

The Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in the Sector of Fast Food

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Abstract: The performance and sustainability of a company is not only economic in nature, but also includes other dimensions: organizational, commercial, social, environmental and human. Today, other factors must be integrated, in particular quality and customer satisfaction. These magnitudes better reflect the economic conditions and growth prospects of a company. Since the 1980s, several marketing researchers have been interested in customer satisfaction (Dufer J. and Moulins J-L (1989), Labarbera P.A and Mazursky D. (1983), Ngobo P.V (1997), Oliver R.L (1997)). Recently, a financial perspective of customer satisfaction is emerging. Satisfaction is thus designated as one of the pillars of the company's financial sustainability. This article aims to address the determinants of customer satisfaction in the fast food sector, in a tourist city in southern Morocco. Its main contribution lies in two horizons; the first in academic terms, where researchers will understand and analyze various perspectives to consider when studying consumers; and on the other hand, at the management level, it provides a tool for problem solving and its pragmatic application in an increasingly competitive environment.

Keywords: satisfaction; quality of service, fast food

Introduction

Customer satisfaction has always been a crucial issue for any company, regardless of its sector of activity. Lately, this has been analyzed as a key factor in the marketing strategy of companies, which at the same time is analyzed in an approach aimed at obtaining economic benefits. In the catering sector, the term competitiveness is a variable that cannot be left aside, because the company able to best satisfy its guest will be the one with the best chance of surviving in an increasingly saturated market. and required by the customer. For Sabir et al. (2014), customer satisfaction is the most important thing in every fast food business because a satisfied customer represents a significant impact on business benefits, and similarly, Hanaysha & Hilman (2015), mention that the perceived satisfaction can influence customer confidence as well as future purchasing behavior (Clemes, Gan, Kao and Choong, 2008; Cronin and Taylor, 1994).

The level of customer satisfaction can be analyzed in terms of a mood cycle that ends with a positive or negative response to current and future customer consumption. In the restaurant environment, dimensions such as human capital, food, waiting times, facilities, atmosphere, spaces, etc., are aspects that all businessmen and women should be critically considered when integrating their market strategy and positioning themselves in the minds of their consumers, therefore, Kotler & Keller (2012), argue that satisfied customers are always loyal to the product and the company. Businesses.

Obtaining a satisfied customer is only the result of a subjective process called customer perception on the value received in an existing transaction or relationship, where the concept of value is directly related to the perceived quality in relation to factors such as prices, costs and expectations that have been previously generated by various advertising mechanisms or already existing relationships with competing bidders in the market. In this way, high levels of customer satisfaction serve as strong predictors of customer retention, customer loyalty, and habitual consumer products (Rojas, 2010; Vazifedhoost, Rahanama, & Mousavian, 2014).

Due to all the above, the fundamental objective of this research is to analyze factors such as price, atmosphere, food quality and service quality, which affect the process of customer satisfaction in the fast food companies, with the main purpose of forming and understanding the conceptual framework; and at the same time, outline qualitative research avenues for various case studies in the fast food industry.

The phenomenon of customer satisfaction

Satisfying a customer is becoming, over time, an increasingly important aspect for decision makers in the fast food industry. Therefore, arriving at a single definition of this concept is not an easy task (Giese & Cote, 2000). Thus, Oliver, Rust, & Varki (1997) mention that "everyone knows what satisfaction is until they are asked to define it. Then all of a sudden, it seems like no one knows." However, we have to recognize that customer satisfaction has one common element in each of its definitions, and that is that it is seen as a process of evaluation of consumption with positive or negative results. On the other hand, Gardial et al (1994) and Yi (1991), mention the differences in its attributes which make its definition very difficult, as well as the development of methodologies which facilitate its weighting and its interpretation in his presence in the case studies.

Taking into account what was expressed by Zairi (2000), feelings of pleasure and satisfaction of expectations cause a state of satisfaction in people, which will lead to loyalty. Conversely, if the product or service does not satisfy the customer's feelings, dissatisfaction will arise. Oliver (1981), expresses in his research that customer satisfaction is an essential element of marketing and that it plays a fundamental role in decision-making in the market. The above can be interpreted to mean that if companies have customers who are satisfied with their service offerings, their market position will be competitive, so every day companies have to worry more about adequately satisfying customers. they are in direct contact with when developing moments of truth (Carlzon, 1987), which involves paying attention to feelings of happiness, acceptance, relief, joy, pleasure, and other emotions (Rahman and 2012).

