

PERCEIVED QUALITY IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING FRANCHISED EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

QUALIDADE PERCEBIDA EM SERVIÇOS EDUCACIONAIS FRANQUEADOS DE LÍNGUA INGLESA

CALIDAD PERCIBIDA EN LOS SERVICIOS EDUCATIVOS FRANQUICIADOS DE IDIOMA EN INGLÉS

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ABSTRACT: This article wants to present discussions on management, allocation and improvement of resources and investments in marketing made by English-language educational franchises. Based on the quality perceptions of student consumers – and what they want and qualify as a quality service – we want to discuss educational services/courses that meet customer demand and satisfy them. This paper discusses terms and concepts such as marketing (KOTLER; KELLER, 2019; Kotler, "KOTLER"; ARMSTRONG 1998; 2004), services and satisfaction for perceived quality (GIANESI; RAN, 2007; GARVIN, 1992; PALADINI, 2000) decision (SIMON, 1979; BRETAS PEREIRA, 1997; SIN OIH YU, 2011). It seeks to confront what has been understood about by educational franchises as qualified and quality and what is actually understood as qualified service and quality in the view of the final consumer, the student.

KEYWORDS: Marketing. English franchises. Perceived quality. Education as a service. Decision.

RESUMO: Este artigo se propõe a apresentar discussões sobre gestão, alocação e aprimoramento de recursos e investimentos em marketing realizados pelas franquias educacionais de língua inglesa. Com base nas percepções de qualidade dos consumidores estudantes – e o que estes desejam e qualificam como um serviço de qualidade – quer-se discutir sobre os serviços educacionais/cursos que atentam a demanda dos clientes e as satisfaçam. Neste artigo debatem-se termos e conceitos como marketing (KOTLER; KELLER, 2019; KOTLER; ARMSTRONG 1998; 2004), serviços e satisfação pela qualidade percebida (GIANESI; CORRIA, 2007; GARVIN, 1992; PALADINI, 2000) decisão (SIMON, 1979; BRETAS PEREIRA, 1997; SIN OIH YU, 2011). Busca-se confrontar o que foi entendido e publicizado por franquias educacionais como qualificado e de qualidade e o que de fato é entendido como serviço qualificado e de qualidade na visão do consumidor final, o estudante.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Marketing. Franquias de inglês. Qualidade percebida. Educação como serviço. Decisão.

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RESUMEN: *Este artículo tiene como objetivo presentar discusiones sobre la gestión, asignación y mejora de los recursos y las inversiones en marketing realizadas por las franquicias educativas de idioma en inglés. Basándonos en las percepciones de calidad de los estudiantes consumidores, y lo que quieren y califican como un servicio de calidad, queremos discutir los servicios / cursos educativos que satisfacen la demanda de los clientes y los satisfacen. Este artículo discute términos y conceptos como marketing (KOTLER; KELLER, 2019; Kotler, "KOTLER"; ARMSTRONG 1998; 2004), servicios y satisfacción por la calidad percibida (GIANESI; RAN, 2007; GARVIN, 1992; PALADINI, 2000) decisión (SIMON, 1979; BRETAS PEREIRA, 1997; SIN OIH YU, 2011). Se busca confrontar lo que fue entendido y publicitado por las franquicias educativas como calificado y de calidad y lo que de hecho se entiende como servicio calificado y de calidad desde el punto de vista del consumidor final, el estudiante.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Marketing. Franquicias inglesas. Calidad percibida. Educación como servicio. Decisión.*

Introduction

Managing a prosperous, profitable and lasting business is synonymous with managing to generate customer satisfaction for those who consume the products and/or services offered by the company. This is a fact notoriously consolidated both by the administrative-empirical business experience - seen in the daily practice of any company still alive and existing in this fiercely competitive market that presents itself today - and by the consolidated academic-administrative literature (GIANESI; CORRIA, 2007; GARVIN, 1992; PALADINI, 2000). As a result of the mentioned arguments, this article proposes, from the exposure on the quality perceived by consumers of franchised educational services - in the modality of acquisition of a new language in English - to expose what these consumers received, from what these consumers qualify as quality service, based on their own perceptions of qualified service - which are of quality, efficient and effective for this service demand - compared to investments in marketing made by franchises and/or by franchised administrators of these educational services.

