




Barra de Barro, Restaurant-Bar. A unique experience of entrepreneurship**Barra de Barro, Restaurante-Bar. Una experiencia singular de emprendimiento**González-Anaya, Ana Gabriela^a, González-Pérez, Cándido Jorge^b and Vargas-Ruiz, Daniel^c^a  Universidad de Guadalajara^b  Universidad de Guadalajara^c  Universidad de Guadalajara**CONAHCYT classification:**

Area:

Field:

Discipline:

Subdiscipline:

 <https://doi.org/10.35429/JBAB.2024.8.14.4.1.10>**History of the article:**

Received: September 08, 2024

Accepted: December 20, 2024

* ✉ [\[ana.ganaya@academicos.udg.mx\]](mailto:ana.ganaya@academicos.udg.mx)**Abstract**

This paper is the description of an individual effort of administrative entrepreneurship. It is the story of the creation of a food service company in a medium-sized city in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. The Barra de Barro restaurant has its own history and Daniel, one of the co-authors of this work, is the owner and creator of the business. In the first part, the characteristics of food companies in Mexico are described in general terms and the main particularities that a business of its kind must experience in order to be commercially successful are presented after. This is a work that should be considered as a qualitative work in the area of social sciences and that uses as a method the life testimony in reference to a business' owner and his entrepreneurship, Barra de Barro restaurant. The references of this kind of studies is used to place it in its proper dimensions and the main variables that intervene in the task of food sales service are explained, such as prices, attention and customer satisfaction. The concepts of franchising and the use of social networks are also described, as these are two elements that are invariably embedded in food service activities. Each company has its own particularities and a very special aspect of it is its insertion in a traditional society with deep-rooted customs. The analysis of the environment is also part of the framework.

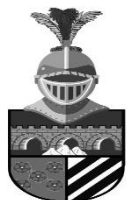
Entrepreneurship, Franchise, Family Business, Social Networks, Internal Rate of Return

Resumen


Este trabajo es la descripción de un esfuerzo individual de emprendimiento administrativo. Es la historia de la creación de una empresa de servicio de alimentos en una ciudad mediana del estado de Jalisco, México. El restaurante Barra de Barro tiene su propia historia y Daniel, uno de los coautores de este trabajo, es el propietario y creador del negocio. En la primera parte se describen de manera general las características de las empresas de alimentos en México y posteriormente se presentan las principales particularidades que debe experimentar un negocio de su tipo para ser exitoso comercialmente. Este es un trabajo que debe ser considerado como un trabajo cualitativo en el área de las ciencias sociales y que utiliza como método el testimonio de vida en referencia al dueño de un negocio y su emprendimiento, el restaurante Barra de Barro. Se utilizan las referencias de este tipo de estudios para situarlo en su justa dimensión y se explican las principales variables que intervienen en la tarea del servicio de venta de alimentos, como son los precios, la atención y la satisfacción del cliente. También se describen los conceptos de franquicia y el uso de redes sociales, ya que son dos elementos que están invariablemente inmersos en las actividades del servicio de venta de alimentos. Cada empresa tiene sus particularidades y un aspecto muy especial es su inserción en una sociedad tradicional con costumbres muy arraigadas. El análisis del entorno también forma parte del marco.

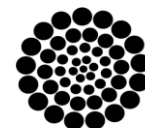
Iniciativa empresarial, franquicia, empresa familiar, redes sociales, tasa interna de rendimiento

Citation: González-Anaya, Ana Gabriela, González-Pérez, Cándido Jorge and Vargas-Ruiz, Daniel. Barra de Barro, Restaurant-Bar. A unique experience of entrepreneurship. Journal-Business Administration-Marketing; Accounting. 8[14]1-10: e40814110.



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Peer review under the responsibility of the Scientific Committee  in the contribution to the scientific, technological and innovation Peer Review Process through the training of Human Resources for continuity in the Critical Analysis of International Research.

**RENIECYT**

Registro Nacional de Instituciones y Empresas Científicas y Tecnológicas

1702902 CONAHCYT

1. Introduction

Service companies have been increasing substantially since the end of the last century in our country. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), service economic activities are responsible for more than two thirds of the Gross Domestic Product of its member countries. Restaurants form an important part of this sector and, if we analyse it strictly, there is an ambivalence in its conception because it is very common to hear talk of the food industry and food services. You are either one or the other, but this dichotomy has always prevailed. When it comes to national accounting, there is no doubt: it belongs to the service sector.

