

# Diagnosis of Customer Expectations and Perceptions in Restaurants in the State of Tlaxcala

Sandra Karina Saldaña Conde, Crisanto Tenopala Hernández, Elizabeth Montiel Huerta, Gerardo Islas Téllez, and Alejandra Torres López

## ABSTRACT

The restaurant industry is one of the main productive sectors in Mexico that generates an important economic benefit for the country, Mexican food in particular is recognized throughout the world for its great value and historical contribution. Derived from its importance, it is significant to consider offering quality customer service; However, if you want to improve the Mexican food restaurant sector, you must start by addressing all the problems that commonly occur in establishments on a day-to-day basis, derived from the support of a company with home delivery service in the state of Tlaxcala significant increase in customer complaints was detected, such as; they do not deliver as promised, slow service, poor attention from employees and even some complaints with food hygiene. The objective of the research is to analyze the perception and expectations of customers and identify the factors that impact the quality of the service received in Mexican food restaurants in the central area of the state of Tlaxcala, taking the Servqual model as a reference. The Servqual instrument adapted to 45 clients was applied to know their expectations and perceptions, the research was carried out in 3 Mexican food restaurants located in: Apizaco, Chiautempan and Tlaxcala Capital. The results showed that customers are not satisfied with the service they receive from restaurants because in the gap analysis all variables are negative, although the difference between expectations and perceptions is not so significant, so they generally agree. depending on the service received. The most critical variables or those with the greatest impact are responsiveness and empathy.

**Keywords:** Expectations, Perceptions, Quality analysis, Restaurant sector, Servqual model.

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**Sandra Karina Saldaña Conde \***  
Tecnológico Nacional de México,  
(TecNM) / Instituto Tecnológico  
de Apizaco (ITA), México.

(e-mail: m20371419@apizaco.tecnm.mx)

**Crisanto Tenopala Hernández**  
Tecnológico Nacional de México,  
(TecNM) / Instituto Tecnológico de  
Apizaco (ITA), México.

(e-mail: crisanto.th@apizaco.tecnm.mx)

**Elizabeth Montiel Huerta**  
Tecnológico Nacional de México,  
(TecNM) / Instituto Tecnológico de  
Apizaco (ITA), México.

(e-mail: elizabeth.mh@apizaco.tecnm.mx)

**Gerardo Islas Téllez**  
Tecnológico Nacional de México,  
(TecNM) / Instituto Tecnológico de  
Apizaco (ITA), México.

(e-mail: gerardo.it@apizaco.tecnm.mx)

**Alejandra Torres López**  
Tecnológico Nacional de México,  
(TecNM) / Instituto Tecnológico de  
Apizaco (ITA), México.

(e-mail: alejandra.tl@apizaco.tecnm.mx)

*\*Corresponding Author*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of the service is the habit developed and practiced by an organization to interpret the needs and expectations of the clients and offer, consequently, an accessible, adequate, agile, flexible, appreciable, useful, timely, safe and reliable service, even under unforeseen situations or errors, in such a way that the client feels understood, cared for and cared for personally, with dedication and efficiency, and surprised with greater value than expected, consequently providing higher income and lower costs for the organization (Pizzo, 2013). As Edwards Deming (2013) said, "what is not measured cannot be improved". No company or organization can join in continuous improvement if it does not have a complete knowledge of its areas of opportunity. Mexican food is recognized throughout the world named by UNESCO in 2010

as a cultural heritage of humanity is a recognition and obligation of conservation and heritage that is undoubtedly part of a whole series of initiatives that must be launched now that the Mexican cuisine is in great demand throughout the country and with global recognition which must be preserved and maintained, so strategies are required to increase and / or improve the quality of services. On the other hand, the number of establishments that open each year exceeds the behavior of the demand for this type of services. Therefore, being a sector in constant growth and generating a significant economic spill in the country, always consider offering a quality service. If you want to improve the Mexican food restaurant industry, you have to start first by addressing all the problems that often occur in establishments on a daily basis. Really, know the level of satisfaction of the client for which it is proposed to use the SERVQUAL method. Tlaxcala's tourism sector is still below the state's potential. In 2006, temporary housing, food, and beverage preparation

