

**ANÁLISIS DE LA CALIDAD PERCIBIDA POR  
LOS TURISTAS EN UNA COMUNIDAD  
INDÍGENA BRASILEÑA  
ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITY PERCEIVED BY  
TOURISTS IN A BRAZILIAN INDIGENOUS  
COMMUNITY  
ANÁLISE DA QUALIDADE PERCEBIDA POR  
TURISTAS EM UMA COMUNIDADE INDÍGENA  
BRASILEIRA**

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**ABSTRACT:**

The objective of this article is to verify the perception of tourists about the quality of the services offered in a cultural tourism destination in Paraíba. The study uses a mixed approach (quantitative and qualitative), using the triangulation strategy in the data collection methods. The first refers to online questionnaires (204 valid) sent to the inn manager. Which were analyzed with the aid of the PSPP software being analyzed based on TOURQUAL. The article presents theoretical and practical contributions and helps to identify a series of tourism action and development plans for the region to put into practice. In addition, tourist activities of this nature help to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the locality. The experience category was the best rated by tourists due to their experience with aspects such as nature, culture and the local community. The worst assessment was the technical quality related to the lack of management of the services support technologies. Conducted a study to evaluate the quality of service in a destination where tourism is not yet consolidated, showing the lack of these

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locations and the potential of these destinations, in addition to being the first job applied to TOURQUAL in one Indian tribe.

**Keywords:** Quality of services, TOURQUAL, Cultural Tourism, Indigenous tourism.

**RESUMO:**

O objetivo deste artigo é verificar a percepção dos turistas sobre a qualidade dos serviços oferecidos em um destino de turismo cultural da Paraíba. O estudo utiliza uma abordagem mista (quantitativa e qualitativa), usando a estratégia de triangulação nos métodos de coleta de dados. A primeira refere-se a questionários online (total de 204 válidos) enviado ao gestor da pousada. Que foram analisados com auxílio do software PSPP sendo analisados baseados no TOURQUAL. O artigo apresenta contribuições teóricas e práticas e ajuda a identificar uma série de planos de ação e desenvolvimento do turismo para a região colocar em prática. Além disso, atividades turísticas desta natureza ajudam a preservar o rico patrimônio cultural da localidade. A categoria experiência foi a mais bem avaliada pelos turistas devido à sua vivência com aspectos como natureza, cultura e comunidade local. A pior avaliação foi a qualidade técnica relacionada à falta de gerenciamento das tecnologias de suporte aos serviços. Realizou um estudo para avaliar a qualidade do serviço em um destino onde o turismo ainda não está consolidado, evidenciando a carência dessas localidades e o potencial desses destinos, além de ser o primeiro trabalho aplicado TOURQUAL em uma tribo indígena.

**Palavras-Chave:** Qualidade de serviços, TOURQUAL, Turismo Cultural, Turismo indígena.

**RESUMEN:**

El objetivo de este artículo es verificar la percepción de los turistas sobre la calidad de los servicios ofrecidos en un destino de turismo cultural en Paraíba. El estudio utiliza un enfoque mixto (cuantitativo y cualitativo), utilizando la estrategia de triangulación en los métodos de recolección de datos. El primero se refiere a los cuestionarios en línea (204 válidos) enviados al gerente de la posada. Los cuales fueron analizados con la ayuda del software PSPP siendo analizados en base a TOURQUAL. El artículo presenta aportes teóricos y prácticos y ayuda a identificar una serie de planes de acción y desarrollo turístico para la región a poner en práctica. Además, las actividades turísticas de esta índole ayudan a conservar el rico patrimonio cultural de la localidad. La categoría experiencia fue la mejor valorada por los turistas debido a su experiencia con aspectos como la naturaleza, la cultura y la comunidad local. La peor valoración fue la calidad técnica relacionada con la falta de gestión de las tecnologías de soporte de los servicios. El estudio presente evaluó la calidad del servicio en un destino donde el turismo aún no está consolidado, mostrando la carencia de estos lugares y el potencial de estos destinos, además de ser el primer trabajo aplicado a TOURQUAL en una tribu indígena.

**Palabras Clave:** Calidad de los servicios, TOURQUAL, Turismo Cultural, Turismo Indígena.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the international context, despite the economic and political challenges, especially in 2017, it exceeded all growth expectations; tourism exceeded 7% of international travel, buying itself in 2016, according to data from the WTTC - World Travel & Tourism Council (2018). In Brazil, data from the Ministry of Tourism (2018) report that the direct participation of tourism in the economy reaches around US \$ 56.8 billion, representing 8.5% of GDP, a significant contribution to the Brazilian economy.

Due to tourism expansion, the activity becomes more complex concerning demand, trends, supply, industry, management, planning instruments (Ramos & Costa, 2017). It demands a new perspective of experience, no longer restrictively defining displacement or even the sale of products and services (Matovelle & Baez, 2018). In this way, tourists have become more critical, considering the choice processes not only the price but also the perceived quality (Mondo, Da Silva & Vidor, 2018) during their experiences.

The concern and commitment of managers with the planning of activities and management of customer satisfaction are interests justified by tourists' new demands (Matovelle & Baez, 2018). Thus, managers of tourist activities, which involve the interaction of people, goods, and the environment, have sought to know tourists' perception and satisfaction due to the fierce current competition (Campos & Maia, 2015). In this context, competitiveness in tourism is multidimensional (Barbosa, Oliveira & Rezende, 2010) and can be understood as the initiative to develop public policies for tourist destinations (Gooroochurn & Sugiyarto, 2005). Also, as preservation or deterioration of areas, and as management, economic vitality and the impacts of tourism on the territory (Santos, Ferreira & Costa, 2014). Something that makes it essential to measure quality from the point of view of those who consume tourist services.

