

# The customer's experience in the Foodservice sector: an analysis of the literature and a proposition of a research agenda

A EXPERIÊNCIA DO CLIENTE NO SETOR DE FOODSERVICE: ANÁLISE DA LITERATURA E PROPOSIÇÃO DE UMA AGENDA DE PESQUISA

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## RESUMO

O objetivo do estudo foi identificar as principais áreas de estudo e apresentar uma agenda para estudos futuros sobre a experiência do cliente no setor de Foodservice. Isso foi possível mediante o desenvolvimento de uma Revisão Sistemática da Literatura que contou com a análise de 1.955 artigos da base de dados da Scopus. Por meio da técnica de análise de conteúdo, foram identificadas quatro temáticas: comportamento do consumidor, satisfação e lealdade, experiência memorável e compartilhável, e turismo e marketing de destino. Os dados mostram que a área do marketing onde são desenvolvidos mais estudos é em satisfação e lealdade, correspondendo a quase 32% das pesquisas, enquanto as demais áreas, mostram um comportamento similar, em termos de número de estudos. Ainda, o tema de pesquisa que mais tem se desenvolvido nos últimos dois anos é turismo e mídias sociais. Na sequência foi formulada uma agenda de pesquisa a partir da



análise dos *Calls for Papers* dos 40 periódicos identificados nesse estudo e das indicações de trabalhos futuros citados nos artigos mais recentes. Com isso, foi possível inferir que o setor de *Foodservice* será alvo de diversos estudos nos próximos anos devido a relevância do setor para a economia, e o tema experiência tem sido um dos temas em destaque no marketing por estar alinhado com as aspirações e necessidades dos consumidores contemporâneos.

**Palavras-chave:** FoodService, Experiência do cliente, satisfação e lealdade, experiência memorável, marketing de destino.

### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this paper was to identify the main areas of study and present an agenda for future studies on the customer experience in the Foodservice sector. This was made possible through the development of a Systematic Literature Review that included the analysis of 1,955 articles from the Scopus database. Through the content analysis technique, four themes were identified: consumer behavior, satisfaction and loyalty, memorable and shareable experience, and tourism and destination marketing. The data show that the area of marketing where more studies are developed is in satisfaction and loyalty, corresponding to almost 32% of the total, while the other areas, show a similar behavior, in terms of number of studies. Still, the research theme that has been developing the most in the last two years is tourism and social media. Following, a research agenda was formulated based on the analysis of the *Calls for Papers* of the 40 journals identified in this study and the indications of future works cited in the most recent articles. With that, it was possible to infer that the Foodservice sector will be the target of several studies in the coming years due to the sector's relevance to the economy, and the experience theme has been one of the themes highlighted in marketing as it is aligned with the aspirations and needs of contemporary consumers.

**Keywords:** Foodservice, Customer Experience, Satisfaction and Loyalty, Memorable experience, Destination marketing.



## INTRODUCTION

The globalization of the markets, the constant evolution in the behavior of consumers and the current pandemic caused by COVID-19, have led researchers and marketing managers to rethink strategies to better adapt themselves to such market, as well as new consumer demands. Such shift from traditional marketing, focused on analytical rationality of clients, to experiential marketing, where senses and emotions are targets for the creation of an experience (Schmitt, 1999), demands that the focus shall be in conducting the consumers to valuable experiences and that remain present in the memory (Kim, 2010).

The Foodservice field is one of such sources of meaningful experiences opportunities. Food is a symbolic process, with meanings in different cultures and traditions, once "meals are used to mark special occasions, to celebrate rituals of passage or to reinforce social bonds" (Morgan *et al.*, 2008, p. 114). Through food, multi-sensorial experiences are unraveled, where satisfaction and pleasure are expected (Batat *et al.*, 2019; van Esch *et al.*, 2019).

Throughout History, changes in the form of how people fed themselves have been unwinding, what before was only a form of survival has also become an indicative of social, cultural aspects and forms of recreation (Avelar & Rezende, 2013; Ferreira & Silva, 2018 Warde & Martens, 2000). Such transformations associated to the changes in family structures and life habits (Warde *et al.*, 2007), were preponderant factors to enhance food outside from home.

This field involves the chain of production and distribution, supplies, equipment and services for the establishments that propose to serve meals outside from home, this includes restaurants from all types, bakeries, diners, bars, among others. According to the Brazilian Association of Bars and Restaurants (ABRASEL), the outside from home food field presented in 2018 an income of 230 billion Reais and already represents 34% of the expenses with



food for the Brazilian population (ABRASEL, 2019). On the other hand, the Brazilian Service of Support to Micro and Small Companies (SEBRAE) has revealed that the field generated 6 million jobs in 1 million business and represented 2.7 % of the Brazilian Gross Internal Production (PIB) in 2018 (SEBRAE, 2019).

COVID-19 pandemic, which haunted the world in 2020, brought impacts to the public health, reverberating in a catastrophic way in the economy and in the labor market (Costa, 2020). The current economy scenery presents a rate of world unemployment of 8.3% and fall in the income of several segments, including in 11.6% in Foodservice (Instituto Foodservice Brasil (IFB), 2020; Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), 2021). With this, it is notorious to see a change in food habits that include increase in home food and, at the same times, requests of food through delivery, demonstrating the dynamics of such field.

