RESTAURANT SERVICE: Gaps in the perception of quality

Cintia Goldenberg, PHD student, Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, São Paulo
Cicera Bezerra, PHD Student, Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, São Paulo
Elizabeth Kyoko Wada, Post Doctorate, Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, São Paulo
Sergio Moretti, Post Doctorate, Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, São Paulo

Brazilians spend 25% of their income in the food service industry, according to IBGE (Brazilian institute of geography and statistics) (2012). According to the Brazilian Food Industry Association (ABIA), the sector has grown at an annual average of 14%. The segment of bars and restaurants represents 2.4% of GDP, circulating 65.2 billion BRL in 2012 (ABIA, 2015).

The perception of quality of services is closely linked to personal factors such as socioeconomic and cultural profile, age group, nationality, among others. Thus, what is said to be quality for one person, will not necessarily be considered as quality for another and this is precisely the challenge encountered in providing services.

This work aims to analyse existing gaps in the quality perception of clients, managers and operational staff of companies operating in the food service sector, specifically restaurants. The following specific objectives were established: To analyse the socioeconomic and cultural profile of the waiters and managers of the studied companies; to understand how the studied companies invest in training, to understand how the hospitality relationship occurs between waiters, managers and clients, considering their diverse socioeconomic and cultural profiles. The study question is: are the gaps in the quality perception of employees, managers and clients influenced by their socioeconomic and cultural profile and by the investment in training by companies?

To answer the study question, three hypotheses were developed: (H1) The investment in training influences the possible gaps in the quality perception of customers, waiters and managers; (H2) The gap in the quality perception of waiters / managers and clients is inversely proportional to the proximity of the socioeconomic and cultural profile of waiters /
managers and clients; and (H3) The socioeconomic and cultural proximity of waiters / managers and clients facilitates the establishment of a hospitality relationship.

The study methodology was an exploratory empirical research developed through multiple case studies according to the protocol proposed by Yin (2005). Data was gathered thro

Results confirmed that the investment in training has a positive impact on the quality of services delivered to clients by waiters, since clients evaluate the services based on what is said or described. Managers' perceptions regarding customer expectations and service quality specifications provide establishments with the priorities, timing and content of the trainings performed.

Another factor that should be emphasized in the study results regards the perceived welcoming and delivered welcoming, reinforcing what Camargo (2014) affirms: "hospitality happens in the gaps of the dominant inospitality and for that reason it surprises when there are attitudes loaded with human warmth".

REFERENCES


MORETTI, S. Encontros de hospitalidade, experiência de consumo e relacionamento com clientes: proposta preliminar para sua integração. [Mimeo de projeto em andamento]. Programa de Mestrado e Doutorado em Hospitalidade da Universidade Anhembi Morumbi. 2015