The oldest and most widespread definition in the literature on service quality is that perceived quality results from comparing what the customer expects and what he receives (Parasumaran, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). Said & Fathy (2015) understand the quality of service as the totality of characteristics that can satisfy customers' needs, this ability being the reflection of the value of the service for the customer. So, businesses need to identify the primary resources to measure the quality perceived by their customers, cite the necessary and specific attributes for the location, and the instrument for measuring the quality perceived by tourists.

Measuring the quality of services has multiple possibilities due to the divergence of the models, methods and

tools used for this purpose, being sometimes generalist (Mondo, Talini & Fiates, 2016). To fill this gap, Mondo (2014) built the TOURQUAL model, an evaluation protocol based on a theoretical model for measuring quality services at tourist attractions. The model has six categories for analyzing quality in tourists' perception, which are: 1) access; 2) environment; 3) safety; 4) experience; 5) technical quality; and 6) human element.

In the tourism sector, one of the segments of activity is cultural tourism, defined by the Ministry of Tourism (2008) as the experience of the set of significant historical and cultural heritage elements, valuing and promoting the material and immaterial goods of culture. Goulart & Santos (1998) define cultural tourism as a social phenomenon, a product of human experience, whose practice strengthens social relations and the process of interaction between individuals and social groups belonging to the same culture or different cultures.

Cultural tourism has many particular characteristics and can be considered a new model of tourism, based on planning and management as an alternative to minimize negative impacts resulting from mass tourism under the natural and urban environment, in addition to social and cultural interferences in communities receiving (Carneiro, De Oliveira & Carvalho, 2010). There is a need for the quality of services also to be measured in the context of cultural tourism, from a systemic view with the communities involved, which can establish control mechanisms such as the carrying capacity, monitoring and evaluation of the activities developed (Carneiro, De Oliveira & Carvalho, 2010).

For Mondo, Talini & Fiates (2016), studying tourism experience is understanding the feelings of a tourist when visiting a place, carrying with it its cultural, emotional, expectations and, unconsciously, making comparisons between different tourist destinations. Mondo, Talini & Fiates (2016) applied TOURQUAL and identified that the learning indicator had a higher rate of dissatisfaction among tourists, indicating that cultural aspects deserve more attention and can be better explored by tourism managers. Sette & Tomazzoni (2017) argue that the excess of uniformity in collecting and analyzing results on quality does not consider the different realities of services and tourist destinations. It reveals the importance of observing the TOURQUAL indicators in a cultural tourism destination.

In this context, the question is: What is tourists' perception of the quality of services offered in an indigenous community on the Brazilian coast? Thus, this study's general objective is to analyze tourists' perception of the quality of the services provided in an indigenous community on the Brazilian coast.

The Potiguara indigenous community occupies areas belonging to the states of Pernambuco, Paraíba and Rio Grande do Norte in Brazil. The meaning of its name refers to “shrimp eater”. Baía da Traição is made up of 33 villages, being the only ethnic group in the world to come into conflict with colonizing powers and remain in the same place of origin for more than 500 years. In the indigenous community, cultural immersion, connection with nature, visits to the villages to perform typical dances, body painting, the experience of history and customs are worked on (Silveira, 2001).

In this context, the TOURQUAL Model was applied to analyze tourists' perception in a cultural destination located in João Pessoa – PB. The study has theoretical and practical contributions. The first one offers the application of TOURQUAL in a different type of tourism. The second provides essential information for the management and planning of the studied tourist destination.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

The tourist destination concept is considered multiple, as there are many definitions in the literature (Flores & Campos & Maia, 2015; Mendes, 2014) and contradictory, as the discussions tend to be divergent from the conceptual point of view (Framke, 2002). For the World Tourism Organization Network (2007), tourist destinations can be understood as the regions tourists visit during their travels. Understanding the tourist destination concept should not be an attitude strictly and only linked to the perspectives of offering services and attractions (Gomes, Gândara & Ivars-Baidal, 2017; Joivic, 2016). The holistic vision of Flores & Mendes (2014) states that the destination can be perceived in multiple ways, from the perspective of visitors, the community of the tourist environment and the managers of the respective tourist destinations.

The concept of a tourist destination goes through several different approaches. Part of this concept converges to the tourist destination's perception as a complex network of co-production (Brandão, Joia & Teles, 2016). Considering the needs of planning and managing tourist destinations, the concern is intense and constant with competitiveness (Santos & Forte, 2015). Despite the criticisms surrounding the concept of services, it focuses on three main characteristics identified by Parasumaran, Zeithaml & Berry (1988). They are 1) simultaneity, as they are consumed almost at the same time of production; 2) intangibility, are not physical goods; and 3) heterogeneity, as there is a wide variety of types of existing services, for example, receptive (hotel and extra-hotel activities); food services; transport (from residence to tourist

destination); public; and recreation and entertainment (Beni, 2001). Kotler (2003) states that service is an action or process with intangibility as its main characteristic, which depends on a human effort and may or may not be linked to some physical good (Lamb, 2004; Grönroos, 2003). For Dias (2003), the service is an intangible product, which can be understood as an action that creates value for someone through the change desired by the customer and its benefits.

Paladini (2005) and Silva and Meireles (2006) conceptualize service from the perspective of demand. According to Paladini (2005), the service is the result of activities at the interface between supplier and consumer, together with the set of internal activities of the service provider, to meet customers' needs. In this view, service is an interface atmosphere between those who offer the service and those who consume it. In turn, Silva and Meireles (2006) relate the concept to the characteristics of consumption, where services are examined based on their use and the role they play in each type of consumer. In this definition, services are classified into two categories: intermediate and final (consumer services). The Ministry of Tourism (2011) conceptualizes tourism services as a component of the tourism product, a set of attractions, equipment and services plus facilities located in one or more municipalities, to be offered in an organized manner for a specific price.