Despite the importance that such field has, which represents a competitive market (Kukanja *et al.*, 2017), where "the consumption of food and drinks is a genetic cultural practice, with complex plot, motivations and practices" (Rezende & Silva, 2014, p. 94), there is still a reduced number of studies which are about the experiences in restaurants. According to a research performed for such study, based on data from Scopus, since the year 2000 publications in this area have appeared but still in an incipient form. For example, considering the 72 articles analyzed in this research, it was noticed that only in the last 3 years (2018 to 2020) 54% of the studies were published. Still, analyzing the data from the publications 60% of them are from The United States, The United Kingdom, Australia and South Korea, demonstrating that studies are still scarce in Brazil.

From such scenario, this present article has the purpose to identify the main areas of study and to present an agenda for future studies on the experience of the client in the Foodservice sector, with the purpose of understanding the content, the results, the theories embraced in academic publications, understanding its production and the opportunities of



development for future studies when it comes to experience marketing in the Foodservice sector.

From this exposed, the study is justified for dealing with a sector of considerable relevance for the economy and for the Brazilian consumer market. In addition to representing a strategic opportunity to provide for the consumers experiences that can be memorable (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999) with a wake up call for emotions, once that "those are strictly related to the consumption experiences of services and affect the perceptions of the consumer regarding what is being offered" (Barbosa & Farias, 2012, p. 448). Also, such memorable experiences may result in a sustainable competitive advantage (Widjaja *et al.*, 2020) for the Foodservice field .

In the same way, such study has the intention of contributing with the Foodservice sector, by pointing out what has been produced in the academy, which marketing areas have been developing researchers and what relevant results may serve for supporting the strategies of the sector, in addition to signaling the perspectives of new studies, fomenting the growth of studies in the area. This way, it is justified to know the state of art of researches in restaurant experience and to understand whether SRL may be a path to deepen the knowledge on the theme.

## EXPERIENCE MARKETING

The study here performed embraces the theory on experience marketing or experiential marketing and its main concepts and approaches. The first studies on experiential marketing appeared in the 80's from seminal studies from Hirschman & Holbrook (1982), who brought to life the concept of hedonistic consumption in face of the current utilitarian view at the time. The memorable experience, for example, takes place together with all its components, among them, hedonism, involvement, participation and novelty (Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020). And hedonism, on the other hand, might have a positive relation with collaborative consumption (Chagas & Aguiar, 2020).



Schmitt (1999) quotes that such change in traditional marketing to experiential marketing was due to the development of information technology, brand domains and to the strong presence of communication. As consequences, they made consumers have new aspirations and needs in which the customer services provided for them considered reaching their feelings and senses (Barbosa & Farias, 2012) and the creation of an environment that provided unique experiences (Kim *et al.*, 2018).

Same & Larimo (2012) brought that the experiential marketing definition was more related to the concepts regarding emotions, feelings and senses and less related to rationality and functionality, for instance. The experience itself is, then, something multi-sensorial (Batat *et al.*, 2019; van Esch *et al.*, 2019) and this way, the "consumer is, therefore, seen as an emotionally involved individual, in a process of purchase, in which multi-sensorial, imaginary and emotional aspects, in particular, are searched and valued" (Carù & Cova, 2003, p. 272).

According to Abrahams (2001, p. 45) "the experience is ultimately employed to discuss significant actions, from the most ordinary to the most extraordinary". Carù & Cova (2003) corroborated by defining the experience in two axes that go along a continuum between the ordinary and the extraordinary experience. On the other hand, Andersson, Mossberg, Therkelsen (2017), complemented that some experiences with food may become out of the ordinary and memorable, meanwhile some serve only to reach the goal of fulfilling the target-public. For Abrahams (2001), the ordinary experience regards routine and daily events, to the consumption of tangible goods focusing on the functionality (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003). Thus, the extraordinary experience, according to Hanefors & Mossberg (2003), is something unusual, memorable, without routine and which represents elevated emotional attachment.

When talking about tourism destinations and gastronomy, involving the tourist in memorable experiences through local products, culinary courses, gastronomic tours, among others, are important actions for the tourism industry to maintain itself competitive (Di-Clemente *et al.*, 2019). "Food may be a



reason to travel, a search for an extraordinary experience and a factor, in combination with other factors, which influence the visits to destinations" (Andersson *et al.*, 2017, p. 1). In a memorable experience, routes and scripts are left aside and the surprise element is emphasized, with the purpose of charming the client (Barbosa & Farias, 2012; Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003).

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

A Systematic Review of Literature (SRL) is a research method in which secondary data are used to better understand a certain theme, through structure selection procedures, evaluation and analysis of such data (Sampaio & Mancini, 2007). According to Akobeng (2005, p. 845), the SRL "is particularly useful to gather a series of studies conducted separately, sometimes with conflicting findings, and summary their results". In Table 1, the procedures used in this research are summarized.

Table 1

### Procedures, filters and selection of studies

Terms of research	(marketing AND experienc*) AND (restaurant* OR food OR feeding OR gastronom*)
Data base	Scopus
Type of source of documents	Full articles published in peer-review journals
Results	1.955
Time horizon	1972 - 2020
Selection and evaluation criteria (include and exclude)	Reading of the title, reading of the abstract, reading of the complete article.
Analyzed articles	72 (3.68% of the results)

Source: Elaborated by the authors

The articles were obtained starting by the definition of the keywords (Leal *et al.*, 2020), aiming at searching for studies focused on experiential marketing in the outside from home food sector. As follows, the definition of the data base for the gathering of the data was defined (DAMÁZIO, COUTINHO & SHIGAKI,



2020), in which Scopus was chosen by being one of the most important academic data base for the Administration area (ELSEVIER, 2020). The research was performed in January 2021 resulting in 1.955 articles, being the first articles, within the parameters, dated from the year 1972.

