

# Quality and Satisfaction – The case of Nautical Tourist Services in the Region of Alto Douro Vinhateiro – Portugal

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** – Organizations of tourist services, in the context of económica and financial crisis, seeking to combine the concept of quality to the satisfaction of internal customers (employees) and external customers (tourists), so as to ensure the provision of a personalized service excellence. This paper aims to provide an overview of the quality of the tourist services effected in the nautical Alto Douro Vinhateiro (ADV) – Portugal.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This project work was applied to 117 internal customers (employees), through the application of a survey of various nautical tourist services organizations in the ADV.

**Findings** – The results obtained demonstrate that there are aspects to be improved in these organizations, so that employees feel satisfied, namely: concern for employees; specific training; working conditions; greater dialogue between supervisors and employees; allocation of workload and time off.

**Originality/value** – The employees' satisfaction (internal customers) hasn't been studied in nautical tourist services, due to the fact that the main approach has been to analyse the external customers satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Quality, Satisfaction, Nautical Tourist Services, Region of Alto Douro Vinhateiro - Portugal

**Paper type:** Case study

## **INTRODUCTION**

The concept of tourism has been studied by several authors (eg Hall, 2005; Page and Connell, 2006), since it is an area that is constantly growing and is considered as an increasingly expressive leisure activity of the current society. Tourism is a global sector that establishes relationships with several sectors, such as political, social and environmental, which spreads to other economic activities, generating a revenue and expenditure cycle and contributing to employment, increased income and the development of regions and the country. According to Cunha (2013), tourism encompasses activities carried out by people traveling and staying in places outside their usual setting for a successive period of not more than one year for recreational, business or other purposes.

Regarding quality, Martín (2000) and Watkins (2006) consider that quality is a purpose of both social life and organizational management and it is a substantial condition of competitiveness. Quality in the tourism sector has been a major concern of the organizations managers, due to the high competition between the various tourist services and the need to obtain competitive advantages, namely in terms of professionalism, innovation, human resources, information and communication technologies and marketing (Dias et al., 2009).

According to Sousa (2002), and since 2001, this region is considered a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, being the first wine-growing region in the region of Alto Douro Vinhateiro (ADV) demarcated and controlled in the World.

Tourism service organizations are constantly looking for to apply quality tools to their services because only quality and personalized services will enable organizations to achieve a level of stability and development that will allow them to survive and remain competitive (Gouthier et al., 2012). To this end, tourism service organizations will have to consider and meet the needs and expectations of both internal (employees) customers and external (tourist) customers, as these are the essence of organizations (Arnett and McLane, 2002 , Lashley et al., 2005, Noone et al., 2003, Wall set al., 2011).

Bearing in mind what was mentioned above, it is intended to evaluate quality in the tourist services, more specifically the nautical services, offered by the ADV region. Thus, this research has as main objectives: 1) verify if there is quality in the nautical tourist services in the opinion of the internal clients (collaborators); 2) recognize quality in tourism through the variables under analysis (Safety, Hygiene, Accessibility, Transparency, Authenticity and Harmony); and 3) Analyze if the gender of the employees influences the quality in the provision of nautical tourist services.

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, a questionnaire survey was conducted for employees, a sample of tourism companies from the ADV region and interviews with the hierarchical superiors, in order to recognize the quality of nautical tourism services in the region. ADV. This instrument of data collection was adapted from the study of Eraqi (2006).

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### ***Quality in Tourist Services***

In the tourism industry two terms prevail: customer satisfaction and the quality of services. These terms are relevant since, in order to achieve the quality of tourist services, customer satisfaction and the satisfaction of the employees of the organization must be related, since only then can a personalized and excellent service be provided for all (Salleh et al. al., 2009).

Employees who are more motivated and satisfied assume a greater commitment to service delivery, performing them with more quality, commitment, efficiency and greater concern with customers (Yoon and Suh, 2003).

The motivation and the satisfaction of the employees will also affect the profitability of the organizations, since they increase the future intentions of purchase and the loyalty of the clients; influence customer behavior; and make customers willing to pay higher prices for the same services. For this reason, the quality of services results from a process that implies meeting the needs, requirements and expectations of the customers, at an acceptable price and according to the determinants of quality: safety, hygiene, accessibility, transparency, authenticity and harmony ( World Tourism Organization - WTO, 2003).