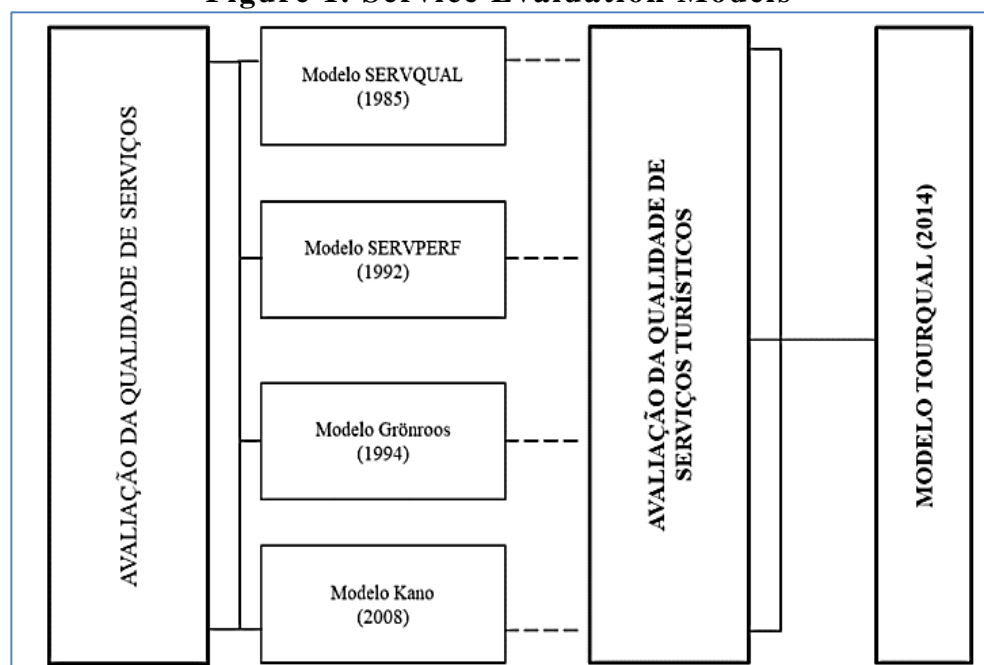
Since the beginning of the 1980s, the service sector has occupied a prominent place in the market (Freitas, 2001). Due to this, several countries encourage tourism as a primary factor for economic development production (Campos & Maia, 2015). The continuous search for excellence in the provision of services requires measuring customers' perceptions about the quality of the services (Miguel & Salomi, 2004; Freitas, 2005). The relationship between services and tourism products, with perceptions about quality and values generated through the tourist experience must be understood as influencing the competitive environment (Campos & Maia, 2015). Thus, it is essential to understand the measuring mechanisms for quality's perceptions of the services and how it is possible to measure the evaluation of the quality of services from the tourist's point of view.

The first contributions about quality of services were made in 1985 from the studies of Parasumaran, Zeithaml and Berry, which define the quality of service as a formal attitude linked to customer satisfaction, relating perception to the expectations of those who consume the service (Mondo, 2015).

The perceived quality in service has been increasingly discussed, especially in the tertiary sector (Da Silva, 2005), considered a fundamental aspect of achieving business growth (Mondo & Fiates, 2015). Thus, quality tends to manifest itself simultaneously with the service, where productivity is

expressed in terms of the satisfaction of those who consume it (Beni, 2001), requiring a constant evaluation of the services offered to tourists to take place in tourism assessment processes.

**Figure 1. Service Evaluation Models**



**Source:** Authors' elaboration (2021)

Despite the models for evaluating the quality of services (Figure 1), TOURQUAL has been an influent model in the tourism mainstream, as it was developed specifically for the sector. TOURQUAL was created in 2014 by Mondo and consists of an evaluation protocol based on measuring the quality of services. The model focuses on quality studies, specifically in the tourism sector. The TOURQUAL model includes a diagram that aggregates six categories: 1) access; 2) environment; 3) safety; 4) experience; 5) human element; 6) technical quality (Table 1).

The access category comprises seven indicators. It corresponds to the set of indicators in which the tourist easily accesses and finds the attraction or destination. The second category is environment including two indicators, which considers the atmosphere of the service. The third category is the human element with five indicators. It is related to the perceptions about the work teams' influences with whom tourists maintain contact during the service consumption as well as the organizational effectiveness and the applied practices by the company.

**Table 1. TOURQUAL Model of categories and their respective indicators**

	INDICATOR	DEFINITION
<b>ACCESS</b>	Accessibility / location	Access per se to the attraction or destination (highways, sidewalks, stairs), as well as perceived ease of access, including the difficulty or facility in finding the attraction or destination and parking.
	PCD accessibility	Adequacy of attractions and destinations so that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as typical tourists, following Brazil's specific laws.
	Access to toilets	The bathrooms' spatial strategy, adequate distribution, compliance with regulation, facilities, hygiene, and environmental aspects.
	Waiting for service	Waiting time it takes for the tourist to be attended
	Ease of purchase	Customer effort to purchase the tourist product or service, availability of information and operationalization of the purchase and sale processes.
	Opening hours	Availability or compromise of tourist access
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	Temperature / Acoustics	Adequacy of the destination's temperature and acoustics to tourist consumption.
	Comfort of the place	Subjective perception of the place's comfort, as well as the pleasure promoted by it.
<b>HUMAN ELEMENT</b>	Presentation of the service	How the employee presents the service: tone of voice, the content of the presentation, speed of the information provided
	Attention	Levels of attention of employees during consumption at the destination, as well as attention to specific needs
	Customer service	Problem-solving ability, kindness, education
	Reliability	Employee integrity
	Technical knowledge	The domain over the content of the destination