For the selection of the articles, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined, (Sampaio & Mancini, 2007) as shown in Table 2 . From the reading of the titles, and after, the abstracts, those studies which did not were related to the theme proposed in such study were excluded (Leal *et al.*, 2020). From the 1.955 published selected, 161 were elected by the reading of the title, from such selection the abstracts were read and 80 articles for full reading were selected. From such reading, at last, 72 articles were selected and evaluated in this study.

Table2

**Criteria of Inclusion and Exclusion**

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Criteria of Inclusion and Exclusion
Studies regarding marketing were included.
Studies that regarded the client experience as theme were included.
Studies that treated the theme of experience in other areas, not Marketing, were excluded.
Studies that not approached the outside home food were excluded.

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Source: Elaborated by the authors

The analysis of the articles read was performed through the technique of content analysis, taking into account that such technique reaches the purpose of deepening and enriching the reading, enabling a better comprehension of the content (Bardin, 2016). All articles were organized by the systematization of ideas, building the pre-analysis phase of the material. As follows, the interpretation of the articles was performed, to identify the convergences and divergences between the purposes of the studies, the used theories, the main results and conclusions. Corroborating the content analysis performed in one of the 72 articles, the software VOSviewer was used to identify and visualize the

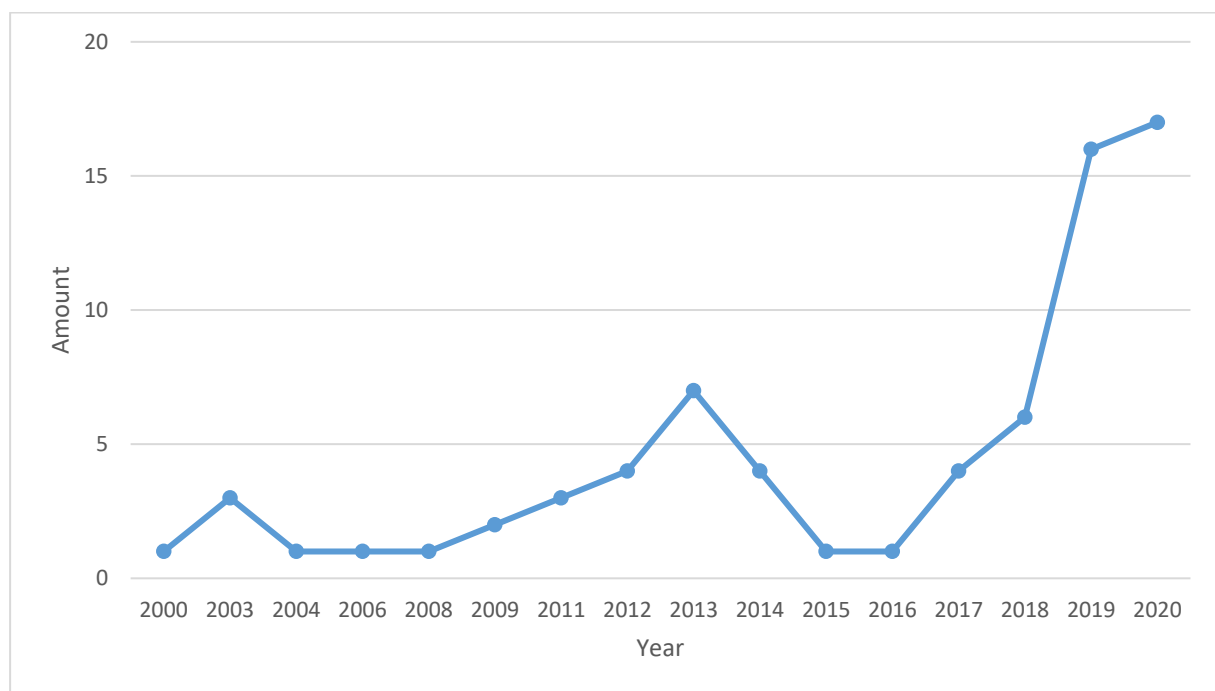




clusters studies, as well as the themes which composed the network of trends for the formulation of the agenda of the research.

## PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

From the 72 analyzed articles, an increase in the number of publications which approached the theme in the last years was noticed (Figure 1). From these, 33 were published in the period from 2000 to 2017 and the other 39 between 2018 to 2020. Such data showed that in the last 3 years, there was a significant interest in knowing more about the theme of consumer experience with out of home food and a trend to remain crescent the number of studies in this area.