In our case, we assume that restaurants are part of services even if what is paid for as consumption is tangible. Food is part of the industrial chain of production in various branches, but in its final consumption it is paid for a value of the last transformation. It is curious that restaurants are placed within the service industry since they are also offering a product. For some authors such as Guzmán López and Cárcamos Solís (2014), this means that restaurants are in the middle of a product-service paradigm as they have something tangible (food) and something intangible (service). This duality leads us to think about the complexity of the restaurant as a business, as it is not only the palpable aspects or elements that need to be taken care of, but also the abstract ones. Thus, it becomes difficult to improve the intangible part not only because it requires more attention, but also because it can vary according to elements such as those mentioned above.

‘The restaurant industry in Mexico is made up of economic units of food and beverage preparation services for immediate consumption (Economic Census, 2014). In 2015, there were 515,059 establishments dedicated exclusively to the preparation of food and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, ranging from cafeterias, soda fountains, self-service restaurants, restaurants that prepare snacks, tacos, cakes, fish and seafood, to large chains. This industry employs more than 1.5 million people. The restaurant industry represents 10.6% of the national economic units, employs 6.6% of the employed personnel in the country and participates in more than 1.6% of the total gross production (Censos Económicos, 2014).

The generation of value in the restaurant industry is characterised by a tangible part, which is the preparation of food, and an intangible part made up of the attention received by the customer’ (Zárraga Cano Izárraga, Molina Morejón, and Corona Sandoval, 2017).

1.1. Food as a business

Human nutrition goes beyond the ingestion of food that is transformed into energy in the human body. In all cultures, food is part of rituals and ceremonies to celebrate different moments in life or society. Restaurants have become an option where people go to consume food, but above all to live an experience where they are the diners.

They choose a setting, a space, the time to go, the type of food they are going to eat, the culture it comes from, whether it is to celebrate, to meet, to work, to have a courtesy with someone or to have a good time. Restaurants become the setting for countless occasions and therefore form one of the most important industries within the service sector of any economy.

On this, Aguirre (2016) points out that the food event is situated in a time and space within a society. Food is part of the daily life of every human being and it is the lack of it that leads to an awareness of how important it is. As long as there is an absence of it, it is blurred within everyday life unless it is given a certain role, as is the case with going to a restaurant: where, what kind of food, where it is located, what kind of people go there, what is the experience of having gone to that particular place.

Among the most in-demand and difficult businesses to operate is a restaurant. It is also one of those that ends in less than three years of operation in a large number of cases (Sanghyeop, Bee-Lia & Heesup, 2020), in the following pages we present how the relationships with customers, among the staff working in the business and also the perceptions that are held about the different characteristics of the restaurant will influence its success or failure.

1.2. Catering to different tastes

A restaurant business is also part of the tourism service industry. This is one of the main reasons why a person decides, through curiosity, to satisfy a biological as well as a psychosocial need. An interesting phenomenon is how people respond to their environment under the influence of living experiences that have a profound impact on their emotional and psychological well-being. And food linked to environments or surroundings that nurture a person's cultural background generates personal and collective satisfaction.

Consuming food in a clean, tidy environment that satisfies needs in a quick and healthy way is a conscious effort on the part of the restaurant entrepreneur.

Service plays a very important role in the work of a restaurant, because it is not only about adapting to new demands or to the events of the time, as happened with the COVID-19 pandemic, for example (Guzmán López and Cárcamos Solís, 2014). Rather, the aim is for the customer to be satisfied, to become a regular at the restaurant and also to collaborate with the dissemination of what the restaurant does.

The quality of the service will depend on the type of industry and cultural context. In the case of the industry, it has characteristics that are different from each other and therefore customers have expectations that are going to be different (for example, a family restaurant and one aimed at customers in an exclusive area). On the other hand, as far as culture is concerned, customer expectations will change because each culture has its own characteristics by which customers will understand 'well served' differently. The quality of service will be perceived or received in different ways according to each culture (Guzmán López and Cárcamos Solís, 2014).