<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	Apprenticeship	How much the tourist learned while immersed in the tourist destination
	Entertainment	Elements made available to tourists during their experience is linked to the search to enhance the positive absorption of the experience and satisfaction and relaxation through the five senses
	Evasion	Commitment to keep the tourist immersed in the destination
	Aesthetics	The image from the tourist's perspective
<b>SECURITY</b>	Security	Tourist perceptions of site security
<b>TECHNICAL QUALITY</b>	Price	Values charged for the service, perception of cost / benefit
	Climate conditions	Degree to which climate influences experience
	Maintenance (equipment and infrastructure)	Availability of repair and maintenance services
	Signaling	Possibility of tourist orientation within the destination
	Technology	Degree of technological development offered at the destination
	Cleaning	Perception of cleanliness of the place, physical appearance of employees
	Load capacity	Maximum volume of service at destination
	Variety of activities	Volume of activities offered in addition to the central activity of the tourist service

Source: Mondo and Fiates (2017).

Next, the fourth category refers to the experience and emotion concerns provided during the consumption at the tourist destination, including four indicators. The fifth category is security with one indicator. It refers to the freedom from danger, risk, doubt, physical, mental, and financial security. Finally, the sixth category is technical quality with eight indicators. It is related to the services provision when the tourists perceive the quality as a result of their interaction with company. Considering that such indicators are assential to

assess the quality of the tourism sector, TOURQUAL can be an appropriate mechanism for tourism and it can offer managerial support for destinations in planning and management activities, influencing the experiences during the consumption of tourists. Thus, TOURQUAL can be applied in different contexts to evaluate the tourists' perceived quality of a particular attraction, destination, or tourist service.

### 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study uses a quantitative approach as descriptive research for evaluating the quality of services in a cultural tourism destination. The categories and indicators used to describe the perception of quality by tourists from a cultural destination were selected from the TOURQUAL Model. Flick (2009) instructed a circular research process, which allowed for the reassessment and review of data treatment and analysis.

**Figure 2. Baía da Traição – Brazil**



Source: Site bahia.ws

The research was carried out in a cultural tourism destination, located in the city of Baía da Traição (Figure 2), on the coast of João Pessoa, capital of the State of Paraíba.

The city has about ten thousand residents, seven thousand of whom are indigenous. The study object is a lodging, remarkably peculiar, as the accommodations are made solely and exclusively to provide a Cultural Immersion in the Potiguara ethnic group. The lodging was created about five years ago by a local indigenous citizen and is based on the native people of the region.

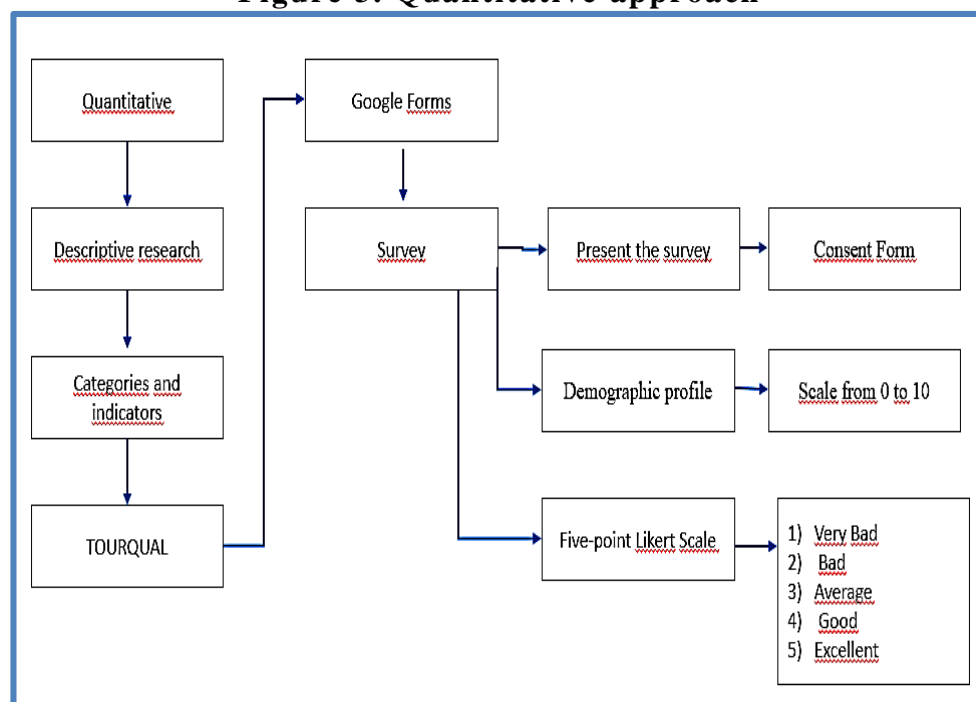
The owner of the lodging is the host and guide as well as responsible for managing the service such as scheduling accommodations, welcoming tourists and taking them to all the activities offered. The Lodging has all the essential equipment for guests, starting from material minimalism in which the guests feel closer to the indigenous people's reality. Located by the sea, the lodging has four large rooms, all with bathrooms, with a maximum capacity to loadge eighteen people at the same time. The booking process is done through Instagram and WhatsApp, being the most significant accommodation flow on weekends and holidays.