When analyzing customer satisfaction, it is possible to find three profiles: the first of them is referred to a result. Satisfaction as a result or response is conceived as the result of a consumption experience. Authors like Howard & Sheth (1969) define it as a cognitive state derived from the relevance or inadequacy in relation to the reward received for the investment made. On the other hand, Westbrook & Reilly (1983), consider customer satisfaction as an emotional response to experiences related to the purchase of certain products and services, with points of sale, or even with the behavior of the seller or with the market in question. Churchill & Surprenant (1982), expressed satisfaction as a post-purchase response, since it is a feeling that emerges once consumption has been made by the consumer before the expected rewards, costs and consequences. ; while Spreng, Mac Kenzie and Olshavsky (1996) defined it as a consumer's emotional reaction to the experience of a derivative product or service after purchase. Spreng & Olshavsky (1993) argue that it is an outcome derived from the product meeting or exceeding the consumer's wishes, while Mano & Oliver (1993) define it as an attitude and post-evaluative judgment. consumption that varies along a hedonic continuum that arises after consumption.

For its part, satisfaction as a process entails a value judgment that underlies the experience to be consumed (Yi, 1991). Hunt (1977) explains that satisfaction is an evaluation that analyzes whether a consumption experience is at least as good as expected, i.e. whether expectations are met or exceeded, with the above coming after consumption, while that other authors define it as an overall evaluation after the purchase (Day, 1980; Westbrook R. 1987; Fornell, C. 1992). The notion of process for these authors is extremely important, since it is the product that derives in the post-consumption of the response. For the above, Swan, Trawick and Carroll (1981) defined customer satisfaction as an evaluative or cognitive judgment that analyzes whether the product or service produces a good or bad result or whether the product is substitutable or irreplaceable. On the other hand, authors such as Tse, Nicosia, & Wilton (1990) identified satisfaction with a cognitive process; however, their definition suggests that satisfaction can be interpreted as both a process and a response, since they define satisfaction as consumer satisfaction as a response to evaluating the gap between their prior expectations and the result of the product or service after consumption.

A third profile with which customer satisfaction can be interpreted is across a specific or cumulative transaction. The satisfaction that a specific transaction brings to the consumer depends on the outcome of the subsequent post-choice value judgment (Oliver R. 1980). Under this approach, authors such as Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann (1994) understand that transaction-specific, or transactional, satisfaction centers on the customer's responses to a particular transaction of a product or service. . Similarly, delving into the nature of this satisfaction, Halstead, Hartman, & Schmidt (1994), consider satisfaction as an affective response associated with a specific transaction resulting from the comparison of the product's outcome with a previously established norm. Along the same lines, other authors, such as Evrard & Aurier (1996) and Plichon (1998), define consumer satisfaction with a specific transaction as a psychological state resulting from the buying experience. and/or consumption.) and that it has a relative character. On the other hand, the satisfaction associated with a cumulative transaction implies that the evaluation judgment is not exclusively circumscribed to a specific transaction, but rather assumes an overall evaluation based on the consumer's experience with a good or service in the weather. Therefore, cumulative satisfaction turns out to be a story of individual, satisfactory or

unsatisfactory experiences (Aurier, Evrard, & N'Goala, 2004) and the integration of evaluative judgments linked to a succession of specific transactions (Vanhamme; 2002 Aurier, Evrard & N'Goala 2004).

Main determinants of customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants

Various surveys have been carried out in fast food companies to check which factors have the greatest impact on customer satisfaction and which cause their repeat consumption (Canny, 2013). Khan, Hussain and Yaqoob, F. (2013) argued that customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants is the most important issue every organization should have, and they consider customer feedback as the most important dimension. important to consider in this section. When analyzing customer satisfaction as a whole within a business process, it is important to highlight the patterns that have shaped this phenomenon. (Oliver, 1980), raised the paradigm of non-confirmation as the comparison between perceived performance and expectations before service, which leads to two outcomes: both satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In a strictly commercial sense, decision makers cannot be proactive in the face of this result, which is why (Khan, Hussain, & Yaqoob, 2013) mention that companies must identify the mechanisms that significantly affect customer satisfaction.

Analyzing the above from the point of view of fast food restaurants implies knowing that customers are increasingly demanding in terms of gastronomic quality, so satisfying them is not an easy task, hence the importance to know what are the environmental factors of the restaurant that promote diner satisfaction in the offer of gastronomic services (Chiguvi, 2017). Next, the main factors that have been found in the literature on fast food services that affect customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants will be described, taking into account the literature on this emotional phenomenon that reflects on business.