**Figura 1.** Amount of publications per year

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Regarding the methodology employed in the analyzed studies, it was noticed that 64% were quantitative researches (n=46), 15% qualitative (n=11)

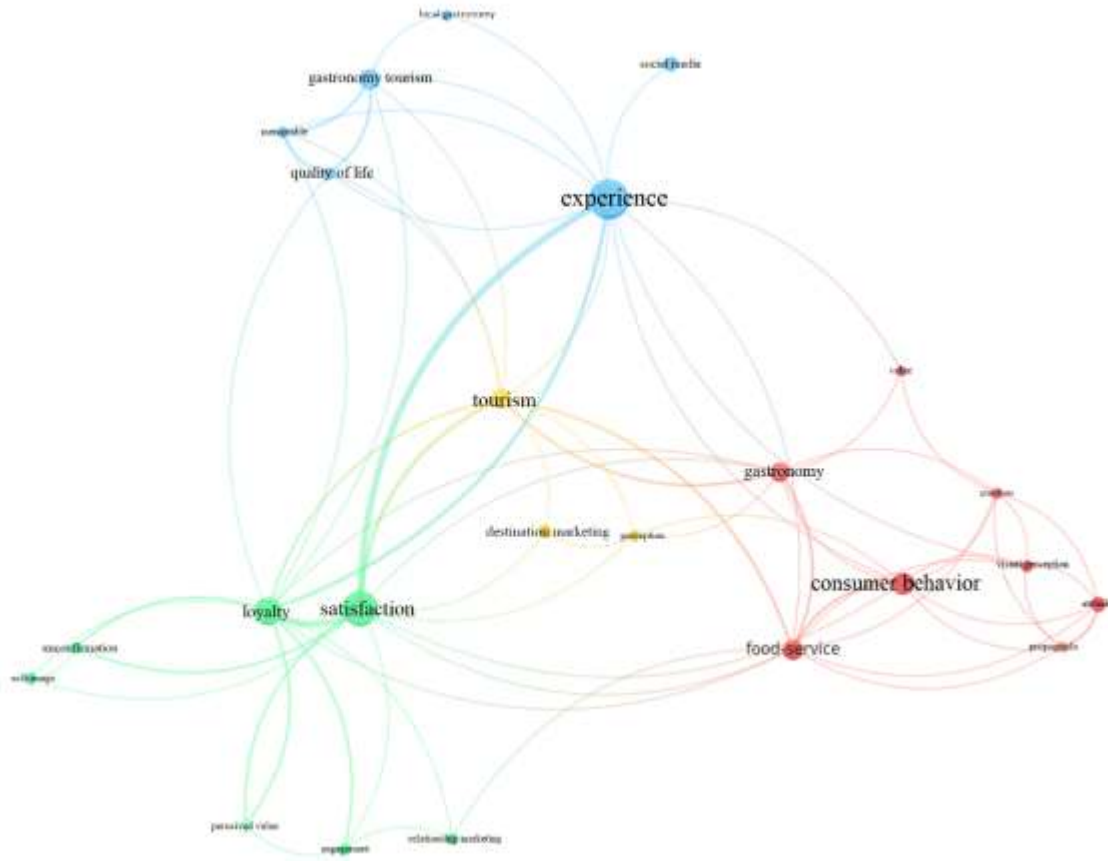


and other 13% theoretical (n=8). Still, there were articles of quantitative experiment (n=3), mixed methods (n=2) and study of qualitative case (n=2).

The authors who most published regarding the theme were Campón-Cerro, Di-Clement, Hernásdez-Mogollón, Jan, Jeong and Peter, with the amount of 2 studies. Among the countries, The United States is highlighted with 24 publications, followed by The United Kingdom (n=7), Australia and South Korea (n=6). Brazil appears in the list with 2 articles from Rezende & Silva (2014) and Lucchese-Cheung, Batalha & Lambert (2012). Among the areas of publication, the following areas are highlighted: Business Administration (n=65), Social Sciences (n=18), Biological Sciences (n=11) and Economy (n=5). Other areas of knowledge were also present, such as Environmental Sciences, Decision Sciences, Psychology and Humanities, but with inferior values to 4 articles per area.

In the sequence, the analysis of the network of words through VOSviewer version 1.6.15, a software of bibliometric data structuralization, was performed (Vosviewer, 2021). The graphic representation of the data network consulted in the studied base can be seen in Figure 2. According to Van Eck & Waltman (2010, p. 525) "the distance between two items reflects the strength of the relation between the items. A smaller distance generally indicates a stronger relation."





**Figure 2.** Network of most used terms  
Source: Elaborated by the authors through VosViewer

From the analysis, the main 4 themes or clusters were identified, when it comes to the theme experience in Foodservice (Batat *et al.*, 2019; Haase *et al.*, 2020; Shahriari *et al.*, 2020; van Esch *et al.*, 2019), being the (a) consumer behavior, (b) satisfaction and loyalty, (c) memorable and shared experience, (d) tourism and destination marketing. In the attempt to fit the 72 analyzed studies in the up-mentioned theme (Table 3), it is important to mention that the main theme of each study prevailed (de Lima *et al.*, 2021), which means that the studies present different secondary themes, taking into the account the complexity of the subjects that permeate the performed studies.