Some several tours and activities can be offered to tourists, such as: relaxing massages with techniques, ambience and natural sounds performed by the host's mother, a beautician with over twenty years of experience; trails called 'Caminhos do Anfitrião'; dives in the Rio do Gozo, a spring that empties into the sea of Baía da Traição; cuisines and handicrafts; and visitation to thirty-three villages. It is essential to highlight that, due to Chagas disease, the indigenous are not allowed to live in the villages, but all of them are available for tourists for visiting and for the indigenous to perform their sacred rituals.

For data collection, people who have already stayed at the lodging were considered as the research universe. In the quantitative sample (Figure 3), the host did not have exact knowledge about the number of people who stayed at the lodging, nor contacts such as e-mail or Instagram.

Thus, due to the lack of control over guest information, this survey opted for a convenience sample, carrying out a survey with participants.

**Figure 3. Quantitative approach**



Source: Authors' elaboration (2021)

Google Forms was used to develop the survey in which the questions were based on the TOURQUAL indicators. The survey (was divided into three sections. The first section presents the survey 'Survey for assessing the quality of services at Lodging XY'. Then, the Informed Consent Form (ICF) was conferred to guarantee confidentiality. The second stage of the survey refers to the demographic profile of lodging's guests. In this section, there was a general satisfaction indicator, using a scale from 0 to 10, asking the respondent to assess their general tourist satisfaction level during their experience at the destination. In the third stage, the indicators evaluated using the five-point Likert Scale (ranging from 1 to 5) were arranged, which are: 1) very bad; 2) bad; 3) average, 4) good, and 5) excellent.

Due to the particularity and pioneering characteristics of the object of study, this research added the category "sustainable development" to the set of categories of the TOURQUAL. This new category comprises three indicators: preservation of the environment, generation of income for the locality and knowledge of other cultures. Thus, the survey presented 28 indicators, divided into seven categories (Table 7).

The data collection was performed from August 20 to November 22 of the year 2020. The survey was sent to the lodging's host, who posted it on the Instagram page and in WhatsApp groups of guests. At the end of the process, a total of 204 valid questionnaires were collected. Quantitative data were analyzed with the aid of the PSPP software. PSPP was

preferred because it is free software application developed by the GNU community. Thus, we performed the univariate and bivariate analyzes, analyzing the following statistical indexes: mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

##### ***Respondent's Profile***

The participants are tourists who stayed at the lodging, in which 45.1% of respondents are male and 54.9% female. Regarding the age group, 14.7% of the participants are between 18 and 25 years old; 43.6% are between 26 and 35 years old; 34.3% between 36 and 45 years old; 6.4% between 46 and 55 years old and only 1% are people over 56 years old.

Considering scholarity, 10.3% have only completed high school; 45.6% have completed higher education; 33.8% have complete specialization; 6.9% have a master's degree and the minority, 3.4% have a full doctorate. Considering the monthly income, 13.7% of respondents receive up to one minimum wage per month; 54.4% of respondents receive between one and three minimum wages; 18.1% receive between three and five minimum wages and 13.7% above five wages.

Regarding marital status, 66.7% of respondents are single, 24.5% are married, 7.4% are divorced, and 1.4% are widowed. Regarding their profession, 35.3% stated that they are employees of the private sector; 18.6% are civil servants; 32.4% are self-employed; 0.5% are retired; 2.9% did not perform professional activities at the time of the survey, and about 10.3% have other professional activities. Finally, the respondents' overall satisfaction with the accommodation averaged 9.76, considering a scale ranging from 0 to 10.

##### ***Evaluation of indicators***

Next, the analyzes of the TOURQUAL categories and their respective indicators would be presented.

##### ***Access category***

The access category refers to the indicators in which tourists have their first contact with the lodging. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistical result (mean and standard deviation) and each indicator's relationship to overall satisfaction through Pearson's correlation.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the Access Category indicators**

Indicator	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlation with Overall Satisfaction
Accessibility / Location	4,55	0,710	0,378
Accessibility/ Access to toilets	4,73	0,619	0,552
Waiting for service	4,71	0,594	0,487
Ease of purchase	4,75	0,563	0,348
Opening hours	4,84	0,491	0,468

Source: Authors' elaboration (2021).

Overall, this category scored highly ( $\bar{x} = 4,72$ ), considered excellent by respondents, where the opening hours' indicator ( $\bar{x} = 4,84$ ) was the best rated in this category, and the accessibility and location category had the lowest average ( $\bar{x} = 4,55$ ) and standard deviation equivalent to 0,710, indicating that the data are dispersed from the central mean. The comments can explain the lower score for accessibility and location because the lodging has difficult access.

One hundred ninety-four codes were identified, referring to the term "complicated access". This may be related to the lodging location since it is located at a certain distance from the highway (BR 101) of the region. It may hinder the faster access of tourists to the lodging, which could influence a negative evaluation of the tourists. However, the lodging is located in a reserved place, in front of the beach and far away from the agglomerations of the city of Baía da Traição. It has been seen by tourists as a positive factor.

The other indicators of the access category were not identified in the comments but they were well evaluated on the survey, ranking between 4,71 and 4,84. The indicator access to toilets ( $\bar{x} = 4,73$ ) was considered excellent by the respondents. It corroborates Machado (2018) who concluded that the bathroom had been a priority for evaluating accommodation.

The waiting for service indicator is crucial for the lodging, as the host does not receive an amount above eighteen guests simultaneously. Even with this decision, the indicator's average corresponded to 4,71, showing that the guests are satisfied. Then, the average ease of purchase was 4,75. This result can be explained by the booking method used at the lodging. Interested parties seek the host through Instagram, where the reservation is made through Whatsapp, facilitating the reservation process. Finally, the opening hours were the best-rated indicator in the category, with an average equivalent to 4,84.