Satisfaction and price

For Opolsky & Salay (2013), the economic factor had a very important specific weight, since the price was the most relevant factor in fast food; In addition, when forecasting consumption, price is a determining factor for diners (Khan, 2011). For Zeithaml (1998), price is seen not only as a multi-aspect variable for monetary price, target price and sacrifice, but also similar to the entity of value that consumers have to sacrifice to get what they really want to own. From the point of view of Mattila & O'Neill (2013), the price is used as a signal to evaluate experiences with the performance of goods and services consumed. By focusing on the strategic concept, it is possible to assert that price has a significant effect on customer reactions to decisions made by the company (Sinha & Batra, 1999; Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1986).

From the point of view of Xia, Monroe, & Cox (2004), price perceptions refer to the general evaluations made by consumers as to their reasonableness in relation to the benefits obtained, so that they can be accepted or justified. Along the same lines, Bolton, Warlop, & Alba (2003) assert that the price factor can affect satisfaction when customers begin to make comparisons and make value judgments with various reference sources. What was mentioned above shows that the evaluation of the impact of prices on customer satisfaction entails a comparison of the cost, both economic and emotional, in relation to the benefits consumed in the product or service purchased, and which same time is fed by comparisons of past transactions or observations on the prices of other customers (Briesh, Krishnamurthi, Mazumdar, & Raj, 1997).

In a contrary approach, a price can also be the cause of dissatisfaction. Rothenberger (2015) also confirmed that customers' perception of an unfair price for the benefit received leads to negative perceptions, such as: dissatisfaction, reduced consumer behavior, negative publicity, and consistent complaining behavior and growing customers. Similarly, (Hermann et al. 2007; Kaura, 2012) mention in their research that a fair price for the service received has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction in fast food restaurants. The above can be well understood since increased access to information by customers, access to more alternatives, more simplified transactions, increased communication between them and widespread mistrust and resentment on the part of customers represent consumption trends that can undoubtedly reinforce the power of customers within these certain companies (Urban, 2005).

Satisfaction and quality of meals

Without fear of failure, food should be, if not the main factor, if not one of the factors having the greatest bearing in the satisfaction of a diner, and, therefore, its influence is major in the future consumption in the fast food restaurants. (Namkung & Jan, 2010). Many studies have been conducted on food quality and customer perceived satisfaction, reaching in these conclusions related to brand positioning and customer loyalty. Sulek & Hensley (2014), asserted that when diners visit a fast food restaurant, it is mainly due to the taste of the food, as it redeems a reflection of the main main attributes of the restaurant.

In many studies, the taste of foods offered by fast food outlets has been approached as a very important sub-factor for customer differentiation and preference. In this same criterion, Jaini, Ahmad, & Zaib (2015), stated that the quality of the food represents the main criterion in the evaluation made by the diners, being

classified as a competitive advantage of the company. In addition to the above, Peri (2006), demonstrated that the quality of food is a fundamental dimension that must be granted by fast food companies, in order to best satisfy their target customers, and in this sense, Liu & Jang (2009), mentions that the quality of food is widely regarded as a priority aspect for the success of every restaurant.

In terms of importance and preference, the quality of the food is decisive in the choice of the place of consumption of food by consumers (Canny, 2014; Namkung & Choi, 2011; Nasir et al., 2014), the Similarly, Gagic, Tesanovic, & Jovicic (2013), found that food quality is a key driver of customer satisfaction and behavioral intention, and similarly, Kivela (2000), pointed out the he importance of offering non-food only under the differentiation of flavor, otherwise, what was healthy, provided an additional factor of satisfaction to customers.

Satisfaction and physical environment

The physical conditions of fast food are one of the aspects in which it is possible to establish a competitive advantage. When we talk about the physical environment of a restaurant, we are talking about all the tangible and intangible elements that exist inside and outside of it. To present a better picture of the physical environment, restaurant decision makers must constantly and substantially invest in interior design; decorations, floor cleaning and other accessories, since these expenses are the most important investments to attract customers (Azim et al., 2014). In addition, the environmental environment includes background intangible characteristics that significantly influence consumers' perceptions and responses to a service provider's environment (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2002).

