items	Indicator	Objectives	Strategies
Capacidad de respuesta	1. Employees offer prompt service 2. Consider that employees are willing to help 3. Employees are available to correctly answer any questions you may have. 4. How do you consider the restaurant's delivery service? 5. How do you consider the reservation service of this restaurant?	76% If they are satisfied with the service received 24% are not satisfied	O1. Reduce the percentage of non-conformities by presenting faster service and better employee disposition.	O1-E1. Have an adequate number of employees according to the demand of each restaurant to reduce waiting times. O1-E2. Employee training on all the services included in the restaurant to effectively resolve any questions related to; menu, dishes, recommendations, etc. O1-E3 Knowledge to diners about home delivery service and reservations through printed and digital advertising.
Empatía	1. You receive personalized attention 2. Are you satisfied with the restaurant's service hours? 3. Employees offer you personalized attention 4. Employees care about your needs 5. The restaurant service cares about your interests and/or desires	90% If they are satisfied with the service received. 10% are not satisfied with the service received.	O.2. Comply with the rules established by the restaurant administration. O3. Improve the attention of all restaurant staff.	O.2-E5. Comply with the established schedules in the restaurant. If there is any unforeseen event, notify customers in advance. O.3-E6. The entire restaurant team can participate in training regarding personalized customer service. (A.R.B.A.T)

| Publicidad | 1. Es importante que el restaurante anuncie sus servicios en redes sociales
2. Es importante que el restaurante cuente con servicio a domicilio mediante las nuevas aplicaciones móviles
3. Es importante que el restaurante se anuncie a través de publicidad impresa (lonas, folletos, etc) | 100% están de acuerdo con la importancia de esta variable en el restaurante | O.4 Inclusión del restaurante en estrategias de marketing digital
O.5 Incorporación del restaurante en nuevas tecnologías. | O.4-E4. Each restaurant can count on a community manager for presence in the main social networks (Facebook and Instagram) publishing original designs
O.4-E5 Incorporation to e-commerce platforms for home delivery (Food Express, Didi, Pronto). These platforms offer the lowest commission in the market, in addition to cost savings in the logistics of the home delivery service.
O4-E6 Consider a graphic designer for professional brochure type design. |

The improvement strategies are by way of proposal, each restaurant administration must decide whether to adopt them or not, in the same way a personal approach can be considered to learn more about the results as well as advice regarding the previous experience of the author of this investigation.
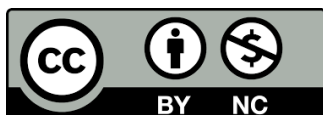
VII. CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that according to the data analyzed, customers in general agree with the service offered by Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala, however there are negative gaps although in the negative global averages the differences are not so significant. . It would be convenient to solve the problems and improve the service without a doubt. The hygiene and advertising variables are the least critical, the gap is insignificant. The most critical variables in the four restaurants analyzed are responsiveness and empathy, with a difference of -1.9666 and -0.6233, respectively. Based on these results, both variables (responsiveness and empathy) were subjected to a more exhaustive statistical analysis to determine their level of impact on the service through a t-student test for two paired samples and a distribution test of proportions. in which the hypotheses were affirmed that although it is true that there are important gaps, it does not symbolize that the majority of clients are dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the service received. The improvement proposals for the four proposed restaurants include general strategies to improve the quality of customer service, have enough staff, train employees to know the customer and offer personalized attention, as well as specific strategies to consider the inclusion of restaurants in new technologies such as home delivery applications and social networks, since the instrument indicates that customers consider it of the utmost importance. It is concluded that the factors that negatively impact the perception and expectations of customers in Mexican food restaurants are; responsiveness and empathy, while the variables that positively impact perception and expectations are: safety, tangible elements, reliability, hygiene and advertising. The level of satisfaction perceived by customers of Mexican food restaurants in the central area of the state of Tlaxcala is positive, since although there are negative differences, they are not significantly high. Even derived from the analysis of the gaps, the client does not receive the service that he expects at 100%, but at 90%. It is considered that the level of quality of the restaurants is also moderately positive due to the little difference that is obtained between what is expected and what is received in terms of service, however the differences and gaps are not very significant, so the quality is It cannot be considered 100% bad, but areas of opportunity for improvement were detected that would be important for restaurant owners to address.

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