Specifically, the accessibility and location indicator can be better managed by the host of the lodging. Although access is related to external aspects, the research suggests offering

guests more precise information about access and location. Also, reinforcing that the site is justified by the central element of the experience provided in that place: getting to know the Potiguara culture, where tribes are located far from the city centre, so that cultural roots and contact with nature are maintained.

Considering the correlation of indicators in this category with the variable of general satisfaction, Hours of Operation were the indicator with the highest correlation (0,753), Accessibility and Location showed the lowest correlation (0,378) with general satisfaction. According to Hair et al. (2009), two variables are considered correlated when the changes in one variable are associated with one another.

#### *Environment category*

The environment's category is concerning to the ambience of the place such as lighting, decoration, temperature, acoustics, and comfort perceived by visitors. The category included both indicators: Temperature and acoustics and Comfort as well (Table 3). Score of the environment category was high with mean of 4.80. In one side, Temperature and acoustics and Comfort and tranquillity have similar evaluations by the respondents. On the other side, the Comfort and tranquillity has a higher correlation (0,515) with general satisfaction than the Temperature and acoustics (0,493). This correlation indicates that comfort and tranquillity are aspects more influential in the tourist's overall satisfaction than their concerning about Lodging's internal temperature and silence.

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the Environment Category indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Correlation with Overall Satisfaction</b>
<b>Temperature and acoustics</b>	4,79	0,556	0,476
<b>Comfort and tranquillity</b>	4,80	0,350	0,515

Source: Authors' elaboration (2021).

In the analysis of the TripAdvisor website comments, the environment category was mentioned once through the Temperature/acoustic indicator and 44 times through the Comfort /Tranquillity indicator. In summary, the tourist's comments indicated that guests positively evaluate the comfort and especially the place's tranquillity, which can be justified by the Lodging location, far from the city centre. Comfort is also linked to the perceived sense of pleasure, so the host can use tourists' speeches to emphasize the particularity of the



local tourism activity, which is evidenced by the distance from the interest in developing mass tourism.

*Human element category*

The category of the human element (Table 4) is concerning to human aspects in service provision processes. Such category obtained an overall mean of 4,88 in which is considered the second-best mean among all the study categories.

**Table 4. Descriptive statistics of the Human Element Category indicators**

Indicator	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlation with Overall Satisfaction
Presentation of the service	4,80	0,517	0,651
Guide's attention	4,92	0,384	0,461
Customer service	4,84	0,498	0,495
Trust in the guide	4,93	0,373	0,383
Technical knowledge of the guide	4,92	0,384	0,363

**Source:** Authors' elaboration (2021).

In this category, the best-rated indicator was Trust in the guide ( $\bar{x} = 4,94$ ). This indicator is vital for the destination since the host's lodging carries out all the activities. Many studies have reinforced the importance of the guide's role in tourism and skills that can maximize the guides' performance such as faithful compliance with the hired itineraries, proper posture, visual presentation, good oratory, confidence in dealing with unforeseen circumstances, and responsibility (Canani, 1999; Leme, 2010). In the specific case of the lodging, the high evaluation of the Trust indicator can be explained by the fact that the guide is a native of the region and has vast geographic and cultural knowledge about the town.

The lowest evaluation indicator was the Presentation of the service, with mean of 4,80. The result can be explained by the non-existence of SOPs (Standard Operating Procedure) in the pre-sale, sale and post-sale processes. In addition, there is no offer of a Portfolio to those interested in accommodation, containing information relevant to access, payment methods, rules of the inn and values of the services provided. Despite suggestions for improvement, all category indicators were assessed at very close to an excellent level. In the human element category, the indicator that showed the highest correlation with the general satisfaction indicator was a grade of 0,651.



From five indicators of the human element category, only three were mentioned in the tourist's comments. They are knowledge of the guide, service and attention, with 17 coded comments. Regarding the guide's attention, respondents rated as an excellent factor ( $\bar{x} = 4,92$ ). Hospitality is defined by Dias (2002) as the satisfactory interaction between strangers, for the guest's physiological comfort, through physical, cultural and space structures, has been a relevant aspect in tourism studies. Hospitality emerges as a fundamental factor in the search for competitive advantage in the sector (Erig, 2014).

The service indicator mean was 4,84. Finally, concerning the guide's technical knowledge, as in the previous indicator was described the hosts themselves take tourists to see the most beautiful parts of the Bay and it should contribute to the indicator to obtain a mean of 4,92.

### *Experience Category*

The experience category is concerning to the level of emotions and feelings of the tourist. The experience category presented an overall average of 4,90, considered the best average among all the TOURQUAL categories applied at the Hotel. Yet, such category presented a more significant amount of coded comments in the TripAdvisor. This category includes four indicators: Learning, Entertainment, Evasion and Aesthetics (Table 5).

**Table 5. Descriptive statistics of the Experience Category indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Correlation with Overall Satisfaction</b>
Learning	4,91	0,428	0,467
Entertainment	4,84	0,504	0,497
Aesthetics	4,92	0,407	0,389
Evasion	4,91	0,417	0,371

**Source:** Authors' elaboration (2021).

The high evaluation of the experience category may reflect the focus of experience tourism offered to cultural immersion in the Potiguara ethnic group, with cultural exchanges being the reason tourists stay. De La Torre (1997) explains that, by experience tourism, practices are social phenomena in which tourists voluntarily and temporarily, for recreation, rest and culture, leave their natural place to develop social interrelationships, economic and cultural. All indicators belonging to the experience category showed very positive evaluations, approaching the highest level of satisfaction (level 5 of the scale).