Table 3  
Area of knowledge and authors

Áreas	Authors
Consumer behavior	(Batat <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Choi <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Clauzel & Riché, 2015; Ha & Jang, 2013; Haase <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Khalilzadeh <i>et al.</i> ,



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	2017; LaTour & Carbone, 2014; Lord <i>et al.</i> , 2004; Lucchese-Cheung <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Mhlanga, 2018; Shahriari <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Suvittawatt <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Van Esch <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Van Rompay <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Zahra <i>et al.</i> , 2020)
Satisfaction and loyalty	(Alhelalat <i>et al.</i> , 2017; J. Bowden, 2009; Clemes <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Dagevos & Van Ophem, 2013; Jeong & Jang, 2018; Ji <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Jin <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Kang <i>et al.</i> , 2018; Kim & Jang, 2019; Kim & Tang, 2020; Kim <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Knutson <i>et al.</i> , 2006; Kukanja <i>et al.</i> , 2017; Laming & Mason, 2014; Morganosky & Cude, 2000; Quynh <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Rashid, 2003; Ryu & Han, 2011; Sánchez Fernández <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Sundqvist & Walter, 2017; Torres <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Wu & Liang, 2009; Yuan & Wu, 2008)
Memorable and shared experience	(Alnsour & Al Faour, 2019; Beldona <i>et al.</i> , 2014; Bowden & Dagger, 2011; Di-Clemente <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Gray <i>et al.</i> , 2003; Gregorash, 2018; Gupta <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Hernández-Mogollón <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Koufie & Kesa, 2020; Lepkowska-White <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Lin <i>et al.</i> , 2012; Mendini <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Mugel <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Pujiastuti & Rusfian, 2019; Rezende & Silva, 2014; Saarijärvi <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Yim & Yoo, 2020; Zhu <i>et al.</i> , 2019)
Tourism and destination marketing	(Balderas-Cejudo <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Castillo-Canalejo <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Hasan <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Hendijani & Boo, 2020; Kim <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Knollenberg <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Kunasegaran <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Mkono, 2013; Pratt <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Roustia & Jamshidi, 2020; Seongseop (Sam) <i>et al.</i> , 2020; Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020; Silkes <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Wijaya <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003)

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Source: Elaborated by the authors

Data revealed that in the marketing area where most studies are developed are satisfaction and loyalty (n=23), corresponding to almost 32% of the researches, followed by the other areas, consumer behavior (n=16, 22%),



memorable and shared experience (n=18, 25%) and tourism and destination marketing (n=15, 21%), showing a similar behavior, in numbers.

## Consumer behavior

One of the studies related to this cluster of Consumer Behavior is from Haase, Wiedmann & Bettels (2020) which discuss the effects of sensorial images in the performance of marketing indicators (sensorial perception, perception of the product's design and attitude). Through the study performed by the authors, it was noticed that the presentation of sensorial images in advertisements affects in a convenient way the consumer's perception.

The research of Shahriari *et al.* (2020), on the other hand, also approaches the interference of stimulation by sensorial images, in this case focusing on the desire for food, which involves cognitive and emotional aspects. Data from the authors showed that the visual stimulation of images were the ones which provoked more desire for food, meanwhile hearing images provoked less desire and the olfactory stimulated more the desire for food than taste buds stimulation.

The theme of research in the study of Batat *et al.* (2019) involves the experiential pleasure of food that, just as the desire for food, also involves cognition and emotion associated to mult-sensorial, community and cultural meanings of the act of feeding oneself. The study discusses how pleasure shapes the practices and episodes of food welfare.

On the other hand, the study of Alnsour & Faour (2019) treats the relation between engagement of the community of the brand in social media and the client's behavior which may lead or not in choosing a certain restaurant. Data showed that the community of the brand does not have a direct influence in the intention of purchase by the consumer, but the involvement of such community affects the clients' attitude. Regarding the subjective regulation, data showed that it does not moderate the relation between attitude and consumer intention.



Khalilzadeh, Ghahramani & Tabari (2017), in their research in fine restaurants in the capital of Iran, recognized the characteristics of consumers and complaining clients and classified them into 4 groups, being: friendly complainants, hypercritical, silent killers and happy campers. According to the authors, the friendly complainants represent an interesting group, once they complain but give the chance of implementing repair and correction by part of the restaurants, the same is applied to hypercritical. The silent killers do not complain in the restaurant but promote negative actions, on the other hand the happy campers neither complain in the restaurant nor promote such negative actions.

A study by Lucchese-Cheung, Batalha & Lambert (2012) investigate the food practices of individuals researching the consumption behavior and experiences which go beyond economic and social-cultural issues. The findings of the research reveal that food has a symbolism in the transmission of social identity, beliefs and sense of belonging or not to certain groups. This way, the choice of food goes way beyond the physical and nutritional characteristics of food.

## **Satisfaction and loyalty**

According to Kukanja, Omerzel & Kodric (2017), the restaurant sector presents high competition due to peculiar facts such as, for example, the intangibility of the service, the multiplication of food and drinks, the volatility of the demand, the protagonism of labor and the impact of the employees' attitudes. Being the quality of something a purpose to be pursued as a condition for success, which may lead to loyalty, a competitive advantage in such market (Jin *et al.*, 2012).

There are several factors which influence satisfaction and loyalty of clients and Ryu & Han (2011) quote that the unconfirmation, which is the



confrontation in the psychological level between the expectation of the service/product and what was delivered, is one of these factors, and that satisfaction positively influences loyalty. The focus of the authors was to examine the relation between the physical environment and the unconfirmation perceived. The findings of the research showed that the physical environment directly affects the unconfirmation and still, that the stimulation of the physical environment (illumination, table configuration, aesthetic of the location) is highly distinguished whether it is evaluated between new customers and frequent clients.