services, as well as recreational services accounted for 2.3% of the state's GDP. In 2015, these tourism-related services represented 1.10% of state GDP and registered an increase of 14% compared to the previous year, according to data from INEGI (2014). In 2020, restaurants have suffered very low sales, reporting a 50% drop due to the contingency situation that everyone is going through, sales have been below expectations and the restaurant industry is one of the most affected sectors according to Canirac (National Chamber of the Restaurant and Seasoned Food Industry). Given the situation, the customer every day becomes more demanding in terms of the quality of services, so that everyday complaints to establishments increase. In an interview with the call-center staff of the Food express mobile application (app dedicated to the delivery of food at home in the state of Tlaxcala) with a sample of 167 comments from the application, they mention that approximately 4 out of 10 customers per day are They complain of poor service in the restaurant related to: they do not comply with what was promised, they do not have the food established in their menu, outdated prices, food hygiene, they do not comply with the promised hours, among other aspects that generate dissatisfaction with the customer and comment that the complaints are in small restaurants, in some cases medium and mostly in the category of fast food, Mexican food, seafood and Japanese food located in the municipalities of Apizaco and Tlaxcala (Food Express, 2021). For this reason, this research proposes to analyze quality by mainly identifying the expectations and perceptions of customers in the restaurant sector of the state of Tlaxcala, which is one of the main sectors of Tourism in Mexico and thus obtain the level of customer satisfaction. In relation to the subject, a review of the literature was previously carried out where the researchers analyzed, for the most part, obtain negative results, that is, the clients are not satisfied with the service received. Due to the approach to the problem of this research, it is very important to carry it out to detect areas of opportunity in the restaurant sector of Tlaxcala. The researchers analyzed that focus on the restaurant industry only contemplate one company in the sector. It is also observed that in some cases, adaptations were made to the model, or another was used together and in the same way valuable information was obtained, which confirms that the combination of two epistemological axes is useful. Despite having mostly negative results, the authors refrain from proposing a model to improve quality and take advantage of the areas of opportunities detected, which are considered of utmost importance since they could add more value to entrepreneurs or businessmen and to the sector, for therefore general. The proposed research considers two important points that could add more depth of knowledge and they are: the study for a broader restaurant sector and a model of improvements for the sector.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Quality

It represents a process of continuous improvement, in which all areas of the company seek to satisfy the client's needs or anticipate them, actively participating in the

development of products or in the provision of services (Álvarez, 2006).

### B. Service

It is a means of delivering value to clients, facilitating the results that clients want to achieve without assuming specific costs or risks (Bon, 2008).

### C. 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. The perception of quality is the level of service that the client qualifies subjectively close to his experience received from the service. The client perceives the services based on what is quality for him and to what extent he is satisfied. On the other hand, customer expectations are the level of service they expect to receive; Likewise, this level of expectations is different for each client (Sánchez & Sanchez, 2016).

Finally, customer satisfaction is that in which their expectations are compared with their perceptions of the actual service contract (Hoffman and Bateson, 2011).

### D. Importance of Quality in Service

The quality of customer service is one of the main points that must be met within each of the companies; Regardless of the size, structure, and nature of their operations, they must demonstrate the capacity they have to perform in this area, since being the first image that is given to clients helps to maintain their preference, and if it is altered it can become a threat. However, on many occasions it can be used by organizations incorrectly, affecting both their development and growth, therefore, mainly, the importance of said customer service must be defined, in order to properly structure the most optimal way to carry it out (Parra, 2013).

### E. Models to Measure Service Quality

Quantifying the quality that the customer 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).

Table I briefly describes the models that have been used to measure service quality within various organizations over the past 30 years.

### F. Target

Analyze the perception and expectations of customers and identify the factors that impact on the quality of the service received, taking the servqual model as a reference and in this way propose a model to improve the quality of service in Mexican food restaurants in the center of the city town of the state of Tlaxcala.

TABLE I: MODELS TO MEASURE QUALITY

Year	Auhor	Model	Assessment	Dimensions
1984	Cristian Grönroos	Grönroos service quality model	Expectations Perceptions	Marketing
				Prices
1988	Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry	Servqual	Expectations Perceptions	Previous experiences
				Traditions
1992	Cronin and Taylor	Serpref	Perceptions	Ideologies
				Mouth to mouth
1994	Rust & Oliver	3 component model	Expectations Perceptions	Culture organizations
				Philosophy
				Tangible items
				Empathy
				Reliability
				Security
				Answer's capacity
				Tangible items
				Empathy
				Reliability
				Security
				Answer's capacity
				Cultural Organizations
				Philosophy
				Tangible elements
				Empathy
				Reliability
				Security
				Answer's capacity
				Characteristics
				Objectives

TABLE II: 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?
Security	6. Employees have trustworthy behavior
	7. You feel confident with the service the restaurant offers.
	8. Employees have a friendly demeanor
	9. Employees have sufficient knowledge in service.
Tangible items	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
Empathy	15. The restaurant has modern-looking equipment
	16. The restaurant has visibly attractive facilities
	17. General restaurant facilities are clean
	18. The restaurant's work materials are attractive (menu, advertising, social networks, etc.)
Reliability	19. You receive individualized attention
	20. You are satisfied with the restaurant's service hours
	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
Hygiene	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
	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)
Publicity	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?
	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
	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.)

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 elements. However, an adaptation was made to the model and the instrument to be applied was added two extra variables that are Hygiene and Advertising, in addition to adding items in the variable safety related to the hygiene measures that the restaurant has regarding Covid 19 this due the change that has taken place today in the face of the pandemic that is being experienced around the world and that have been important factors that the client considers to go out to eat at restaurants in addition to the advertising variable is also considered by the technological changes that are They have increased in recent years, especially the change in digital marketing and that also represent a great importance for the client when it comes to acquiring a service and of course being evaluated. The model used is shown in Table II.