According to Ko and Pastore (2004), the quality of services can be understood either through its tangibility, because it is what the client sees and feels, or through its intangibility, that is, the affability and cordiality of the employees, who attend customers. For this purpose, it is essential that employees feel always motivated, satisfied and that the organization knows how to optimize the talent of its employees (Castelli, 2003).

While that in the prespective of Zeithaml et al. (2009) and Kotler et al. (2013), the quality of services is the comparison between satisfaction of needs and overcoming customer expectations, that is, the comparison between the subjective evaluations of the clients and the expectations of the service and the realistic perceptions of the performance of the service.

For Eraqi (2005) and Yang (2007), the quality of services is a crucial factor for the competitiveness of the tourism industry, since it promotes tourist products and tourism activities, developing tourism in a sustainable way, creating increasing productivity, lowering costs, and increasing market share.

The tourism services face several challenges that require frequent change and innovation, in order to conquer an increasingly competitive market and with more offer (Hu et al., 2009). Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson, 2009). These challenges will become profitable for tourism services and for clients, as they will reduce costs, lessen the competitive market, improve employee performance and increase sustainability.

The theme of quality related to the area of tourist services and the perspective of employees is a scarce area, in terms of studies carried out both in the national panorama and in the international panorama. Table 1 presents some international studies on the subject under study.

From the studies analyzed, it can be concluded that the quality of the service is related to satisfaction, since the perceived quality of the clients can be boosted, through the positive behavior of the employees, in order to generate good practices of human resources management and a service excellence. However, in the studies of Sharpley and Forster (2003), Eraqi (2005) and Yunus (2012) there was a low satisfaction or even a dissatisfaction of the employees, due to the lack of encouragement and recognition of the hierarchical superiors so that their workers can be creative, innovative, participate in the decision-making process, feel self-fulfilling, and make a commitment to the company.

Table 1 – Summary of Scientific Studies

<b>Authors/ Year</b>	<b>Studies</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Methodologies</b>	<b>Findings / Conclusions</b>
<b>Sharpley e Forster (2003)</b>	<i>The implications of hotel employee attitudes for the development of quality tourism: The case of Cyprus</i>	Cyprus	Evaluate and value the importance of employees to increase the competitiveness of the organization;  Ascertain their attitudes in the role of service delivery and to meet customer needs	Application of questionnaires to employees	Employees only work for money, (without any kind of commitment). This is due to the fact that the hotel industry in the country is the one that offers the best salaries; Managers have to think of intrinsic rewards for employees to feel self-fulfilling and to make commitment to the company

<b>Tsaur e Lin (2004)</b>	<i>Promoting service quality in tourist hotels: The role of HRM practices and service behavior</i>	China	Relate the management of human resources, the degree of knowledge of the service and the perception of quality service in hotels	Application of questionnaires to 203 employees and 272 clients (tourists) of the hotels.	HRM practices have an indirect effect on customer perception and a direct effect on employee behavior
<b>Tsaur, Chang e Wu (2004)</b>	<i>Promoting Service Quality with Employee Empowerment in Tourist Hotels: The Role of Service Behavior</i>	China	Analyze the relationship between employee empowerment and quality services in tourist hotels	Application of questionnaires to 203 employees and 272 clients (tourists) of the hotels.	Employee empowerment is related to quality in services and four dimensions of quality in services: reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy
<b>Snipes, Oswald, LaTour e Armenakis (2005)</b>	<i>The effects of specific job satisfaction facets on customer perceptions of service quality: an employee-level analysis</i>	USA	Determine which specific aspects of job satisfaction have the greatest effect on the client regarding the quality of services	Application of questionnaires to 351 employees and 8667 clients of Higher Education	The aspects that have the greatest influence on job satisfaction are: customer satisfaction, satisfaction through benefits and satisfaction with work itself
<b>Eraqi (2005)</b>	<i>Tourism services quality (TourServQual) in Egypt The viewpoints of external and internal customers</i>	Egypt	Identify from the perspective of internal customers (employees) and external clients (tourists) the quality of tourist services in Egypt	Application of questionnaires to 500 employees and 700 tourists	Quality can serve as a guideline in the tourism sector and influence the decision-making of tourism services; Low internal and external customer satisfaction
<b>Yee, Yeung e Cheng (2008)</b>	<i>The impact of employee satisfaction on quality and profitability in high-contact service industries</i>	China	Recognize the impact of employee satisfaction on their operational performance, in the services sector with direct contact with customers	Empirical study with 206 industries in the service sector	Employee satisfaction is intertwined with service quality and customer satisfaction playing a significant role in the organization