Based on the premise that when any company invests in advertising and propaganda, it seeks to attract and, above all, retain a captive clientele to its products and/or services. Generally, advertising products and, in the case of services, offering unique, qualified and quality experiences, which will be "impossible" to be replicated by competing companies, much less easily found on the market (SILVA JUNIOR, 2021b). To this end, the company makes an investment in Marketing - advertising, propaganda, publicity, publicity - in order to inform the future consumer, such benefits that he will enjoy, only with him, obviously, exclusively in that

company, which are not even imagined, perhaps even cogitated a better offer elsewhere but in your company¹.

Along this line of reasoning, and based on the studies of *Total Quality Management*² (TQM) realizados por Silva Junior (2018), baseados na pesquisa empírica sobre a percepção de qualidade dos consumidores de serviços educacionais e publicação de artigo (SILVA JUNIOR, 2021a), quer-se saber/verificar se os investimentos em marketing, para atrair o consumidor, para esta franquia educacional em detrimento da outra concorrente, consubstanciam ou não, com a percepção de serviço qualificado pelo consumidor que adquiriu/recebeu tal serviço. Ainda, acrescenta-se a esta discussão pressupostos teóricos sobre a tomada de decisão na gestão administrativa.

This article is based on the empirical research findings of Silva Junior (2018), which are collected, analyzed, cited and addressed according to that research methodology. As a field finding it is cited that, sometimes, the educational franchise manager makes massive investments in publicizing his services, spending part of his resources - which are scarce and finite -, marketing that which is not, or will not be "perceived with the same significance" by customers; or even leverages and publicizes accessories of the service provision that are not considered "essential", in the consumer's view. Highlighting, even, in their disclosures and advertisements, features and or relative peculiarities of those services that are considered "unimportant" in the view of the customer-consumer - according to the field findings of Silva Junior, 2018. Therefore, sinning the franchisee administrator, in the management, allocation and destination of administrative resources belonging to the account of non-current and intangible assets, the accounting account marketing, thus wasting important and scarce financial resources - especially if they are in the first five years of implementation of the educational franchise.

Silva Junior (2018) also warns these franchise managers, based on his research, that the provision of the service may not be enough, as to its effectiveness in fact, before the consumer's taste. When the service, is marketed/sold by the franchises as something wonderful and, disappointingly, received/perceived by the customer who supposedly acquired the "bad experience" regarding learning a new language, this can be harmful, long term, to the financial-

¹ To deepen the discussion on the current market intensification in the article: **The on-demand urban mobility application worker: recruitment, selection and decision**, which addresses the technological and social changes, the lack of recruitment and selection in view of self-employment, the limited and insufficient labor guarantee in labor exploitation, depersonalization, by an intangible application, without physical or legal personality, which exempts him from responsibilities the employer among other themes and issues involving modernity (SILVA JUNIOR, 2021b).

² Term coined by quality researchers (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018).

business health of that franchise. Par and step to this research (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018; 2021a) in the proposition of promoting debates and discussions regarding these entangled relationships, briefly in this article, some questions are raised, as follows.

Has the manager invested in marketing in order to promote the differential items, as to the offering of packages of services? Did the consumer get to the franchise offering services by/through these ads/advertisements? And does the consumer consider important and essential what was advertised and linked to the essential service by the marketing? As well as, after receiving the service, how does the consumer evaluate the franchise and the service, based on his/her own perception of quality? Was it a qualified, quality service as stated in the attractive advertisement? Did the manager really invest in the "order-winning" items, or did this go unnoticed, according to the evaluation made by the consumer customer?

In this article, then, it is desired to know and compare, thus, if these investments in marketing, made by the franchises and or franchisees, influence and/or have repercussions on the answers acquired in the field (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018; 2021) as to the educational services considered as qualified and of quality by the consumer customers. It is reported that this empirical research was based on a case study, or rather, it was a multi-case research, conducted with consumer customers of franchises offering educational services: CCAA, CNA, FISK, WIZARD, YAZIGI, YES; and with the respective managers of these franchises - of course, the managers who, voluntarily, were willing to participate in the investigative research, by means of a semi-structured chat/interview by conversation guidelines/routes (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018).