Features at the intangible level are temperature, lighting, smell, noise, air quality and music (Bitner, 1992). A well-maintained physical environment in a restaurant should provide distinctive customer experiences and keep them coming back to the restaurant frequently. (Choi, Heo and Kim, 2013), mentioned that the elements of the physical environment include aesthetics, environment, functionality and convenience, which provides the customer with a combination of habitual restaurant consumption. The importance of building an attractive physical environment has been strongly emphasized by several researchers and restaurant managers, considering it a very important factor that helps to strengthen and increase customer satisfaction (Ryu & Han, 2011). Previous studies have shown that the physical quality of a restaurant's environment has a positive influence on customer satisfaction (Nasir et al., 2014). According to Canny (2014), the physical environment is a key marketing factor in differentiating a restaurant by establishing an extraordinary customer experience with a pleasant and comfortable environment. Therefore, the physical environment has a greater effect on retaining existing customers as well as attracting new customers. Additionally, a well-designed physical environment is considered important in influencing consumers' pre-purchase decisions as well as their post-purchase behavior while gauging their satisfaction with the quality of a service provider's products and services. service (Bitner, 1992).

Specifically, there are aspects such as architectural design, in which Wakefield & Blodgett (1994) mention that they are factors that contribute to the attractiveness of consumer preference. Cobe (2007) asserts that restaurant aesthetics contribute significantly to customer satisfaction and especially to repeat consumption. Similarly, Ryu & Jang (2008) stated that repeat drinking behavior is influenced to a large extent by aesthetic and interior design factors that a customer may enjoy while visiting a restaurant. Tuzunkan & Albayrak (2016), like previous authors, expressed the importance of the architectural attractiveness of catering facilities; however, these could be diminished in customer perception if any of the other factors considered by the diner are diminished in taste and preference when consuming.

Satisfaction and quality in service

The analysis of the quality of service is essential information for all businessmen and women whose main objective is to optimize the performance of their business, improve their basic skills and position themselves in a more strategy in the market (Cronin & Taylor 1994, Jain & Gupta 2004). Companies that provide a higher level of service quality have higher economic returns and also have more satisfied customers (Aaker & Jacobson, 1994; Gilbert et al., 2004; Gilbert & Veloutsou, 2006). Therefore, it has become common for service providers to seek competitive advantages by providing superior service (Lee et al., 2004). According to Zeithaml (1988) service quality is defined as the value judgment made by customers on the general excellence or superiority of the service. Powers & Barrows (2003), suggest that service is particularly fundamental in the restaurant industry.

Muhamad, Hashim and Rozila (2016) demonstrated that the variables tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, guarantee and empathy have significant relationships with customer satisfaction. They also indicated that gender moderates the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Ghobadian, Speller and Jones (1994) found that service quality is more important than product quality and that increasing

efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery will result in an increase in quality perceived (Chang and Chen, 1998). On the other hand, Kotler & Keller (2012), define that through marketing it is possible to create and improve relationships with customers based specifically on value. The above can be supported by service theory, in which Schlesinger & Heskett (1991) mention that the relationship of external customers with internal customers has been defined, which shows the importance of service quality in satisfaction. customer and subsequent consumption. In another study related to service quality and its impact on customer satisfaction, Law, Hui, & Zhao (2004) showed that wait time and other service factors such as staff knowledge, he atmosphere and the spaces in the restaurant are fundamental and influential on the pleasure of food consumption and which undoubtedly affect the satisfaction perceived by the diners.

Discussion

In this research work, it was possible to analyze four factors of great importance for consumer decision-making by customers who frequent fast food outlets. Authors such as Ryu & Han (2010), have defined in their studies that factors such as the atmosphere and design that prevail in companies increase customer satisfaction; similarly, Nasir et al. (2014), found that the physical quality of a restaurant's environment has a major influence on customer satisfaction. On the other hand, Canny (2014) explained that the physical environment of a fast food serves as a key element of corporate marketing to generate differentiators between restaurants by establishing an experiential selling concept for the customer, and in the same way, in order to be able to attract others. Along the same lines, Bitner (1992) cited that a comfortable physical environment is important in the prior purchase decision process since it motivates and stimulates the customer to consume, and in the same way, it influences positively the post-purchase behavior, in such a way that this is reflected in the evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Considering the analysis of prices and their impact on customer satisfaction in fast food, it is possible to state that positive results were found in the relationship between the two variables (Gagic et al. 2013; Herrmann et al., 2007; Kaura, 2012). Studies confirm that price can be taken into account as a relevant dimension of influence on customer satisfaction within the restaurant segment. Pricing in a restaurant, as in any business, is a very delicate matter and of great importance since it can affect, on the one hand, the income and profitability of restaurants, and on the other hand, what determines customer satisfaction.