<p><b>Yee, Yeung e Cheng (2009)</b></p>	<p><i>An empirical study of employee loyalty, service quality and firm performance in the service industry</i></p>	<p>China</p>	<p>Observe the relationship between employee loyalty, quality of service, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and the organization's profitability</p>	<p>Application of questionnaires to 210 service industries</p>	<p>The effect of the employee's loyalty was reflected in the organization's profit, since it is through the quality service provided that originates the satisfaction of the customer and their loyalty to the company</p>
<p><b>Ivyanno e Nila (2012)</b></p>	<p><i>The Influence of Service Quality and Tourist Satisfaction on Future Behavioral Intentions: The case study of Borobudur Temple as a UNESCO World Culture Heritage Destination</i></p>	<p>Indonesia</p>	<p>To study the influence of service quality and the satisfaction of tourists on the future behavior of domestic tourists</p>	<p>Application of questionnaires to 200 domestic tourists</p>	<p>The quality of the service has a positive influence on the satisfaction of the tourists, being the tangible dimension the most relevant in the quality of the service</p>
<p><b>Yunus (2012)</b></p>	<p><i>The Relationship between Internal Satisfaction and External Satisfaction amongst Hotel Customers in Malaysia</i></p>	<p>Malasya</p>	<p>Understand the relationship between internal satisfaction (employees) and external satisfaction (clients)</p>	<p>Application of 120 questionnaires to employees and clients (tourists) of hotels</p>	<p>Little satisfaction or lack of it either in internal customers (employees) or in external clients (tourists)</p>

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *Problems and Objectives*

The problematic of this study is the global analysis of the following key question: Is there quality in the nautical tourism services offered by the ADV region of quality? On the other hand, we also want to know if the gender of the employees influences the quality in the provision of nautical tourist services?

Thus, the present study intends to provide an overview of the quality of the nautical tourist services carried out in the ADV region, with the internal clients (collaborators). To this end, the following specific objectives have been defined:

- 1) Verify if there is quality in the nautical tourist services in the opinion of the internal clients (collaborators);
- 2) Recognize quality in tourism through the variables under analysis (Safety, Hygiene, Accessibility, Transparency, Authenticity and Harmony);
- 3) Analyze if the gender of the employees influences the quality in the provision of nautical tourist services.

## ***Method***

### *Participants*

This survey was attended by 117 employees of the nautical tourism services, referring to all nautical tourism services organizations operating in the ADV region. The sample consists of a significant number of employees belonging to the male gender; single; aged 30-39 years; with secondary school qualification; with fixed term contract; having the job of waiters / bar; who have worked in the same tourist service for at least 2 years; other professional activity; and have between 1-10 years of professional experience.

### *Study Variables*

The variables of the study are formed by the six tourism quality standards (Protection and Security, Hygiene, Accessibility, Transparency, Authenticity and Harmony), which according to the World Tourism Organization (2003) should be considered in tourism products / services decisions, in order to create consistency and harmony in the quality process, and as Eraqi (2006) verified in his study (see Table 2)

The **variable Protection, Safety and Hygiene** is related to the norms of protection, safety and hygiene established by law, which should not neglect the integrity and life of employees and all corporate stakeholders and should be considered as standards for quality.

According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA, 2014), effective management of occupational safety and health is one of the main factors of constant success of companies, ie companies should invest on the protection, safety and hygiene in the workplace, so as to guarantee stability in productivity, as well as quality of services provided and satisfaction of both external and internal customers.