Furthermore, it is announced that this field research was conducted in the city of Vitória da Conquista, interior of the state of Bahia, in the aforementioned universe of educational franchises as to consumers, but with the voluntary participation of only a few samples of managers of these educational franchises in that locality. It is believed that some franchised managers, fearing "spies" and/or that the researcher was an agent of another franchise carrying out observation/research with the intention of proposing a benchmark for the competition, did not want to, or were unwilling to, participate in the semi-structured interview.

In summary, this article proposes to think, presenting/confronting what was advertised by the company - or expressed in a purchase and sale/service rendering contract, or in structured advertising campaigns, or even orally announced, at the moment of sale - and the actual perception of the quality of the service rendered by the company compared to the perception of the service received by this consumer customer. Having said that, it is understood that the quality proclaimed by the franchisee manager must be the same quality perceived by the customer/consumer. Otherwise, the quality announced becomes a mere expectation of quality,

which in the future will be, in the consumer, frustrated; producing a damaging effect that raises and increases, cubed, the frustration experienced by this consumer. In this way, the beneficial effect, promised by marketing to the corporate image, to sales and to the health and longevity of the company as a whole - positive corporate brand image, present in the word-of-mouth of the clientele - besides not materializing, will bring a negatively marketed effect.

When promises are made and not kept, the consumer's disappointment with the company is much greater; making the investment, which was marketed, for the customer, as misleading; negatively affecting the consumer's experience with the service when comparing the promises of the contract with the reality of the services received. This generates dissatisfaction and damage to the marketing most desired by any company, the effective, effective, efficient and free word-of-mouth marketing (GIANESI; CORRIA, 2007). When the rebound effect happens in some aspect of service delivery, for the customer, usually, this dissatisfaction spreads unintentionally to the entire service received; the customer propagates and announces his rancorous disappointment to relatives, friends, in social networks, and to whoever has ears to hear; in a generalized negative way, the impact to the corporate image, and to future new customers, is very harmful.

Not to cause dread in beginning administrators who want to join service franchises, but, by way of illustration even, exemplifies how the lack of customer satisfaction are harmful to corporate life and business, considering the mortality rate of small businesses, released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2018), between the years 2013 and 2018, in which 697.1 thousand companies started/opened business, other 762.9 thousand closed their activities. Considering the balance sheet, between the same years - 2013 to 2018 - presented by the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (SEBRAE, 2020) the business mortality rate is equivalent to 29% of the companies in this period. These data do not include the great *sui generis* recession caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, stemming from the SarCov19 virus, since they reflect the closure of companies - based on economic assumptions and other items, factors, and aspects - not discussed here.

While these aforementioned agencies state that more than half of the companies created in this period closed their activities in less than 5 years, it should be emphasized that customer satisfaction enables, provokes and promotes business longevity (GIANESI; CORRIA, 2007; GARVIN, 1992). Whether by ignorance, in the etymological sense of the term of ignorance on the part of administrators before the competition and their own clientele, or by inexperience when implementing a new franchise, the fact is that many companies go to death in the first years of constitution (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018).

So, in order to alert these managers about the importance of keeping customers satisfied, as well as about the necessary and essential investments made in the marketing account to promote their services, as well as to propose better investment practices for this account - safeguarding the capital account, especially in the first years of the company's implementation - it is that it is important to unveil this information, based on the empirical research of Silva Junior (2018; 2021a) which I seek, briefly, to substantiate in this article.

Marketing, services, and quality

We will begin by describing, according to the published and consolidated academic literature in the area of Administration, some examples, definitions and concepts, as to certain terms developed in Silva Junior's research (2018; 2021) which will be cited and revisited in this text. Here, it is intended to raise and propose understandings between the imbricated concepts of Marketing and qualified Services and quality - more specifically the quality perceived by the consumer, the student - without prejudice to concepts, definitions, and ideas, which may, as a satellite, orbit around these main ideas and discussions presented here.