In the expectation of the experience on the part of diners when they go to a business through a recommendation or out of curiosity through one of the *marketing* channels, it is essential to bear in mind that the diner goes to the business with a promise of feeling well looked after. From the reception by the staff, during their consumption and upon their departure, as well as in each of the common areas in which they can develop during their stay in the establishment.

It is important to consider that after-sales is directly related to the recommendation that the diner can make to the business. There are many digital tools and platforms for our business to be rated and criticised, because criticism is a fundamental part of the marketing strategy that a business needs to make itself known and find its place in the market. Even knowing how to handle a bad review satisfies a need that the business itself has generated for the diner, which is, reaffirming, the feeling of being well attended.

One of the fundamental parts of the service is the staff, but it is also one of the most complex that the industry faces due to the high turnover and even more so in medium-sized cities where the low tourist influx does not allow for solid professional training, unlike cities that are tourist centres where satisfying the customer's need for excellent service is a priority for the *staff* and does not leave to personal criteria what should or should not be a good service, simply reflected in the percentage of tips achieved in the service of a table, but in a whole chain of operation that is well standardised and organised in its narrative as a business.

It should also be noted that it is difficult to standardise service in a population centre of these characteristics, as *staff* face wages and salaries that do not reflect what the National Minimum Wage Commission establishes in its tabulators and which are not respected by employers, not to mention the lack of benefits.

And also bad practices such as charging taxes for the use and handling of debit or credit cards in establishments, which in the end results in dissatisfaction of the informed customer and affects not the complaints or denunciations that could be filed with the consumer's attorney's office, but rather the tips that the staff may receive, which does not encourage the criteria that we mentioned earlier. Staff should be seen as sellers of the experience offered by a business.

Among the elements that must be considered in restaurants to increase profits are the prices and the duration of the food: the time before it perishes, its preparation and consumption. Other characteristics of a restaurant should be added to this, such as the willingness of customers to make reservations or the type of offers they like best (giving away coupons, special hours, group discounts) (Thompson, 2010).

Today there are professional business tools that help to solve operational needs in a practical and cost-effective way depending on the level of operation or business model chosen by the restaurant entrepreneur.

Organisational planning, CRM systems, the Canva model, inventory systems, table operation and reservations, point of sale systems, menu costing, loyalty systems, staff control, even the immersion of artificial intelligence for order tracking and communication with our customers on social networks facilitate the order and operation of businesses in the industry, which also contribute to the construction of the experience for diners. Some elements that are important within the business and have an impact on increasing profits are the following (Thompson, 2010): Group size, composition, age, gender, relationships between people (family or business, for example). Products consumed: number of dishes, alcohol consumption, other products, takeaways. Duration of consumption.

To these elements must be added what the customer considers among his or her options for choosing or not choosing a restaurant (Thompson, 2010). Some of these are: location, size and flexibility (that they can receive groups of different sizes, that changes can be made in the arrangement of tables or chairs or spaces to which diners can be assigned). Concept (the type of food offered and service, also whether it is a franchise or not).

Decoration and amenities, target segment, quality level, type of service (includes type of payments, whether catering is available, etc.); price, offers: coupons, discounts, gifts or special offers; working hours, menu, reservations (also includes whether the space is frequently overcrowded); training (of workers and how this is transferred to the service given to the consumer); layout (of the space, how seating, tables are laid out and how the clientele can be accommodated); product sales (other than just food or beverages).

1.3. The experience economy

The 1990s saw the emergence of the so-called 'experience economy'. In the case of restaurants, it focuses on the aspects that influence the customer's willingness to spend money with the intention of acquiring an experience that gives him/her fun and pleasure in return.

This implies that for a restaurant this experience should be sensory: through sight, sound, taste, texture and smell. In addition to being affective (through the emotions they will relate to the experience), cognitive (through the way they will relate to the experience), behavioural (through the reactions they will have to the experience) and relational (associating the environment with consumption) (Yuan, Bauman, Ferns, Ebrahimzadeh & Alshiha, 2022).

The aim is for subjects to make a deliberate choice about where they want to go to consume their food. And for this it will not only be the decision of what to eat but where, what preference one place will have over another, what will be the new experience they want to try, the speed at which they will be able to consume, how they relate to the staff who are part of the restaurant and, above all: what others say about the place where they want to go to eat (Bertan, 2020).