Hamel and Prahalad (1993) argue that long-term competitiveness and survival of companies depend on the attitudes and behavior of managers, since they must maximize benefits, take advantage of new opportunities and minimize negative effects on protection, safety and hygiene of all members of the company.

Table 2 – Variables in study

Variable	Statements in the Survey
<b>Protection, Safety and Hygiene</b>	<p>Q20 - The physical appearance of co-workers is important for the work they do</p> <p>Q27 - The company offers all the necessary tools (uniform, mobile phone, transport, etc.) to work</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>Q8 - The work I do is flexible.</p> <p>Q13 - The internet, computer, mobile phone and other information and communication technologies help to reduce costs for the company</p> <p>Q14 - New technologies help to communicate with your colleagues</p> <p>Q15 - Communication among all helps maintain good customer service</p> <p>Q19 - The company premises (Wc, lockers, cafeteria, etc.) are good</p> <p>Q21 - Flexibility at work makes my colleagues perform better</p> <p>Q22 - The service provided will be more credible if there is good communication</p> <p>Q26 - Work shifts are selected based on preferences</p>
<b>Transparency</b>	<p>Q3 - Effective leadership results in rewards and praise</p> <p>Q6 - The compliments of the tasks performed are carried out in front of my colleagues</p> <p>Q7 - The praises of the tasks performed are done in a particular way</p> <p>Q11 - Praise from customers gives me motivation</p> <p>Q12 - Praise from my bosses gives me motivation</p> <p>Q16 - The training required for this job was given at the beginning of the contract</p> <p>Q17 - Training to focus on the services I provide to clients was also given</p> <p>Q23 - The exchange of information influences the attitude of my colleagues at work</p>
<b>Authenticity</b>	<p>Q9 - The work done by me adapts to the customer needs</p> <p>Q24 - My colleagues have the appropriate skills / abilities to meet the expectations</p> <p>Q25 - The work environment allows to create something new (innovation) for the company</p> <p>Q29 - Mycolleagues will make this job their professional career</p>
<b>Harmony</b>	<p>Q1 - The relationship with my colleagues is good</p> <p>Q2 - The relationship with all members of the company is good (including bosses)</p> <p>Q4 - Salary is not the only reward I receive at the end of the month</p> <p>Q5 - My salary is paid on the agreed date</p> <p>Q10 - Respect prevails both in the relationship with clients and in the relationship between colleagues</p> <p>Q20 - The behavior of colleagues is also important</p> <p>Q28 - Tasks should be done right at the first time</p> <p>Q30 - empresaMy colleagues' opinions are important to the company</p> <p>Q31 - My colleagues are happy to work for this company</p>

In business, the human resources department is responsible for safety, security and hygiene and it must implement people management policies so that responsibilities are shared by all members; effective responses to these responsibilities; ensure that all members take part in policies and business measures (CCOHS, 2005).

The **variable Accessibility** is related to the accessibility of both communication and physical barriers and services, ie all members of companies should be able to freely access and use tourism products and services.



For Bueno (2009), the survival of modern companies requires a constant process of improvement and qualification of communication, since good communication encompasses permanent involvement and commitment on the part of all members (Cunha et al., 2007).

Companies must invest on the conditions that boost individual and organizational skills, considering people as a key element of success. To this end, companies must develop human capital through training, flexibility, interest and commitment; to develop structural capital, that is, to define internal structures that allow the exchange of knowledge, to sustain the relational networks of the members, both vertically and horizontally, and to develop relational capital, in order to obtain a more valuable knowledge, innovation and creativity (Santos, 2004).

The **Transparency variable** is related to the legitimacy of the expectations and needs of clients and employees, that is, the actions performed by hierarchical superiors and employees must be transparent and clear, so as not to raise doubts and to be well understood by all.

Human resources management must implement transparent and clear actions, ranging from recruitment and selection activities; retention of human capital through policies tailored to the needs of the company and its members; empowerment through training to the development and motivation of employees through incentives, rewards, praise, feedback, among others (Kaya et al., 2010).