Marketing, among its many existing understandings, can be determined and defined as: i) the activity-action, carried out by the company that manufactures products/offers services, in order to enhance its image and brand, creating, maintaining or changing attitudes and behaviors in consumers; ii) reorganization and/or repositioning of the brand, in the imaginary of the consumer clients of certain products and/or services, in order to influence them as to acquisition, use, or consumption; iii) leveraging and raising the image, before customers, as to the company/brand, positively connecting the company to the consumer's imaginary, positively impacting on their consumption habits as to a particular product or specific service (KOTLER; KELLER, 2019).

Still, according to Kotler and Keller (2019), marketing also involves four basic objectives: i) develop a strong and attractive brand positioning and image; ii) establish attractive incentives for current and possible buyers or future users, of goods, as well as brands and intangible services; iii) provide products and services in an efficient and attractive way; iv) promote the values and brand image so that potential users become aware of its utilities, advantages and differentiations before less attractive competitors.

So, it is in this sense that marketing can also be characterized as guiding and reinforcing favorable behaviors and perceptions about a company/brand. As well as enhancing the corporate image positively portrayed by consumers to themselves and to their social group. We

also conclude that marketing allows us to conspire and promote an attractive brand/product/service/company identity, influencing the consumers' acquisition of tangible products and intangible goods. In summary, marketing can be considered as the power of persuasion that the company impresses on the consumer, when/when the decision to consume this product/service - sometimes more expensive - in detriment of that - cheaper and, supposedly with the same quality - but, that was not settled in the imagetic portfolio of the consumer by the manqueteada influence of this persuasive tool.

The concept of "*Services*" as well as marketing is also polysemic, however, in order to promote better understanding, let's stick to Garvin's (1992) concept, which focuses on service elements and not on the concept of service itself, emphasizing the great involvement and influence that the consumer customer causes in such services; there is a great interaction of the user/demander with the supplier/demander, according to some aspects:

[...] i) production and consumption are simultaneous [...], ii) the customer defines interest, preference, demand, need, convenience [...], iii) production does not hold objective information about its operations [...], iv) service has a degree of variability [...], v) flexibility, context and adaptation need to be contained in the process [...], vi) focus on effectiveness - the goal of service - and then on efficiency - the process of service delivery. ...], v) flexibility, context and adaptation need to be contained in the process [...], vi) focus on effectiveness - service objective - and then on efficiency - service delivery process. (GARVIN, 1992 apud SILVA JUNIOR, 2018, p. 34)

In service, it takes into account the quick adaptation to meet the customer's demands, subjective analyses, and preferences. Since it does not have stock, in order to meet the requirement of available quantity, supply must adapt to demand. Likewise, Paladini (2000), dirges what he considered to be the main characteristics of service, as follows:

[...] i) are intangible [...], ii) there is no way to have stock [...], iii) the human as a productive agent prevails [...], iv) has flexible operational goal [...] according to demand [...], v) the focus should be on the value perceived by the user [...] (PALADINI, 2000 apud SILVA JUNIOR, 2018 p. 35).

To discuss quality in services, it is necessary to discuss the concept of "quality"; to do so, it is necessary to mention, among other important authors, W. Edward Deming (2003), precursor of the TQM movement. This was the author to whom we owe the definition of quality as the reliability of products to the technical specifications that are assigned (DEMING, 2003). For example, it can be said that a product is of quality, for Deming (2003), when this product

fulfills its function in the way the consumer wants. Similarly, a service has quality if it meets or exceeds customer expectations, in relation to what they want. That said, we present below, through Table 1, the necessary requirements for quality, according to the author.

Table 1 – Necessary requirements for quality according to Deming (2003)

1	Constant improvement of products and services;
2	Failures must be faced as a possibility for improvement;
3	Search for the integrity of product and process planning, (decrease resources with inspection);
4	Contracts can no longer be defined based on price, but on long and lasting relationships with suppliers;
5	Search for quality improvement and cost reduction;
6	Instituir programa de treinamento e formação continuada;
7	Substitution of the term "supervision" for "leadership";
8	Organizational climate of comfort and trust;
9	Eliminate barriers between employees in the company;
10	Structural problems cannot be solved by workers alone;
11	Ending management based on work quotas;
12	Give employees pride in their work;
13	Statistical quality control at the operator level;
14	Involve all employees in the process of dialogue with business principles.