A culinary experience can range from getting to know a small neighbourhood restaurant and gastronomic corridors, to an articulated tourist route located in a specific geographical demarcation. The guild or trade association of restaurants or catering establishments generates an economic dynamic that goes beyond competition for competition, and creates products and services linked to new culinary experiences. Starting from rural environments, the gastronomic routes encourage agro-industrial dishes, cooking techniques, preparation processes and recipes to remain current, resulting in them having a marketing and commercial showcase that helps to document and disseminate them at festivals, fairs, tastings and other events of a gastronomic nature.

This helps to encourage businesses to design experiences around their services and concepts, promoting new sales channels based on the circumstance or season in which they are found and building experiences for the diner that delve into the sensory and psycho-emotional.

The aforementioned ‘experience economy’ is strongly linked to experience consumption, which may well include activities such as holidays, visits to different places and, of course, consumption in restaurants, because beyond food, it is also about providing the clientele with a series of elements that will enable the subject to relate the visit to a particular restaurant with emotions, memories of previous visits, values, sensations and also ways of thinking (Yuan, Bauman, Ferns, Ebrahimzadeh & Alshiha, 2022). It has already been explained above how the restaurant will depend on the type of ambience and clientele that frequent it, and in turn the clientele and ambience depend on the type of restaurant.

A memorable experience in a restaurant will make the customer want to come back to the same place and will recommend it to others. Restaurants acquire a differentiation with respect to other similar spaces that will make consumers choose one place over another because they relate it to positive or meaningful experiences. Some physical elements influence the psychological experience of customers (Yuan, Bauman, Ferns, Ebrahimzadeh & Alshiha, 2022). Among the main ones to be considered are:

1. Design: colours, spatial layout, decoration. This prevents exceeding the number of diners that can be simultaneously in the restaurant, which was particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Ambience: the music, temperature, smell and other elements that are not visual but also contribute to creating a more pleasant experience for people attending these spaces. It has a special impact on customer satisfaction and memory as it will influence positive associations and the evocation of emotions.
3. Sociability: One of the main reasons for going to a restaurant is to have social experiences with others. Thus, meeting other people evokes feelings and social factors, which can also include service and customer relations, will have an important impact on the customer experience.

4. Food and drink: of course, this element is influential in touching all five senses of restaurant-goers. Techniques, inclusion of ethnicity and multi-sensory experiences stimulate the consumer physically, emotionally and cognitively. And it is one of the most important elements in achieving a memorable experience.

1.4. Factors influencing restaurant choice

In addition to this, Thompson (2010) suggests that other factors influence the choice of a restaurant for consumption: demographic group: who the restaurant concept is aimed at, the type of service and the market segment; previous experiences (with the restaurant, relates to reputation); reputation (comments about the restaurant, including online reviews or opinions). The issue of clientele and how this type of business revolves around customer experience has already been presented above. But now it is about restaurants as businesses and spaces that create employment. It is known that the restaurant industry is very important in Mexico as it employs a significant percentage of the population and also contributes to the economy in a very important way (Seyitoğlu, Atsız & Acar, 2023).

According to INEGI (2024), the service sector represents 63.74% of the country's economy, and of these, restaurants and accommodation services account for 12.14% of Mexico's economic activity.

With this information we can see how the restaurant industry plays a very important role in the Mexican economy. In fact, it was one of the industries that began to be reactivated during the COVID-19 pandemic because it was not only necessary to continue with the economic movement that was so necessary at that time, but also to be able to provide safe living spaces for the people who were so much in demand at that time.

In terms of employment, restaurants and accommodation services account for 15.71% of the economically active population by June 2024. It is unfortunate that despite how important it is within the economy, there are still problems in this type of industry where work becomes precarious, working hours are often extended and customer demand can become complicated (Seyitoğlu, Atsız & Acar, 2023).

For this reason many authors say that the service and hospitality industry is not only ambiguous but also at risk. This is because many times decisions that should be based on the know-how and management of a business are guided by intuition or previous experiences (Seyitoğlu, Atsız & Acar, 2023). Therefore, I present my case as a way to demonstrate how business management has an important impact for this type of economic development space.