The **variable Authenticity** is related to the satisfaction of customers and employees, that is, the service provided must be of authentic, true and innovative quality.

Akdere (2009) states that companies are responsible for ensuring the evolution of human capital, improving productivity and organizational performance, so that the services delivery is carried out with quality, differentiation and innovation. These factors will lead companies to a path of success and stability, as well as ensuring the satisfaction of customers and employees.

The **Harmony variable** is related to the harmony in the work environment and the harmony in the relationship between employees, including the hierarchical superiors. The relationship must be guided by respect, recognition, satisfaction and commitment.

Harmony in the work environment encompasses the rational component and the emotional component, that is, in addition to the organizational objectives that must be achieved, companies must also consider the emotions, well-being, empathy, involvement and satisfaction, both personal and professional (Goleman et al., 2002).

Thus, it is intended to determine if these variables in study influence the quality of tourism services in the ADV region and how this will be reflected in the perspective of internal customers (employees).

### *Collection Tools*

As a method of application the questionnaire survey was used using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 - I totally disagree 2 - Partially disagree 3 - Neither agree nor disagree 4 - Partially agree 5 - I totally agree), so that the employees can show their degree of agreement and two interviews were carried out with an owner and a managing partner of an establishment located in the ADV region, where the responses were grouped according to the variables studied in the survey by questionnaire.

## **RESULTS**

### *Characterization of the Alto Douro Vinhateiro Region*

The region of Northern Portugal is a region with a vast wealth, where diverse cultural and natural heritage, in particular the Atlantic and Mediterranean cultures. Most of its territory is located in the watershed of Douro, Minho, Lima, Cávado and Ave rivers (Turismo de Portugal, 2012).

According to the North Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRN, 2015), the Northern region is composed of 86 municipalities and 1426 parishes. The municipalities are divided into eight Inter-Municipal Communities (CIM), which form the level III of the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistical Purposes (NUTS), which includes the Douro region. This region of the Douro encompasses the ADV region, which comprises 13 municipalities and represents 10% of the Douro Demarcated Region, corresponding to approximately 25,000 ha (Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of the North - DRAPN, 2015).

Instituto Português e de Transportes Marítimos (IPTM, 2015) reports that in the waterway of the Douro River, which extends over 210 km, there are approximately 52 vessels to operate, with a capacity of up to 350 people.

In 2001, the ADV region was classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage in the category of "Cultural, Evolutionary and Living Landscape" (DRAPN, 2015) and encompasses diverse natural values (scarcity of fertile soil, scarcity of water, vegetation and Mediterranean crops; (river, vineyard, light, color and the famous river Douro) and cultural values (railroad, imposing landscape, terraces and walls in shale and different techniques of planting of the vineyard) (Cristovão et al., 2005; Perafita, 2007; DRAPN, 2015).

Nautical tourism has as its main motivation "to enjoy an active trip in contact with water, with the possibility of performing all kinds of nautical activities, in leisure or in competition" (Turismo de Portugal, 2006, p.9). According to the same entity, the main activities of nautical tourism are: sailing, windsurfing, surfing, diving, rowing and cruise travel. The nautical tourism market comprises two aspects: the nautical recreation and the nautical sport. In the present study, recreational boating is considered, since the main objective is to analyze tourism service companies that provide recreational boating services. The nautical recreation is related to nautical sports experiences, as a form of leisure and entertainment and represents approximately 85% of all nautical trips (Turismo de Portugal, 2006).

For Jesus et al. (2004), CCDRN (2015) and Pessoa (2008), the ADV region has a high potential to be one of the main regions of nautical tourism. To this end, the unique landscapes, traditions, culture, wines and gastronomy of the region contribute.

#### ***Analysis of the results obtained in the inquiry by questionnaire***

Regarding the variables that should be considered in the tourism services decisions, in order to create consistency and harmony in the quality process, it is emphasized that the collaborators agree with most of the statements presented in the questionnaire survey, except with the affirmation Q27 - "The company offers all the necessary tools (clothes, mobile phone, transport, etc.) to work", this means that although there are positive factors in companies (satisfaction, respect, good communication, good facilities, among others) to be improved by companies, such as: concern for workers; specific training (languages); concern with working conditions (diversification of menus, more plans of activities: visits to the museum, parks, rock engravings, sport fishing, sailing, rowing); more dialogue between managers and employees; frequent maintenance of vessels and this should be done in the low season; assignment of hours and breaks and age discrimination.