Source: Own elaboration based on Deming (2003)

Still, discussing the concepts and assumptions of Deming (2003), shown in Table 1, it is noteworthy that for this author, even the failures must be seen as possibilities/potentialities of constant and continuous improvement, since it is through the "mistakes" that one can (re)evaluate what is not suitable to the corporate strategic planning and thus propose improvements and possibilities of improvement.

Borrowing the logic about quality printed in the academic-administrative literature by Deming (2003), when he stated that all employees should be involved in the process of dialogue with the principles and business objectives, and that the manager needs to find mechanisms that give their employees pride in being part of the team; transposing these statements to services, with the necessary adjustments to this mode, it can be said that the employer needs to provide employees, especially those of services, pride in their work (DEMING, 2003).

In addition, and not to close, we bring Joseph Juran apud Gomes (2004), another classic as to definitions and developments on quality; he defined the quality of a product as the suitability of the intended use, focusing on the customer, and their perceptions, as user of the

product. In other words, quality, for Juran, is the product - service - fulfilling what it proposes. So, bringing this discussion to the provision of services, one can conclude that for a service to be considered qualified and of quality, it needs to execute, with mastery, the entire portfolio of elements that seduced its buyer, to acquire it, there at the beginning of the purchase.

Quality and consumer customers' perceptions of quality

The academic-administrative theory suggests and points to the understanding of quality embedded in the conception of quality perceived by the customer; thus, as being a synonym of the perception of quality cited by the consumer; this influences the entire process of quality measurement; and, therefore, should be the target of the organization's concern (GIANESI; CORREIA, 2007). Even though the reality (the product/service) may be satisfactory to a majority, if the customer is not satisfied with a single aspect - a color, a finish on the product, or the way the employee looked at it, or a date when the service will be delivered - the whole process of improving quality will be lost. From these debates and perspectives that arise the ideas about the "true quality management"; it is found in the measurement of quality apprehended/taken by the customer/consumer (NORMANN, 1993 apud GIANESI; CORREIA, 2007).

So, to heat up this debate, Paladini (2000), in the literary work *Strategic Quality Management*, emphasizes that the receipt of a good or bad service, qualified by the customer-consumer, is not linked to subjectivity, because everyone knows how to characterize differentiating one from the other. The bad service is what it is, there's no way the customer can confuse it. For example, a product/service may have good quality, even excellent quality, according to the customer's perception, and he may not return to the store where he bought it because of the bad customer service he received in the past.

Once this is explained and defined, we move on to the argument that quality has several dimensions, as already evidenced here. And that these dimensions can be subjective. It should be added that the quality measured by the customer, about the service provided, may come, directly, from the mood of this individual, in the act/moment of the purchase. At this point, focus on the objective dimensions of the service to define what quality is. Remembering that, according to Gianesi and Corrêia (2007), one of the factors that influence the perception of a well-provided service, in this customer's view, among other factors, are: reliability, responsibility, empathy, and tangible aspects - the same qualification aspects that were captured in Silva Junior's (2018) field research.

Table 2 – Quality

Criteria	Definition
<i>Tangibility</i>	Appearance of the physical evidences of the service (layout, employees, equipment, classrooms, etc.)
<i>Consistency</i>	Absence of variability in service delivery;
<i>Competence</i>	Skill, technical ability (the greater the client's technical need, the greater the supplier's search for competence - doctor, Ph.D. professor, etc.);
<i>Speed of Attendance</i>	Perception of the waiting time by the customer to get what he wants, (usually negative), unless, somehow, this time is for pleasure or leisure, or even that he understands as important;
<i>Atmosphere/ Service</i>	Perception of the customer, during the process of providing the service, personalized attention, courtesy, quality of classrooms, decoration of the institution/school, organizational climate, and even the friendly atmosphere in the room with colleagues/consumers of the same service;
<i>Flexibility</i>	Quick adaptation of the supplier to changes provoked by the client's needs/desires, or even by the external demands of the market; flexibility in the class project, like Wizard Flex, flexibility in the date, place, and means of providing the service, virtual classes, for example, besides the supply of personalized service packages;
<i>Credibility/ Security</i>	Risk for the customer, when contracting a long-term service, to actually receive it at the agreed time and in the contracted manner; service not provided on time or not provided to the customer's satisfaction is one of the biggest risks for the customer in long-term services;
<i>Access</i>	Easy contact and access to the service provider (physical location, media access - app, phone, internet -, opening hours);
<i>Cost</i>	How much the consumer intends to pay, in money, for the service provided, also including the time spent, the physical and intellectual effort employed, psychological wear (typical of the acquisition of a new language).