Decision-making in restaurants should be based on economic factors, the dynamics and nature of the environment in which it is immersed, as well as meeting the demands of customers, having an organisational structure and knowing how to stay afloat despite the challenges it faces, as often happens before economic circumstances in which Mexico has found itself: pandemic, epidemic, crisis and economic recession.

Circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic led to major changes in this industry where many skilled workers lost their jobs, and many of these businesses had to close due to difficulties in receiving customers. According to Seyitoğlu, Atsız & Acar (2023), studies indicate that the restaurant industry had achieved maximum employability and income before this pandemic spread around the world in 2020. And once the health protocols began, the opening of such businesses resumed, albeit in a very gradual manner.

After having gone through different stages of adaptation and maintaining the essence of the business as a base and expanding the sales channels, it was left to start with a standardisation process to open a second branch derived from taking advantage of the best-selling and most profitable product on the menu of Barra de Barro Restaurante Bar: meat in its juice. During the process of the business plan and the operation of the restaurant, we have noticed the harshness of the restaurant industry, which never stagnates and is elusive to deterioration, given that it is a service that will always be in complete catharsis linked to a physiological and psychosocial function.

1.5. Franchising

The prices of food products are highly variable and depend on a myriad of circumstances to establish them. In many businesses prices are fixed because they depend on the franchises in which they are registered. The most distant antecedent of franchises comes from the Middle Ages because kings granted a 'carte franca' to whom they wanted and for a special reason.

There were those who used them to hunt on some land, to fish or even so that some people could collect taxes (Hernán, 2018; Castellanos, 2006). Meanwhile, in the neighbouring country to the north, new franchises began in the mid-nineteenth century with the sale of Singer sewing machines (Castellanos, 2006). The company at that time did not have the capacity to meet the overflowing demand for the equipment and in 1851 the organisation undertook a momentous change that left its mark for others to follow.

It replaced the system it used in respect of sales where workers were paid on commission; it proposed that from that date onwards they should become owners of a fraction, however small. He now charged the former workers instead of paying them.

Nowadays, the most visible and most franchised businesses are those that sell food, hence the case for citing it in this paper. It is known that at the end of the 19th century this activity was extended to the textile industry and then to the soft drinks industry. The rules that were written to legalise this productive activity were called Trade Name and Product Franchises and their explicit origin was to impose anti-trust laws (Alba Aldave, 2005).

The best known company in the world that represents franchises is Coca Cola, which was created in 1886 and in 1889 two external buyers acquired it for the sale of bottled soft drinks in the United States. These same entrepreneurs, who acquired the rights to sell the soft drink, expanded throughout the world to the extent that today it is impossible to think that there is not a single country where this merchandise is not marketed. The concept of 'sub-franchising' was invented and the owners were responsible only for producing the soft drink concentrate.

Then its main competitor, Pepsi Cola, had very similar beginnings in terms of procedures and results. Both are classic examples of the proliferation of franchises in the world.

In the restaurant business, the classic example par excellence is undoubtedly the company created by brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald. It started in Pasadena, California in 1937 with a small restaurant where they specialised in 'service in your car' and the products on sale were milkshakes and sausages. A few years later, in 1940, they expanded to San Bernardino in the same state of California and there they were able to offer 25 different dishes.

Among the main problems they encountered, they observed two in particular: one, the workers did not last long, they could not keep them; and two, their main customers, who were young, caused significant losses due to the deterioration of crockery and cutlery. 'In 1948, the McDonald brothers decided to put a stop to this situation and completely modified the operation of their business by reducing the menu from 25 dishes to 9, replaced the cutlery and crockery with cardboard plates and glasses, and reduced the advertising budget, which allowed them to reduce the price of hamburgers.

They were based on the concepts of speed, low prices and volume, automating the kitchen with equipment designed by themselves, and in order to reduce the time it took to attend to orders, they opened windows for direct service to customers (introducing self-service in restaurants) and substituted the female staff that attended to these orders' (Alba Aldave, 2005; 5).