Regarding the highest averages of statements for both men and women, they are in Q11 - "Customer praise gives me motivation" and Q20 - "The behavior of colleagues is also important", which means that employees think in a similar way about work situations, in particular the praise they receive from customers and the behavior of colleagues, regardless their gender.

The lowest averages of affirmations in the masculine gender are in Q4 - "Pay is not the only reward I receive at the end of the month" (3.00) and Q27 - "The Company offers all the necessary tools (uniform, mobile phone, transport, etc.) to work "(3.02). In women, the lowest averages are in Q16 "The training required for this job was given at the beginning of the contract" and in Q27 - "The company offers all the necessary tools (uniform, mobile phone, transport, etc.) to work "(3.00).

The lessons that can be drawn are that in both the male and the female gender, the respondent employees feel that the compliments made by the clients impart motivation to them to continue with the provision of a personalized and quality service. It is also important for employees to feel that peer behavior is appropriate for the workplace, ie behavior based on respect, good communication and flexibility.

On the other hand, the aspects with which male respondents are in less agreement are the fact that wages are the only reward they receive at the end of the month and that the company does not offer all the necessary tools to provide the service.

In female respondents, the aspects with which they are in less agreement are related to the training that is not provided at the beginning of the contract and to the fact that the company does not offer all the necessary tools to provide the service. As seen earlier, these are some of the aspects that companies need to change to please the internal customers (employees) and consequently the external customers.

The objective of this paper is to verify the differences, to know to what extent they are statistically significant and to determine the relationship between the respondent employees' gender and the quality of nautical tourism services in the ADV region. For this purpose, a hypothesis test (t-student test) was performed on the difference of means for each statement (see Table 3).

The hypotheses defined for the t Student test are the following:

- H0: The average of the perceptions of the male workers is equal to the average of the perceptions of the female workers
- H1: The average of the perceptions of the male workers is different from the average of the perceptions of the female workers

The test values do not allow rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) in the statements of the questionnaire, since  $p\text{-value} > 0,05$ , in other words, the average employee of the perceptions of the male is not significantly different from the average of the employees perceptions of the female gender. Despite the averages of both statements did not show significant differences, female employees are mostly above the averages of the collaborators of the masculine gender.