Source: Own elaboration based on Gianesi and Correia (2007)

Assuming that vision is an important sense of the consumer customer, which guides him in various aspects branded by advertising and propaganda, then tangibility and consistency will be the first to be involved in the product/service qualification. On the other hand, if competence and credibility do not come first, it is on a par with this one, because it refers to the rational side of the consumer at the moment of buying/contracting the service. The perception of cost, also, goes along with the first placed in the consumer's mind, of course not underestimating the speed of service, the atmosphere of service, flexibility and access to the proposed service (GIANESI; CORRÊIA, 2007).

In view of this scenario, almost as an injunctive recipe for the service manager to be guided by good practices, as well as to propose new and improved ways of offering services, in order to keep his customers satisfied and captive to his enterprise and the services offered there, is that the company is allowed to build a business longevity and a prosperous life, according to its position in the imaginary portfolio of the consumer.

Marketing Investment and the Quality perceived by users

The quality of a product or service has many faces, but it must be guided, as a fundamental orientation, to satisfy the consumers' needs (HARVEY apud GOMES, 2004). The marketing strategy that the company must adopt is to define which dimensions of quality to prioritize. Also, to consolidate the concept of *quality in service*, Gomes (2004 apud SILVA JUNIOR, 2018, p. 37)

[...] service quality will result in the customer's perception compared to his expectations from this service. [...] empathy [...] (feeling that the customer received individual attention) [...], promptness [...] (speed, accuracy) [...], assistance [...] (politeness, competence, communication) [...], tangible qualities of the service [...].

Thus, according to Gianesi and Corrêia (2007), four factors may possibly influence customer expectations to designate service quality as "good" or "bad": i) word-of-mouth communication, ii) previous experience, iii) personal needs, iv) external communication. The human being, who is a social being, does not go unscathed by the social-group influences imputed to him; these points/criteria are seen by this service consumer when they go to make their own trade-off¹ between competing companies; a moment in which the customer highlights the company that wins his trust/buys from the many that exist in the market.

Thus, and then, word-of-mouth communication, previous experience, personal needs and external communication, are factors that influence customer satisfaction, especially when it comes to satisfaction in services. According to Kotler (1999) and Kotler and Armstrong (1998; 2004) the value perceived by the customer is the result of the difference between the total expected value and the total cost involved in the transaction. Valesca Persch Reichelt, in her doctoral thesis, states that

[...] for all customers, choice is influenced by perceptions of value, which are formed primarily by perceptions of quality, price, and convenience. These perceptions tend to be relatively cognitive, objective and rational (for

¹ A conflict situation between different paths/choices.

example, there may be little discussion about the price of a product or its objective attributes (RUST; ZEITHAML; LEMON, 2001, p. 19 apud REICHELT, 2007, p. 47).

Hence, the manager needs his customers' satisfaction so that his business stays alive, maintaining a coherence between profitability and business longevity. Knowing that every investment must be allocated efficiently, effectively, and effectively; the manager, then, must prioritize a productive marketing, which brings greater visibility, leverage, and corporate profitability, not only for the company's coffers, but also for the brand's image, especially before the consumer customer.

Deciding on Marketing Investments

According to Simon (1979), in his Limited Rationality Theory - limited by: a) available information; b) individual cognition of each manager; c) time required for imperative decision making and at the precise moment -, it is necessary that the manager knows what his clients perceive as quality criteria, in the services offered by his company. According to Simon (1979 apud BRETAS PEREIRA, 1997, p. 13), when talking about decision making within the business organization, he infers the following:

Simon concluded that rationality depends on the context and is limited by it. Therefore, behavior, even when viewed as rational, has many elements of incongruence and never occurs in a predictable and ideal way.