The Learning indicator refers to how much the tourist learned during the lodging stay and showed a mean of 4,91 with learning acquired during the tourists' accommodation provides knowledge about the local history and culture.

On the Entertainment indicator (4,84), tourists were asked about the fun elements that available to them during the experience. For Mondo (2014), this indicator is linked to the tourist's five senses and how they provide satisfaction, laughter, and relaxation. Therefore, it is concerning to the host's efforts and to enhance the positive experience of tourists, making it more attractive.

Finally, Evasion indicator implies the tourists' active participation in their experience, that is, the host's ability to keep tourists immersed in the place. The indicator has mean of 4,9, and this result can be reinforced through the following statements: manatee conservation station, beach, lagoon, indigenous handicrafts and a place that offers walks, beaches, river, bathing, exploration, trails, history and many cool places to discover.

In this category, indicator's correlations with overall satisfaction were not high, varying between 0,371 (Entertainment) and 0,497 (Entertainment), signalling that these indicators probably do not influence the overall satisfaction index. The number of options existing in the locality can be used in a manner planned by the owner, making tourists spend more time staying at the Lodging, enjoying a more significant amount of activities, and generating more locality income.

#### *Security category*

The security category refers to physical, mental and financial security perceived by tourists, it refers to the zeal and care of the destination for its tourists (Mondo, 2014). The category has only the Safety indicator, which presented mean of 4,81. The concern with security in tourist destinations has been widely discussed as tourism is affected by criminal practices, which tend to alienate visitors who seek safe environments as destinations (Soares Junior, 2007). Despite the importance highlighted in the studies carried out, in this one, the correlation of the Safety indicator with that of overall satisfaction was 0,420. Even so, the lodging manager must continue to be concerned with reinforcing safety aspects at the destination.

#### *Technical Quality Category*

The category of technical quality is related to the functional quality that the consumer receives during the service's consumption. It represents the actual moment of interaction between the tourist and the person providing the service. The indicators of this category are presented in Table

6. The category presented an overall mean of 4,70, and only six indicators were mentioned in the comments, which are: prices, technology, carrying capacity, climate, cleaning and variety of activities. Although the mean indexes show satisfactory results in all indicators, the technical quality category presented the lowest mean in comparison to other indicators.

**Table 6. Descriptive statistics of the indicators of the Technical Quality Category**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Correlation with Overall Satisfaction</b>
Prices	4,76	0,582	0,424
Climate	4,85	0,474	0,476
Maintenance	4,69	0,626	0,46
Signalling	4,73	0,611	0,485
Technology	4,31	0,877	0,338
Cleanliness	4,69	0,686	0,452
Variety of activities	4,80	0,571	0,562
Load capacity	4,76	0,562	0,428

Source: Authors' elaboration (2021).

The indicator with the lowest rating of this category was Technology ( $\bar{x}$  = 4,31). The result can be explained by the influence of the local characteristics of the lodging's region. Specifically, there is no provision of technological equipment. Besides, due to customs and distance from technological devices, the lodging does not have many options like take money, as there are few places that accept cards, and there is no ATM. Considering the interests for developing the tourism in the region, it is necessary that technologies be available for the tourists, mainly technologies to support financial transactions.

Regarding Prices, the indicator was evaluated with mean of 4,76. The biggest highlight of prices was concerning gastronomic that are excellent and delicious. When asked about the climate, tourists marked their level of satisfaction with the local climatic conditions. Although the destination has no control over the indicator, it is relevant to the type of tourism offered outdoors. The average for this indicator was 4,85 and it was considered profitable in statements of pleasant climate and pleasant temperature.

Maintenance is linked to care of equipment, materials and tools disposed of in the lodging, with mean of 4,69. This indicator discusses the availability of maintenance services at the lodging. The internal Signalling indicator obtained mean of 4,73 and corresponded to the tourist's orientation inside the lodging. Specifically, this indicator is supported by the

owner's services since all activities are supervised by a guide, the lodging owner.

Cleaning indicator has mean of 4,69 and this indicator was very positive, as shown in the following statements that is clean and organized. Then, the Variety of activities was the indicator with the second-best evaluation in the category of technical quality ( $\square = 4,80$ ). The lodging offers a series of options for the tourist experience, for example, massages, trails, dives, visitation to the villages, cuisines and handicrafts.

Finally, the Load capacity (4,76) refers to the number of people staying at the same time and the extent to which the accommodations interfere in the tourists' experiences and comfort. Tourists commented that the "lodging is large", allowing the rental to accommodate a satisfactory amount of tourists.

Among the indicators belonging to the category of technical quality, the Variety of Activities presented the highest correlation with overall satisfaction with an index of 0,562. This may indicate that satisfaction with the quantity and types of activities offered influences tourists' overall satisfaction, mainly due to the nature of the tourism developed by the lodging.

#### *Sustainable Development Category*

The last category of analysis refers to sustainable development, which is not part of TOURQUAL but has been added to the model due to the nature of the study's object. Cultural tourism is a type of tourism that has been discussed from a relational point of view with sustainable development, mainly because tourism is an excellent tool for economic and social development (De Oliveira; Silva & Moreira, 2009). The relationship between tourism and culture must be carefully aligned with the community since this is the channel that can offer satisfactory conditions to maintain and preserve, in a sustainable way, the cultural legacy that needs to be safeguarded (De Oliveira; Silva & Moreira, 2009). For this category, three indicators have been suggested (Table 7).