Table 3 – Test t-student

	Descriptive Statistics				Statistic T	Significance Probability (Sig)	Confidence Interval at 95%	
	Male		Female				Inf.	Sup.
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation				
Q1	4.14	0.654	4.12	0.840	0.136	0.892	- 0.255	0.292
Q2	3.83	0.904	3.94	0.810	- 0.669	0.505	- 0.427	0.211
Q3	3.71	0.890	3.78	0.945	- 0.423	0.673	- 0.410	0.265
Q4	3.00	1.265	3.16	1.173	- 0.686	0.494	- 0.609	0.296
Q5	4.00	0.823	4.20	0.775	- 1.311	0.193	- 0.492	0.100
Q6	3.58	0.946	3.57	0.985	0.040	0.968	- 0.348	0.363
Q7	3.30	1.022	3.12	1.125	0.931	0.354	- 0.209	0.580
Q8	3.83	0.870	3.94	0.810	- 0.685	0.495	- 0.420	0.204
Q9	4.14	0.821	3.96	0.848	1.131	0.260	- 0.132	0.483
Q10	3.80	0.845	3.88	0.791	- 0.517	0.606	- 0.383	0.224
Q11	4.21	0.775	4.25	0.627	- 0.321	0.749	-0.307	0.221
Q12	4.05	0.867	3.98	0.905	0.395	0.694	- 0.261	0.391
Q13	3.85	1.011	3.86	0.895	- 0.079	0.937	- 0.370	0.341
Q14	3.92	0.882	4.22	0.730	- 1.097	0.059	- 0.594	0.011
Q15	4.09	0.799	4.22	0.832	- 0.823	0.412	-0.425	0.176
Q16	3.33	1.155	3.00	1.233	1.503	0.136	- 0.106	0.773
Q17	3.33	1.086	3.20	1.200	0.647	0.519	- 0.283	0.557
Q18	3.61	0.892	3.73	0.723	- 0.778	0.438	- 0.423	0.185
Q19	3.82	0.959	4.06	0.925	- 1.366	0.175	- 0.590	0.108
Q20	4.18	0.763	4.47	0.612	- 2.209	0.029	- 0.548	- 0.030
Q21	3.70	0.822	3.88	0.887	- 1.169	0.245	- 0.500	0.129
Q22	3.95	0.793	4.22	0.757	- 1.802	0.074	- 0.548	0.026
Q23	3.89	0.747	3.96	0.720	- 0.488	0.627	- 0.338	0.205
Q24	3.73	0.921	3.55	0.832	1.082	0.281	-0.148	0.504
Q25	3.38	1.049	3.41	1.023	- 0.170	0.865	- 0.416	0.350
Q26	3.05	1.115	3.02	0.990	0.130	0.896	- 0.367	0.418
Q27	3.02	1.00	3.00	1.114	0.077	0.938	- 0.373	0.403
Q28	3.89	0.914	3.82	0.865	0.423	0.673	- 0.259	0.400
Q29	3.48	0.808	3.29	1.026	1.125	0.263	- 0.145	0.527
Q30	3.38	1.034	3.47	1.027	-0.478	0.634	- 0.473	0.289
Q31	3.67	0.810	3.76	0.790	- 0.656	0.513	- 0.394	0.198

***Analysis of the results obtained in the interviews***

Here we present two interviews with an owner and managing partner of an establishment located in the ADV region. Table 4 shows the responses according to the quality variables in tourism analyzed in the present study and with the aspects that should be improved for a quality service delivery.

As can be seen, the aspects to be improved so that the nautical tourism service in the ADV region increases, in a sustainable and qualitative way, are related to the improvement of the infrastructures, both roads and accomodation establishments; investment or updating in new technologies, namely related with social networks and programs of dissemination of the existing tourist offer; training of employees, namely table / counter service training and languages); reinforce advertising through the

word of mouth; improvement of the service provided and the good image of the company; establishment of a working schedule that respects the legislation and is not only seasonal, as well as the equitable distribution of working hours, considering days off and weekends.

Table 4 – Interviews

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Interviewee 1</b>	<b>Interviewee 2</b>
<b>Protection, Safety and Hygiene</b>	Improvement of infrastructures	Improvement of infrastructures (e g trains, Road 222, increasing of the numebr of bed-places)
<b>Acessibility</b>	Increase the supply with good quality New technologies help reducing communication costs among all members of the company	Dissemination on the Internet of information about the ADV region. Internet promotion of the diverse tourist offer in the ADV region.
<b>Transparency</b>	Lack of training of nautical operators	Lack of employee training (eg table service and counter service). Increased advertising through "word of mouth"
<b>Autenticity</b>	Improvement of service provided so as to meet the costumer's needs	Improvement of the company's good image in order to attract more tourists
<b>Harmony</b>	Establishment of a non seasonal work schedule Implementation of working hours according the legislation.	Establishment of a non seasonal work schedule that is not seasonal. Improvement of working conditions. Equal distribution of working hours.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In the current context, where the economic and financial crisis takes on a global dimension, few sectors of activity are able to survive, one of them is the tourism sector, which is expected to continue to have a successful path.

In order to survive in an increasingly competitive sector, such as tourism, organizations need to opt for quality and a sustainable development strategy, considering details that may stand out their services, such as: personalized service; a good marketing plan; benchmarking; training of employees and adaptability to change.

After comparing the results obtained in the study of Eraqi (2005) with this study, it was concluded that, in both studies, it is essential to meet three requirements: satisfaction of internal customers (employees), satisfaction of external customers (tourists) and process efficiency. Eraqi (2005) concluded that employees were dissatisfied and unmotivated due to the lack of recognition and encouragement of hierarchical superiors, as they did not create oportunity for their employees to be creative, innovative, involved in the decision-making process, feel self-fulfilling and commitment themselves to the company. It also happens in this study, where there is a lack of concern with the employees and the lack of dialogue between managers and employees.