The research by Kim, Chung & Suh (2016) indicates that the gastronomic experiences are examined by clients from three points of references: unconfirmations, self-image congruence and the attractiveness of the alternatives, showing that the consumer's evaluation go through multiple factors. The study also shows that cultural differences influence the way that clients behave themselves regarding such points of reference. The authors state that in more individualist cultures, such as in The United States, clients tend to be more demanding compared to those who live in more collective cultures, such as in South Korea, who are more pleased and more loyal by avoiding the uncertainties.

Bowden (2009) studied how relation mediators, commitment, involvement and trust act differently in the relation between client and brand throughout time. Results show that loyalty is developed wrapped up by psychological aspects, once clients want to get involved affectionately with the restaurants which they go to. Resources of marketing should be used taking into the account that frequent clients or new ones present different needs, in the case of new clients the utilitarian vision of the experience should be highlighted.

The study of Kim & Jang (2019) also approaches the psychological aspects related to satisfaction when it is verified that motivations for sharing experiences by the consumers in restaurants. The results show that there are psychological slopes such as self-esteem, satisfaction and need of belonging,



and still, motivations such as self-expression and search for social status that boost such sharing. At last, the authors verified that the behaviors that lead to sharing do not differ according to gender, which means, are the same for men and for women.

Wu & Liang (2009) evaluated the junction of the encounter of service, experiential value and client's satisfaction and how such variables are related. The conclusion of the research showed that the environmental factors of the environment and other clients favorable affected the value of the consumer experience. Also, there is the close relationship between the employees, which influences the client's satisfaction and at last, the elements of the environment and the non direct interaction with other clients, which influences the client's satisfaction through the experiential value.

The study of Dagevos and van Ophem (2013) brings the concept of value of food consumption that goes beyond the utilitarian elements and physical attributes invoking the client's emotions. Still, Ji *et al.* (2018) say in their study that value is always quoted in the client's relation facing the physical and human available resources. In the study of Ji *et al.* (2018) it was verified how the presence of other clients in the environment of restaurants could be a resource for the co-creation of noticeable experiences and the maximization of results in such visit to the restaurant. The findings showed that the noticeable experience had an important relation with the presence of other clients and with the pleasure of food, and that such pleasure led to frequent visits.

### **Memorable and shared experience**

The concept of experience has been developed in the last decades just as the practice of out of home food, which was before guided by need, nowadays it is constituted as a form of leisure, leading to experiences that go from an ordinary up to an extraordinary nature (Rezende & Silva, 2014). Such scenery has evolved in addition to the *Foodservice* market, where long lasting relationships with clients may be, as quoted by Gray, Bell & Ponsonby (2003), a





way to establish competitive advantage, in addition to reduction of costs and propension to increase in profit. Restaurants that promote experiences to their clients lead and raise significantly the client's intentions by choosing such service provider (Lin *et al.*, 2012).

The study of Di-Clemente, Hernández-Mogollón & Campóm-Cerro (2019) presents the value of experience with a propellant engine of loyalty to a gastronomic tourism destination. It was showed in the empiric findings the relevance of considering experiential dimensions for the success of marketing focused on tourism maintaining the alignment with the demand of contemporary consumers.

Zhu *et al.* (2019) researched the impact of social media in the experience of consumers regarding posting food photos. The results showed that people who posted food photos revealed a more positive experience of dinners regarding people who posted other photos or posted nothing. Even if the combination of between self-expression and gastronomic experience is overrated for those received more likes when compared to those who received less likes.

The article of Hernández-Mongollón, Di-Clemente & Campón-Cerro (2020) evaluates whether the food experience in tourism destinations have implications on the satisfaction and loyalty according to parameters such as quality of the experience, its ability to become memorable and the perspective to improve the quality of life. The results showed that such impact exists and, therefore, the quality of the experience with food determines the memories, satisfaction, and the boost in the quality of life and leads to fidelity.

The research of Yim & Yoo (2020) verified how clients in restaurants respond to the experience of a digital menu based on the web, a digital menu through a tablet and a traditional paper menu. As a result, the study showed that consumption and pleasure are mediators of the impact of the interactivity captured through attitudes regarding the digital menu based on the web. Still, it was observed a direct relation of the experience with the product as the moderator of the relationship. On the other hands, clients who tested the digital



menu on tablet and the traditional, it was noticed that the menu on tabled generated more fun and stimulation when generating the orders in a shorter time and the visions of consumption mediated the effects of interactiveness in the use of digital media, which did not happen with the traditional menu.

In the theoretical article of Mendini, Pizzetti & Peter *et al.* (2019), the authors discussed the concept of food pleasure, in which the emphasis given by the authors was concentrated on the social pleasure of food, given its generator potential of pleasure and healthy experiences. Therefore, the purpose was to understand and define such concept of food pleasure. Starting from a review of the literature related to the areas of marketing and management, the authors proposed a concept of social food pleasure, as being "the pleasure derived from the acts of sharing offline and online food experiences and for the society, in general, which positively contributes to pleasure and general satisfaction of consumers with food" (Mendini *et al.*, 2019, p. 544).