The servqual model is chosen because, according to Vera & Trujillo (2017), it is one of the most widely used and reliable instruments to measure service quality. Furthermore, compared to other models such as SERVFPREP, the Grönroos service quality model or the three-component model, Servqual is one of the main sources of information as it detects quality dimensions in a timely manner, which is why servqual is a 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 & Urcádiz , 2018)). The instrument was adapted to the research needs and some changes were also considered due to the current need in the sector.

A. Instrument Validation

The data collection instrument was validated using the Cron Bach alpha method by applying 35 test surveys in three restaurants in the municipalities; Apizaco, Tlaxcala and Chiuatempam, the results were as follows:

*Cron Bach's Alpha:* The reliability analysis was performed with SPSS version 21 software and the results are shown in Table III.

TABLE III: RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Cronbach's alpha	No. of elements
0.917	36

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

TABLE IV: 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

#### IV. RESULTS

The data collection instrument was used in 45 people, the same instrument was applied to each one twice, once before entering the restaurant (expectation) and once after receiving the service (perception) with a total of 90 surveys in 3 different Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala. Of which 36.5% of the respondents were men while 64.4% were women, aged between 14 and 54 years from the municipality of Tlaxcala. The Mexican food restaurants under study are shown in Table V.

The data matrix was made for each item. Subsequently, the items were grouped for each variable to be measured. Once the grouping of items by variables has been obtained, the sequence of data exploration as well as expectations and perceptions is carried out through the calculation of averages according to (Hernandez, Fernandez, & Baptista, 2006).

Subsequently, the mode and the range of expectations and perceptions are obtained in Tables VI and VII.

TABLE VI: STATISTICAL EXPECTATIONS

	Answer Capacity	Security	Tangible Items	Empathy	Reliability	Hygiene	Publicity
N	Valid	45	45	45	45	45	45
	Lost	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Median	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000
	Rank	0.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

TABLE VII: STATISTICAL PERCEPTIONS

	Answer Capacity	Security	Tangible Items	Empathy	Reliability	Hygiene	Publicity
N	Valid	45	45	45	45	45	45
	Lost	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Median	4.7778	4.5000	4.4000	4.3750	5.0000	4.7778
	Rank	2.00	2.75	2.80	2.75	2.00	2.00



Fig. 1. GAP Analysis.

TABLE V: 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	Pequeño	15	15
Honorina el gran sabor de Tlaxcala	Blvd. Mariano Sánchez 57, Centro, 90000 Tlaxcala de Xicohténcatl, Tlax.	Pequeño	15	15
Taquería "La gran avenida"	Gabino A. Palma 103, Ocotlán, 90030 Tlaxcala de Xicohténcatl, Tlax.	Pequeño	15	15

#### A. GAP Analysis

Once the information of each of the variables of the surveys carried out by 45 clients in 3 Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala has been analyzed and interpreted, considering home delivery and reservations, the following results are obtained, showing the global averages by variable, and are observed in Fig. 1 and Table VIII.

TABLE VIII: GAP ANALYSIS

Variable	Averages		
	Expectations	Perception	GAP (P-E)
Answer's capacity	4.99111111	3.85333333	-1.13777778
Security	5	4.54377778	-0.45622222
Tangible items	5	4.43333333	-0.56666667
Empathy	5	4.31111111	-0.68888889
Reliability	5	4.40155556	-0.59844444
Hygiene	5	4.62222222	-0.37777778
Publicity	5	4.59244444	-0.40755556

## V. CONCLUSION

Finally, it can be concluded that according to the data analyzed, in general customers agree with the service offered by Mexican food restaurants in the state of Tlaxcala, however there are gaps with negative global averages that, although they are not so significant, it is important to attend. The hygiene and publicity variables are the least critical, the gap is not very significant. The most critical variables are responsiveness and empathy with a difference of -1.1377 and -0.6888, respectively. The improvement model must include strategies specifically to consider the inclusion of catering in new technologies such as home service applications and social networks, since the instrument indicates that customers consider it of utmost importance. We must pay attention and improve the security, responsiveness, and empathy variables since, derived from the GAP gap analysis, they are the most critical with a slightly more significant difference, so that customers are still not completely satisfied with the service they receive. The level of satisfaction perceived by customers in Mexican food restaurants in the central area of the state of Tlaxcala is unsatisfied, since according to the analysis of the gaps, the customer does not receive the service they expect. It is considered that the quality level of the restaurants is also a bit low due to the fact that the restaurant does not adequately meet the customer's expectations, however the differences and gaps are not very significant so the quality cannot be considered 100% bad but if it is an opportunity to improve areas of opportunity that were found in the research.

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