One of the things that characterised this new restaurant franchise was that they devised how to carry out changes with the implementation of Henry Ford's assembly line, so they standardised that one person should concentrate on the action of carrying out a single process and that the products should be the ones that moved towards them and direct them to a delivery point at the end. In the annals of history it is recorded that the McDonald brothers' company made the mistake of offering free guided tours to those who would visit them, which prompted some competitors to come in and learn the main bases of success and copy them.

This is how James A. Collins got to know the processes and equipment in use, and based on this information he became the main licensee of the once famous and successful Kentucky Fried Chicken company. Another person who made the most profit by knowing McDonald's know-how was Glen Bell, who started another of the most famous American companies that became a direct competitor, Taco Bell. This irresponsible attitude of the McDonalds resulted in a large number of their own competitors knowing in detail what to do, how to do it and what to avoid. In short, they became their unwitting chief advisors.

Another attitude that could have become a great burden for the development of McDonalds was that they never intended to grow the business (Alba Aldave, 2005), it was then that an external actor by the name of Ray Kroc helped them to grow the business and expand it exponentially to the extent that in 1954 there were already 15 new franchises originated and linked to McDonalds.

Methodology and techniques developed

We worked with qualitative methodology, using the case study technique, in this particular case of a restaurant and the way in which business models were applied to empirical knowledge in order to come out ahead during an economically and socially very difficult period, such as the pandemic caused by COVID-19.

The restaurant chosen for analysis is La Barra de Barro, which is located in the West of Mexico, in a medium-sized city. This provides an interesting overview as we are talking about a successful business immersed in a local and regional economy that does not have tourism or the service sector as its main economic source.

3. Results. The particular experience: La Barra de Barro

The year 2019 was one of the most stressful experiences for global economic activity, economies slowed down, raw materials for global industries stopped moving and industries came to a standstill. Life became 24 hours a day in our homes, a stay that extended to isolated months due to the pandemic generated by COVID-19.

The restaurant industry was one of the hardest hit, with restaurants having to pay their fixed costs, maintain their workforces with wage cuts and reconfigure their schedules to serve the market under conditions that the public authorities would allow, putting owners on edge. In many cases, government regulations were imposed without any logic or strategy that was not based on uncertainty and anxiety for not knowing how to handle a situation that in the contemporary human race we were not prepared for.

The business project on which this experience is based was born precisely in the period of the pandemic, months before the compulsory lock-in, the project had been managed and the investment had begun. Everything was in place: the financial resources, premises in a great location, committed partners, a concept and the clarity of the time required to invest in order to move the business forward.

In the beginning it was easy to agree on the ideas of what the concept would look like and the proposition with which to go to market. Local tourism service providers began to organise trips to the interior of the state, for example to Tequila, Jalisco, and the influx of tourists coming in and out of the municipality began to increase.

It should be noted that Lagos de Moreno, despite being a town with a number of recognised names that could, through well-directed public policies, attract a range of visitors from religious to social, the municipality itself does not have an infrastructure or a business formation aimed at attracting tourism or encouraging a prolonged visit; Lagos de Moreno is not a tourist destination, but rather a place to pass through.

This is due to the fact that it does not have a city brand and a well-defined tourist product that distinguishes it from other cities that do, and that the economy revolves around it, integrating organised civil society as a trigger for culture, taking advantage of the same recognitions and making the social and tourist dynamics revolve, such as Mazamitla and its ecotourism, Tequila with its agave landscape, San Sebastián Del Oeste with its mountain tourism, among others.

From this we had the opportunity to generate an idea on which the main experience of the concept is based: The Jalisco Drinks Route. The aim of which has been to bring to a region of the state such as Los Altos de Jalisco a group or individual experience to taste the flavours of the prepared drinks that have attracted and detonated businesses throughout the state. Within the experiences you can taste drinks such as the cantarito, vampirito, chataso, cazuela, and others, respecting their original recipes and their original presentation, taking advantage of the Jalisco identity more than the Altos, which have their own legends and a cultural impact rooted in the mystique of each drink.

The idea was simple, to take advantage of the location of Lagos de Moreno and its designation as a Magical Town to offer a tourist experience that would attract the attention of those seeking a gastronomic experience, promoting it through local and national platforms such as TripAdvisor, AirBNB and México Desconocido.