**Table 7. Descriptive statistics of the Sustainable Development Category indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Correlation with Overall Satisfaction</b>
Preservation of the environment	4,83	0,474	0,481
Income generation	4,83	0,488	0,417
Knowledge of other cultures	4,89	0,431	0,452

Source: Authors' elaboration (2021)

About the Environmental Preservation indicator, the participants were asked about their level of satisfaction with preserving the environment in the locality. The average of the indicator was 4,83, indicating the host's commitment to preserving fauna and flora.

In the comments, the Environmental Preservation indicator was mentioned in five passages. For example, according to tourist's comments such as "the hotel industry has grown consciously, without harming the environment" and "beautiful, very preserved coastline".

We sought to identify the perception of tourists' satisfaction with income generation indicator through tourism in the region regarding income generation. The indicator was included because the lodging guests are led by the host and guide to visit the villages where other activities are offered such as handicrafts and cuisine. The income's community is distributed, not being concentrated only in the lodging. This indicator had mean of 4,83, reinforcing that tourists perceive this initiative as very positive during the experience. This indicator also enhances the benefit of socio-economic development for the receiving location (Dias & Aguiar, 2002).

Finally, the Knowledge indicator of other cultures obtained the highest mean in sustainable development (4.89). This finding is influenced by the focus of tourism developed in that region, cultural tourism immersed in the ethnicity of the Potiguaras. The indicator extracted and highlighted in the statements that indigenous culture is latent in the city and unique experience with Indigenous Potiguaras culture, crafts, music and religion. These comments reinforce the tourists' satisfaction in having contact with the indigenous culture of the native people of Baía da Traição and the sustainability of the place.

In general, the set of the categories had high mean (4,81) for the overall satisfaction, which is a value close to the maximum satisfaction index (excellent level).

The best-rated category was experiencing ( $\square = 4.90$ ), as shown in Figure 9. The lowest-rated category was technical quality, with a greater need for managerial concern with the indicators included in this category. The homogeneity of data and proximity of the assessment to the maximum level of satisfaction can be explained by the particular public that consumes the evaluated services. Also, by fact, this place's cultural tourism is a pioneer in the State of Paraíba, and there may not be comparison possibilities with other lodgings because this is the only one to offer cultural immersion accommodation.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The current study aimed to analyze tourists' perception regarding the quality of services offered in a cultural tourism destination in Paraíba. To do so, the TOURQUAL Model indicators were analyzed to assess the quality perceived by tourists who stayed at the lodging under analysis.

Although all categories have been very well evaluated, it is essential to highlight Experience and Technical Quality as categories with the highest and lowest ratings, respectively. First, the Experience category results show the destination's tourist potential, supported by a highly positive assessment by tourists. Considering that the tourism experience comprises the level of emotions provided and felt by the tourist, this element constitutes the main characteristic of the destination studied here: cultural immersion in the Potiguara ethnic group.

Thus, the main research findings reflect that the type of tourism offered for cultural immersion in the Potiguara ethnic group is presented in a pioneering, innovative and sustainable way since there are no localities records with similar characteristics. Tourists who decide to stay at the Lodging do so only to experience this immersion since guests are not accepted just for the stay. The host's willingness to receive tourists and direct them to a wide range of programs reinforces that the locality has many potentials and can be better explored, providing tourists with learning about indigenous culture and the locality, possibilities of income generation.

Yet, although the Technical Quality category had the lowest rating than the other categories, the average was still satisfactory. However, the comments extracted from the website suggest that tourists feel the need for better infrastructure. The reality of infrastructure below expectations is understood by the local characteristics themselves since the indigenous of the destination have hardly changed their original customs. Furthermore, the city does not have enough structure for the potential of the studied destination.

The category of Sustainable Development makes a significant contribution due to the nature of the destination. As he has training in environmental management, the host seeks to sensitize visitors about the importance of environmental preservation and each social actor's responsibility for environmental impacts. The category reinforces the importance of the concern with aspects that can cause damage to the areas and reinforces the benefits of cultural and environmental tourism, which are very different from mass tourism.

The importance of the category of sustainable development being included in research using Tourqual raises tourists and visitors' awareness about the importance of environmental preservation so that the environment is less degraded. In this way, it would be possible to reinforce today's

preference for future enjoyment based on the triple bottom of sustainability with environmental, social, and economic emphasis.

Concerning sustainable development in indigenous communities, you need to contact the preserved nature, with immersion in the environment being carried out without more significant environmental, cultural and economic damage, thus characterizing an indigenous tribe that values tourists' awareness through environmental actions and education.

This study presents theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it paves the way in the literature that starts with studies' performance to evaluate the quality of service in a destination where tourism is not yet solidified, highlighting the lack of these locations and the potential of these destinations. Researching new sites offers researchers greater scope in the discussion of results and findings. This study helps to identify a series of action plans and tourism development for the region to put into practice. Local public agencies need to offer local tourism development subsidies, as most residents are indigenous. Tourism can work in the area as a two-way street since it can spread Baía da Traição at a national and international level. Besides, tourist activities of this nature help to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the locality. To improve this process and make the reservation more professional, it is suggested that essential guest data be recorded so that a database can be built with information such as e-mail, home address, cell phone number, etc.

This study is not without limitations. The lack of information on tourists who have already stayed at the lodging was one of the data collection restrictions. Thus, it is imagined that this study could have reached a more significant number of tourists. The profile of tourists, being particular, may have contributed to the slight variation in the data.

For future research, this research suggested developing studies in other accommodation facilities in Brazil that provide cultural immersion in indigenous tribes to understand the perceptions of tourists in these tourist destinations and analyze why they choose to be experiencing a historical experience in this way. In addition, we suggested applying the model linked to Sustainable Development in indigenous locations with a focus on this type of cultural tourism, in addition to a comparison between destinations.

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