## **Tourism and destination marketing**

The change in the behavior of tourists who search each day more for gastronomic experiences involving local food is noticeable (Wijaya *et al.*, 2013). The study of Seyitoglu & Ivanov (2020) brings such perspective of the strategic role of gastronomy in tourism destinations. Based on the theory of strategic management, a model was proposed that pointed to the following findings (a) identification of a destination as gastronomic is a strategic important artifice; (b) a differentiation strategy may be conceived through the elaboration of products that attend their market; (c) the use of culinary traditions may reinforce the individuality of the destination; (d) the disclosure of



the destination by celebrity chefs and the selling of tangible products that might serve as a souvenir of the destination (Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020).

On the other hand, the research of Hendijani & Boo (2020) had the purpose of understanding the gastronomic tourism regarding the behavior profile of the eaters, which goes beyond the exploration of the food itself and takes into the account feelings and positive thoughts involved in such experience. For this, the technique of elicitation of Zaltaman's metaphor (ZMET), which was capable of arousing profound aspects of such behavior. Through such understanding three categories of eaters were defined based on their knowledge of food and experience, the rookee, the student and the specialist.

Kunasegaran, Rasoolimanesh & Khan (2019) approached in their study an investigation of the experiences of international tourists regarding healthy food prepared by Malaysian culinary chefs. The findings show that the memorable experiences with food, food hygiene, cultural values and the tourist's happiness have direct influence on the satisfaction and on the intention of visiting the destination once again. Another data showed that the reason, type and frequency of the trip interferes on the food of the destination.

## Proposition of a research agenda

Evaluating the 40 journals in which the 72 publications are published, it was verified that 6 of them presented *Calls for Papers*, meanwhile the others treated the article submission of the theme in the magazine without specific callings. Among those, 3 had callings focused on the *Foodservice* theme.

In the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* (2021b) the calling is focused on the creation, management and marketing of gastronomic experiences, taking into the account their importance as a booster for tourism, familiarity with the culture and local tradition. Themes such as consumer experience, entrepreneurship, business models which aim the



creation of gastronomic experiences, creation and co-creation of value, as well as the appropriation of gastronomic tourism, technological transformations in tourism and hospitality, economy impacts, sustainable gastronomy, competitiveness and gastronomy tourism sustainability and purchase tourism are relevant for precisely contributing for the understanding and functioning of the local ecosystem.

*British Food Journal* (2021a) brings four new themes, being the first one focused on entrepreneurship practices in the agri-food industry, aiming not only the economy development but also the identification of processes for improvement of the quality of life in the society. The second theme refers to the electronic commerce in the food and drinks sector for the digital future with Covid-19. The proposal is to reunite researches that deal with the issue of electronic commerce facing the pandemic scenery of Covid-19, discussing how the consumer experience will be, their reactions, trust and expectations facing the increase of the demand of such type of commerce.

The third theme, about the process of open innovation the in *Foodservice* industry, is focused on the paradigm of innovation and competitiveness, considering risks and recommendations regarding processual innovations, as well the understanding of collaborative networks. Study opportunities are turned to the future of the *Foodservice* industry in the context of open innovation, reduction of the negative Covid-19 impacts in such sector, the challenges of managers in adopting such innovation, the macro-strategic view focused on the economy, society and sustainability, better practices to implement an open innovation trends of innovation in the sector, integration of processes of open innovation in the market of organic food and the dark side of open innovation in the sector.

At last, the fourth theme corroborates the previous ones when dealing with the future of food from the point of view of understanding the responsibilities of the industry regarding production, acquisition, consumption and responsible availability of products. Which means, studies with the contemporary visions of such practices are predicted, the understanding of



the role of stakeholders and the creation and maintenance of the movement *world free of hunger and malnutrition*.

On the other hand, the calling from the *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* (2021) proposes as topic the future of the client's experience in retail. Here, management issues regarding the client's experience in retail are dealt, approaching the challenges, the new practices, the future, the role of emotions, motivations, sustainability, the impact of technologies and within other co-related subjects.

The journals *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Consumer Marketing* and *Research in Transportation Business and Management* present open calls. Despite none of those being focused on the theme of the present article, it is worth mentioning that they are focused on (i) technological aspects, such as Industry 4.0 with *machine learning* and technology dilemmas, virtual word-to-mouth, data science, transparency and efficiency of processes, technologies for home office (ii) COVID-19, such as productivity, social distance and new paths for chains of value (iii) general themes within the context of strategical marketing, such as price, creativity and culture, consumer and client's behavior, sustainable business, brand value, family business, entrepreneur and anti-racism society

In Table 4 it is possible to visualize all calls related to the theme Marketing and consumption focused directly and indirectly on the *Foodservice* market

Table 4  
**ResearchAgenda**

Journal	Calls for Papers
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	1) Creating, Managing and Marketing Gastronomy Experiences in Hospitality and Tourism (submissions up to 05/15/21)
British Food Journal	1) Entrepreneurial Practices in Agri-Food Industry: Advancing the Research Agenda (submissions up to 08/31/21) 2) E-commerce in the Food and Beverage Sector: The Digital Future with Covid-19 (submissions up to 03/31/21)



	3) Open Innovation in the Food Industry: What we know, What we don't know, What we need to know (submissions up to 04/01/21)
	4) The Future of Food: Responsible Production, Acquisition, Consumption, and Disposition (submissions up to 03/31/21)
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	1) The Future of Customer Experience (CX) in Retailing (submissions up to 03/31/21)

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Source: Elaborated by the authors

In addition to the analysis of the purposes and results of the researches that were put in the clusters, in the reading of the 72 articles, it was possible to notice the main limitations quoted by the authors. The most frequent one the difficulty in the generalization of the results, due to the fact of regarding case studies or qualitative researches (Saarijärvi *et al.*, 2013), by the object of analysis being only a segment of restaurant (Jin *et al.*, 2012; Khalilzadeh *et al.*, 2017; Kim & Tang, 2020; S. Kim *et al.*, 2016; Yim & Yoo, 2020), by the sample being focused on a certain place (Castillo-Canalejo *et al.*, 2020; Koufie & Kesa, 2020; Kunasegaran *et al.*, 2019), by the sample of the research being directed to a certain group, in this case, student from a university (Ha & Jang, 2013). Within this context, future studies that might fulfill such gaps are recommended.