The studies of Snipes et al. (2005) and Cunha (2013) also meets this study, which shows that satisfaction is divided into two aspects: personal and organizational. The personal side includes factors such as concern for employees and customers. The organizational side includes factors such as salary, working conditions, peer-to-peer dialogue and assigned workload.

Regarding the personal and professional formation of employees, this is a factor that hierarchical superiors should not overlook, since it brings added value to the organization, such as: skills improvement; performance improvement; increased self-esteem; motivation; provision of quality service; sustainable development; competitiveness and increase in overall profit (Reed et al., 2000, Cardim, 2005, Costen and Salazar, 2011, Eurico et al., 2012). In the operationalization of the statements in the questionnaires and after analyzing the occurrences, it was verified that the highest averages of the affirmations were in the Q11 - "The praise from the clients gives me motivation" and in the Q20 - "The behavior of the colleagues is also important "for both genders, which means that the co-workers think in a similar way, regardless of their gender, as verified by the t-Student test.

The present study corroborates the studies of Tsauro and Lin (2004) and Cunha (2013), arguing that human resource management practices indirectly influence client perception and directly the behavior of employees, ie the quality perceived by clients is promoted, through the positive participation of employees, which leads to a service of excellence and, consequently, getting recognition by the customers.

Regarding the behavior of colleagues, employees feel that the behavior adopted by colleagues is relevant, as this will influence labor relations and teamwork. This aspect is also described in the studies of Perles (2002) and Marras (2005), which highlight the relevance of teamwork in hotel organizations. In order to achieve good teamwork, it is crucial to see the needs of satisfied employees (salaries and benefits, working conditions, involvement in the planning of the objectives), in order to be able to provide excellent service to clients. The lowest averages of the questionnaire statements were in Q4 - "The salary is not the only reward I get at the end of the month", in Q27 - "The company offers all the necessary tools (uniform, mobile phone, transport, etc.) to work, in Q16 - " The training required for this job was provided at the beginning of the contract "and in Q26 -" Work shifts are selected according to preferences ". In the lower averages, a gender discrepancy was already evident, that is, the male gender did not agree or did not identify themselves with Q4 and Q27 and the female gender did not agree or did not identify themselves with Q16 and Q27.

For the male gender, the issue of salary and the availability of the necessary tools to work are aspects that organizations must improve. For women, on the other hand, the question of the training provided in the beginning of the contract and the fact that the company does not provide the necessary tools for the provision of the service are aspects that need to be improved. The issue of wages is a long-standing problem, as are working conditions that are sometimes precarious, overworked hours, lack of time off or weekends, which influence the level of employee satisfaction. This study is in line with the studies conducted by Nebel (1991), Sharpley and Forster (2003), Katt and Condly (2009) and Smith and Shields (2013), in which the tourism sector was seen as a sector in which the remuneration are not equitable and equivalent to the work done and concludes that employees also like to be rewarded in other ways, such as personal and professional recognition and delegation of responsibilities.

The studies of Breiter and Bloomquist (1998), Hjalager (2001) and Neves (2011) argue that the delegation of responsibilities is essential to achieve quality in services, since the hierarchical superiors demonstrate a sense of trust, which will lead the workers to commi to the organization.

In spite of the averages of the statments of both genders do not show significant differences, the averages of the female workers are, mainly, superior to the average of the male workers . This means that the perceptions of the female gender tend to be closer to the subjects under study: quality and nautical tourism than the perceptions of the male gender.

With this study it can be concluded that quality can be a guide in the tourism sector and influence the decision-making of tourist services. On the other hand, there are aspects that should be improved to make customers feel pleased, as previously mentioned. If the human resources management, together with the hierarchical superiors and the other workers manage to fill these aspects, then the quality will subsist in the tourist services, which will lead to the satisfaction of the internal and external clients and, consequently, to obtain competitive advantages and profit.

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