The goal of a good business manager should be to be aware of and choose what are quality requirements for the customer, which ones best satisfy their needs and desires. When this manager is faced with trade-offs, between distant quality points, he will understand which decision to make. This statement is supported because this manager, who already knows what his customer prefers and/or prefers in his products/services, will decide more accurately in his guidelines to follow, since this decision will be based on the consumption habits of his customers and well known by the manager.

Knowing that, also according to Simon (1979), there is no right or right decision, there is the decision that best fits and meets the needs at that time (society/culture/ethos¹) of that

¹ *ethos* – term derived from the Greek meaning behavior, moral character, custom; a set of fundamental habits and/or customs of a being, an organization, a people, etc.; culture/values/ideas/beliefs, characteristic of a given collectivity, region, or even a time.

demand (target audience), in which these clients/consumers are inserted. Then, the manager who best knows his customers will choose that which best satisfies them.

The purely rational decision - the perfect solution - is an arduous and almost intangible proposition. Even in the limited rational decision - the satisfactory solution for the moment - there are several obstacles that prolong its reach. Sin Oih Yu (2011, p. 23) talks about corporate decision, and about decision from the perspective of business heuristics, here is what he says about the topic:

People guide themselves by practical rules or mental models when making decisions. [...] These strategies that seek to simplify the decision-making process are called heuristics. [...] For example: when we evaluate an employee, we may remember the most recent events better, which may not reflect on the employee's overall result during the entire period we were supposed to evaluate.

Managing, heuristically, must be thought of by the managers and employees of a service providing company. Thus, these service providers will understand that quality service does not depend only on a single point, but rather, on the junction of several aspects added together. Knowing that these models are archetypes/short paths to evaluate and calculate, the arrival at a certain point of quality, considered as satisfactory or to be improved, in the company. And, based on the premise that in services, the driving force is essentially human; then, motivating employees to pursue the same end, as well as recognizing the effort of this worker engaged in improving the quality of service, is an excellent start to implementing TQM in services.

The fact that the manager is responsible for the final decision (Bretas Pereiros, 2010) should not be forgotten. The manager is the one who hits the hammer as to the possible quality printed in his services. The administrator is responsible for managing and deciding where and when to allocate resources. It is important for the service manager to know how to publicize his services, allocating them correctly. Furthermore, identifying what is essential and peripheral attribute in the product/service is strategic knowledge for the company and especially for the manager of the "head decisions". Since this information will influence several, if not all, companies/businesses. The manager must make investments in the promotion of his services guided by the understanding of the importance of his customers; from what they understand as qualified and quality. Set your strategic guidelines, thus marking what is important to the consumer - not necessarily the strengths of the company -, but what is considered important to the customer should be very important to the company.

Final remarks

It was sought, with this article, based on the field research of Silva Junior (2018; 2021a), to ascertain whether the perceived quality and consumer satisfaction consubstantiate with the investments made in Marketing by the company, according to the quality assessed by managers. In the complete research, among other aspects, some questions are highlighted such as: i) what motivated the customer to choose an educational franchise and not the competitor, ii) what qualifies and satisfies this customer, iii) what were the "order winning" items/investments in quality and satisfaction found, by the consumer, in the educational services received, among other points and aspects.

We start by tracing a consumer profile, according to Silva Junior's research (2018; 2021a) in order to think who is the consumer of these franchised educational services, revealing the following i) most of the Conquistense users of English courses are female, ii) they are not yet 20 years old iii) they have not finished high school, iv) they only study and v) they do not work. Thus, an important information about this final consumer came to light: vi) they only study and do not work, being supported by third parties, but these direct-final consumers of the services, despite not being the ones who pay for the course, suffer psychosocial influence, and influence the payers as to the choice of the franchise to be attended (SILVA JUNIOR, 2021a).

Still, analyzing the subjective satisfaction of these consumers, in contrast to the investments made by the managers, according to the results about the quality of the services consumed, it was noticed that two aspects were disharmonious among them. A) the consumer wants smaller courses, more specific courses and with a higher degree of educational interaction and entertainment, while B) the local manager, serves a "canned" product, put from top to bottom that, hardly, will be able to please most of his clientele and b) make the necessary changes to please the local public, according to the managers, is not allowed because of the standard that a franchise should have.