The first steps as a business within the pandemic was to adjust the operation of the restaurant to the policies established by the government and to operate since, regardless of what the state government established, the municipalities constructed their own narrative around the problem. In many cases, due to misinformation, non-standardised criteria were used to determine who operated under what conditions, causing a great deal of dissatisfaction and disruption in the sector.

The project began by taking into account the limitations under which the restaurant would have to operate, going from projecting six tables to 22 in the first quarter and the need to adapt a wider menu was applied to the menu, going from selling only aguachiles and ceviches to incorporating another 20 food options, and in the first half of the year alone the premises were used to offer breakfasts.

The restaurant industry involves analysing the fundamental relationship between the product and the service, resulting in the consumer experience that the diner takes away and how it is intrinsically linked to the discipline in the operation of the business in its financial, administrative and operational part, which goes from the process of attracting the client to the sale and post-sale.

The product, its quality and its origin, are fundamental starting points to begin to design an experience around the atmosphere that a business seeks to provoke in its service. The design of the concept, the harmonisation of the service and the narrative that is sought to transmit to the diner are elements that structurally help to establish the essence of the restaurant and that establish differentiating points within the market and add elements of value to the business to incite in the diner the curiosity to consume the experience and the environment, not only to consume the food that is transformed in the kitchen of a restaurant business, but to live through the recommendation of other diners or marketing strategies, the emotion that helps to satisfy more than one sense.

Agro-industry and the production that derives from it is an interesting factor to analyse, both businesses established in large cities and those in small or medium-sized cities are strongly linked to the work of rural producers. The input market allows for different levels of quality in products that can widely satisfy demanding palates. But having a good construction of the business plan and identifying the 'person profile' within the marketing plan helps to understand the market we are targeting. The main objective to pursue is undoubtedly customer satisfaction in food consumption. This is measured by three different qualities, the quality of the service, the quality of the product and the prices offered.

Box 1

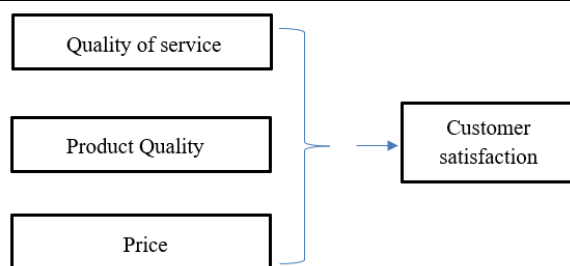


Figure 1

Customer satisfaction

Source: Zárraga Cano Izárraga, Molina Morejón and Corona Sandoval (2017)

The restaurant industry has evolved thanks to technology, the development of new foods or recipes and also because of customer demands.

Thus, the experience is growing, adapting to the new times and to what diners now demand, because a restaurant is not only focused on the customer's food intake, but goes beyond that.

4. Conclusions

With this work we wanted to show how the restaurant industry has moved forward in spite of unfavourable circumstances. A business that was started by hard-working people, with vision and above all making use of the knowledge acquired on how to manage a business of this type, has had favourable results.

In the specific case of the Barra de Barro restaurant, after four years of operating adjustments and going through ups and downs such as changing premises, having to close to the public for short periods due to adjustments in the company and a drop in the number of customers caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the business has always looked for ways to generate income by providing catering services for the employees' dining room and food service at events in and outside Lagos de Moreno. Some alternatives such as corporate *coffee break* service, beverage bars and others, in addition to maintaining currency and taking advantage of a market niche that is beginning to be exploited in a medium-sized city.

As an example, it is worth mentioning that within the business we offer an events programme such as live music, tastings, conferences and corporate events in order to liven up the business proposal, which led us to receive a distinction in 2022 as the best Resto-Bar in Lagos de Moreno, awarded by the National Chamber of Restaurants and Seasoned Food Industry.

These types of strategies are not done at random. They have a reason behind them and what is intended with them is to get the diner to choose the business for reasons that go beyond the food they will receive: treatment, trust, motivation, celebration of events, and others.

Doing the work by means of the case study technique, from a qualitative perspective, has a great impact on the analysis of finance and business. We do not talk about growth in numbers because that is really the end product.

It looks at experiences, strategies, individuals involved and how the application of different elements can characterise a business, in this case in the restaurant industry, as an attractive option for the public and an option that will make it play an important role in the community.

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