Abdul & Zainal (2016), explained that prices can be analyzed not only as an economic perception of the customer; These can be studied from an emotional point of view. Chen, Gupta, & Rom (1994, p. 25), mentioned that the price perceived by a customer can be explained as "the customer's judgment of the average price of a service compared to its competitors". Price was considered an important element in explaining consumer behavior. The price factor can be described as "the customer's judgment of the average price of a service compared to its competitors. The concept of price perceived by the customer is based on the nature of the strictly competitive pricing approach, it is based on the concerns on the part of customers as to whether they are charged more or less than the competition.

In many surveys, it has been agreed that perceived price plays an important role in the post-purchase derivative behavior made by customers and the importance of perceived value is highlighted, which is closely related to perceived price, when explaining customer behavior. Other empirical research has shown the influence of perceived price on consumer behavior in the business services segment (Deruyter, Bloemer, & Peeters, 1997), and it has been possible to argue that increasing levels quality of service leads to an increase in the level of satisfaction, and they pointed out that a low perceived quality can also lead to a direct relationship with the price.

Another factor worthy of analysis in the world of fast food is that related to the quality of the food. This is constituted as one of the most critical factors within gastronomic offer and productivity (Sulek & Hensley, 2004). Food quality can be defined as one of the most important dimensions in terms of customer loyalty and at the same time plays the role of a basic predictor of customer loyalty levels (Jang & Ha, 2010). Considering the above, it is worth mentioning that when customers compare the services offered by fast food restaurants to other dimensions, food quality is the component that contributes the most to customer satisfaction (Kisang & Heesup, 2010), and at the same time Namkung & Jang (2007), mention that there is a positive relationship between food quality and customer satisfaction when evaluating the level of impact in behavioral terms. Compared to repetitive buying behavior, the quality of food is the most important factor to assess their satisfaction and at the same time causes a process of viral communication towards other customers which can be analyzed from a cost saving perspective. network (Al-Tit, 2015).

Finally, the study led to an analysis of service quality and its impact on customer satisfaction. The most relevant part of this section will always be to approach these phenomena in an attitudinal way, constituted by a general long-term evaluation of a product or service, while satisfaction is a specific evaluation of the transaction (Bitner M., 1990; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1981; Parasuraman et al., 1988). Taking such concepts as a

reference, those derived from satisfaction over time are channeled towards perceptions of service quality. On the other hand, other investigations have empirically supported the influence of perceived service quality on customer satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Spreg & MacKoy, 1996; Ting, 2004). In addition to the above, Cronin & Taylor (1992) demonstrated that the conceptualization and measurement of service quality and the relationships between service quality leads to increased consumer satisfaction and future purchase intentions. These results suggest that service quality is an antecedent of consumer satisfaction, while consumer satisfaction is not a significant predictor of service quality. Spreg & MacKoy (1996) cited the conceptual arguments behind the distinction and investigated the relationship between service quality and satisfaction by testing a modified Oliver's (1997) model of service quality and satisfaction. The results indicated that their modified model fit the data well when perceived service quality was an antecedent of satisfaction. On the other hand, (Lee, Lee, & Yoo, 2000), they mentioned that the direction of the impact between service quality and satisfaction causes customer loyalty. What has been said asserts that the perceived quality of service was an antecedent of satisfaction, not the other way around. According to these results, Ting (2004) cited that service quality best explains customer satisfaction, and the path coefficient from service quality to CS is greater than the path coefficient from customer satisfaction to service quality CS in the service industry.

Conclusion

By analyzing from a historical perspective and exclusively oriented to a single sector, it is possible to understand the central importance of customer satisfaction for any company. It should not be forgotten that a Good Customer Service is qualified as optimal only if it manages to satisfy the needs and desires of the customer. This indicates that the efforts of the corresponding domain must be focused on the needs of the customer, so that the service provided and received corresponds to what the customer actually needs.

Factors such as the competition in today's market is becoming more and more important and the products and services are more varied, therefore, consumers are becoming more demanding. They are no longer looking only for quality and price but for good customer service. If a customer searches for a product or service and finds it and also receives good service, he will be satisfied; This makes that customer come back and buy again, and probably recommend it to other consumers, generating a good source of promotion, and at the same time, generating economic and marketing benefits for the company.

In the same way, it is important to mention that customers should not receive bad attention, because it can cause them not to return and to speak badly of the company. It is essential to look for the means that help the customer to receive a good service and thus to create loyalty, a good voice-to-voice channel among consumers and a differentiation in the market among its competitors. Solving customer problems and/or needs in an agile and clear manner not only means that excellent customer service was provided, but also that it is the goal of all business management. The worst mistake today is to follow the measures as they happen, that is to say to be reactive, which is not currently possible.

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