Additionally, discussing points A and B, it was found that the four basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening and understanding in English, offered as the core of the educational service, are perceived in different ways and at different levels of importance by the final consumers of the services. There are course participants who do not care about the four skills offered in the service; for them, the primacy of the service should be in learning to speak and listen in English, relegating to another moment, or even to a second plan, the other two skills mentioned.

Thus, even knowing the difficulties of the franchise managers in changing the "canned" pattern, but in order to meet this consumer demand, we propose the creation of shorter and quicker courses, focused on the faster acquisition of knowledge and centered, first of all, on the ability of speaking and listening in English. Taking for granted that the client must be the center of the product/service demand (GIANESI; CORRIA, 2007; GARVIN, 1992; PALADINI, 1999; 2000). This being the case, it is already a strategy regarding investments in marketing and dissemination by the franchise; dissemination of services/courses focused on the two skills, for more training time, and less course time.

Also, the final consumer indicated that the teaching method, the franchise's reputation, technical competence, and trust, among other aspects, are "order-winning" items (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018; 2021a). These consumers signaled that subjective and motivational factors such as socialization and status are items evaluated by the rigor of the quality perceived by this consumerist. It is noted, that the administrator has no control over the "socialization"¹, resulting from a side effect, by making their services available, however, if it is a positive factor for their business, but, they can interfere as to the positive "status" conferred to the student consumer of educational services. So, managers cannot omit to think of ways to take advantage of this factor.

Still, when it comes to perceived quality and satisfaction in this research, it was possible to know some of the consumers' positions, according to the feedbacks on this subject. We obtained feedbacks of desire, conformity, expectation, agility, excellence in quality, novelty and playfulness, encouragement and challenge, apprehension and caution, pleasure and satisfaction, apathy and contradiction, organization and aesthetics, cost and expense, conversation classes, language exchange, socialization, affection, flexibility, and dissatisfaction. It is known that the manager's job, in order to reach excellence in quality, is not easy. However, in a market of such generic and similar services, one of the alternatives to stand out before the consumer public is the investment in quality and, consequently, the consumer's satisfaction.

We conclude that, according to the feedbacks received from consumers about the perceived quality, in general, the consumer understands the investigated services as qualified, having some reservations and incremental improvements to be implemented. Still, franchise managers have little autonomy to implement changes in teaching methods and investments in

¹ See more on this topic in *Talking about human formation at the interface with identity and difference* by Silva Junior and Barreto (2021), an article that discusses the purpose of market-oriented educational formation, as a training for the labor market, to the detriment of a formation that provides socialization and subjectivation of individuals.

quality dispersed by the franchise, because they are "canned" services, leaving it to compete for differential in the good service, in the prompt meeting of individual needs, in the consistency of service, in the competence made available, in the developed atmosphere.

Continuing in this line of thought, and trying to summarize the studies of Silva Junior (2018; 2021a), it is stated that I) most consumers came to the franchises through word-of-mouth marketing and not through advertising and/or publicity; II) consumers prefer learning methodologies that focus first on understanding and speaking English, and then on reading and writing in the language; III) the administrator focuses in his advertisements on offering services by linking aspects such as i) air-conditioning - air-conditioning in a cold city like conquest is not attractive - ii) offering car parking to the student - to the consumer this should be a basic condition to be able to study, and the administrator iii) does not highlight in his advertisements the flexible and malleable methodology focused on conversation; IV) consumers consider the surveyed franchises, in general, as qualified in what they propose to do, since most of them would indicate to others the course taken there.

Based on Silva Junior's research (2018; 2021a), it is warned that if this manager insists on investing in marketing that are labeled by customers as "unimportant", or the market niche in which this company operates considers "uninteresting", besides incurring in obvious financial waste, it may generate the rebound effect, and advertising becomes negative advertising against the franchise. Considering that, much worse than an investment with no return, is an investment with negative return to the company's image; remembering that the corporate image is part of the intangible assets of any company, both before its competitors and before its customer base. In conclusion, but not ending the discussion, it is recommended to read the monographic research in full or at least its data summarized in an article, in order to know the context in which the research was conducted, as well as to understand the circumstances and conjunctures of the field and research realization (SILVA JUNIOR, 2018; 2021).

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