Also, indications of future studies in each of the analyzed articles were examined and quoted the more recent indications. Articles published in 2020 recommended Articles published in 2020 recommended studies focused on the *Big data* analysis in the hospitality field, including the management of data from social media, mobile apps, digital tools and strategies in the management of hospitality and behavior analysis from consumers classified as *millennials* (Koufie & Kesa, 2020), analysis of different cultural context (Hendijani & Boo, 2020; Seongseop (Sam) *et al.*, 2020; Yim & Yoo, 2020), healthy consumption between children and adults (Shahriari *et al.*, 2020), motivation in gastronomy



tourism (Castillo-Canalejo *et al.*, 2020; Hasan *et al.*, 2020; Kim & Tang, 2020; Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020).

Those articles published in 2019 recommended deep studies on the perception of signed food, as well as the influence of cultural values and type and purpose of visits to restaurants that serve this type of food (Kunasegaran *et al.*, 2019), evaluation of different segments of food (van Esch *et al.*, 2019), validation of the scale to measure the touristic value of restaurants in other destinations and nationalities, with suggestion of including the effects of emotions (Kim *et al.*, 2019), researches in different cultures and social-demographies to search for motivation of connections of the experiential pleasure and the relevance of sensorial aspects on the stimulation to try new food (Batat *et al.*, 2019), application of neuro-marketing techniques and research throughout time to test the value of experientiality as the factor that determines the fidelity to a culinary tourism destination (Di-Clemente *et al.*, 2019).

Still in 2019, more studies in gastronomy tourism were recommended to help suppliers and marketing professionals to better understand the needs and expectation of the senior segment (Balderas-Cejudo *et al.*, 2019), to verify how a certain type of food or specific brands reflect on the self-expression of the consumer through social media (Zhu *et al.*, 2019), to perform a quantitative study to measure the levels of involvement with food welfare processes (Mugel *et al.*, 2019), to analyze how verticality tips may influence brands (van Rompay *et al.*, 2019) and to explore how cultural differences influence the users of social media (Kim & Jang, 2019).

On the other hand the articles published in 2018 suggested studies to investigate how social-economic factors, values, lifestyles and cultures may influence the experience with food starting from the relation with other clients in the restaurant's environment (Ji *et al.*, 2018), to amplify studies on the impact of social media on different types of restaurants and in different social media (Kang *et al.*, 2018) and to explore the effect of the product's image



congruence or the brand with the consumer's image of restaurants and its effect on the intention of behavior (Jeong & Jang, 2018).

## CONCLUSION

Through this study, it was possible to know which marketing areas are more present in the studies which the focus is the *Foodservice experience*, fulfilling with the purpose here proposed. Data showed that where most studies are developed are in the satisfaction and loyalty scope, meanwhile other themes present similar profiles in quantitative terms.

Still, it is explicit that the theme of research which has shown to be more vigorous in the last two years is tourism and social media. Such data may be explained through the proliferation and dissemination of the use of social media in the last years, leading businessmen to understand the power of social media to disclosure, to sell and to aggregate value to either their product or service. On the other hand, it is noticeable how such media has been used by consumers to disclosure, for example, experiences in restaurants, corroborating with the studies of Zhu *et al.* (2019) which reveal that posts in pictures in social media and the number of likes have relevant effect on the gastronomic experience of the visitor.

Regarding the development of researches in tourism, it is noticeable that in the last years, people are aiming at living more tourism experiences and with those, also, gastronomy experiences in the destinations (Okumus, 2020). Within such perspective, gastronomy tourism has been developed and with it, a series of strategies have been used to differentiate the destination according to its gastronomy (Seyitoğlu & Ivanov, 2020).

Examining the research agenda in *Foodservice* through the *Calls for Papers* and the indications of future studies according to the articles analyzed in this study, it is possible to infer that the *Foodservice* sector will be target of several studies in the following years due to the relevance of such sector to the economy taking into the account its representativeness in terms of income, job





openings generation and participation in the Brazilian gross domestic product (ABRASEL, 2019; SEBRAE, 2019). In addition, the theme experience has been one of the highlighted themes in marketing since it is aligned with the aspirations and needs of contemporary consumers.

This way, the experience in the *Foodservice* sector may represent a competitive advantage to businessmen from the sector since they understand that such current consumer wants more than just the delivery of products and services, the consumer want to live memorable experiences (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003).

It can be punctuated that the main limitation of this study resides on the fact that this Systematic Review of the Literature used for consultation only the *Scopus* data base. Despite the relevance of the base to the Business Administration area, future studies are recommended to extend the research to other data basis.

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