Evaluation tools and strategies used in customer service in micro and small businesses in the city of Chihuahua

Herramientas y estrategias de evaluación utilizadas en el servicio al cliente en las micro y pequeñas empresas en la ciudad de Chihuahua

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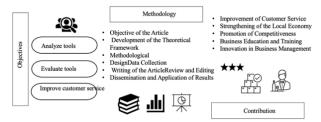
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Abstract

The general objective of this research is to explore the tools and strategies used by micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in Chihuahua to evaluate and improve customer service during the first half of 2024. Specific objectives include identifying the most commonly used tools, analyzing their application through interviews with entrepreneurs, and proposing activities to enhance customer service. The methodology involves exploratory research with focus groups and in-depth interviews, using 12 open-ended questions in the Gesell chamber at the Universidad Tecnológica de Chihuahua. Thirteen entrepreneurs from commercial and service MSEs participate, and nine in-depth interviews are conducted. The research reveals that evaluating customer service is crucial for obtaining information about service perception and capitalizing on business opportunities, which is reflected in increased profits.



Resumen

El objetivo general de esta investigación es explorar las herramientas y estrategias utilizadas por las micro y pequeñas empresas (mypes) en Chihuahua para evaluar y mejorar el servicio al cliente durante el primer semestre de 2024. Se plantean objetivos específicos, como identificar las herramientas más utilizadas, analizar su aplicación a través de entrevistas con empresarios, y proponer actividades para mejorar el servicio al cliente. La metodología incluye una investigación exploratoria con grupos de enfoque y entrevistas en profundidad, utilizando 12 preguntas abiertas en la cámara Gesell de la Universidad Tecnológica de Chihuahua. Participan 13 empresarios de mypes comerciales y de servicios, y se realizan nueve entrevistas en profundidad. La investigación revela que evaluar el servicio al cliente es crucial para obtener información sobre la percepción del servicio y aprovechar oportunidades de negocio, lo cual se refleja en un aumento de las utilidades.



Evaluation, Service, Clients

Evaluación, Servicio, Clientes

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Introduction

This document shows the tools and strategies that micro and small enterprises in the city of Chihuahua, Chihuahua use to evaluate customer service, which is understood as all those activities and processes that a company carries out to satisfy the needs and expectations of its customers, ranging from attention and follow-up before, during and after a purchase, to problem solving and complaint management. In addition to answering questions or solving problems, customer service also allows SMEs to foster customer relations and maintain customer loyalty.

It is mentioned that 'Customer service is not only about solving problems, but also about anticipating customers' needs and exceeding their expectations. This creates loyalty and promotes a long-term relationship between the company and its customers' (Ariza Ramírez & Ariza Ramírez, 2016).

To find out, through qualitative research, the tools and strategies of SMEs in the evaluation and improvement of customer service in the city of Chihuahua, in the first half of the year 2024.

Identify through two focus groups of entrepreneurs, the most used tools and strategies, analyse the application of tools and strategies with interviews with entrepreneurs, identify if these tools and strategies applied generate an increase in profitability and propose complementary activities to the MSMEs to strengthen customer service. The customer is the reason for the existence of any business (Albrecht & Bradford, 1990) and the reason why companies direct their policies, products, services and procedures towards satisfying their expectations (Pérez, 2006).

The above allows information to be gathered to accept or reject the hypothesis, which states that micro and small businesses use tools and strategies for the evaluation and improvement of customer service, which leads to increased sales and strengthened attention to their target market.

The article is composed of sections that give structure to the research, it describes the methodology used in the research process, the results obtained, conclusions and recommendations to the companies and/or representatives of the same, in the document there is also the section of annexes in which the instrument used and information that supports and complements the research is evidenced and finally the section of references.

Problem

What promotional tools and strategies are used by SMEs in the evaluation and continuous improvement of customer service?

Objectives

General objective

To find out, through exploratory research, the tools and strategies used by SMEs in the evaluation and improvement of customer service in the city of Chihuahua in the first half of the year 2024.

Specific objectives

- To identify, through focus groups of entrepreneurs, the evaluation tools and strategies most commonly used by the MSMEs.
- To analyse the application of tools and strategies through interviews with entrepreneurs.
- To identify whether the tools and strategies applied generate an increase in the usefulness of the MSEs.
- To propose complementary activities to the MSEs to strengthen customer service.

Hypothesis

Micro and small enterprises use tools and strategies for the evaluation and improvement of customer service to increase sales and strengthen the attention to their target market.

Methodology

Type of research

An exploratory research is carried out to collect information with a questionnaire to two focus groups with the process of saturation of and in-depth interviews categories, entrepreneurs of micro and small enterprises in the city of Chihuahua, to identify if they use tools and strategies to evaluate customer service. (In the exploratory research a representative sample of the universe is not required). For the research, 12 open questions are posed for the focus group which is carried out in the Gesell chamber in the facilities of the Technological University of Chihuahua. Thirteen entrepreneurs from micro and small commercial and service enterprises participate in the focus groups (five in the first group and eight in the second).

Nine in-depth interviews were conducted with entrepreneurs with the support of students from the Business Development course as moderators and interviewers. The evaluation instrument is elaborated according to the problem statement and the research objectives. In the application of the research instrument, the aim is to identify the line of business and size of the enterprises. Questions 1 to 14 focus on identifying whether customer service is important, the quality they provide, as well as the tools they use to evaluate the quality of service and the benefits of the evaluation.

Eleven questions are elaborated to be applied in the in-depth interview regarding the importance of the use of tools for the evaluation of customer service.

Selection of interviewees

Entrepreneurs of micro enterprises and entrepreneurs of small enterprises through referrals in May 2024.

Box 1		
Table 1		
Name of the companies of the owners interviewed		
_		
Interviews	Interviewed owners	
Objective.	Micro and small	
	enterprises	
To analyse the application	Barber	
of tools and strategies	DiCampo	
with interviews with	Inglés Vital	
entrepreneurs.	Monte Horeb (tortillería)	
	Sport Garden	
	Seguros con alma	

Source: [own elaboration]

Ever-Green Solutions.

Agente de seguros

Higher Kicks

Selection of panelists for the focus group.

A selection of micro and small business entrepreneurs was made by convenience in May 2024.

Design of the assessment instrument for in-depth interview

- 1. When does the company start operations?
- 2. What market is the product and/or service aimed at?
- 3. How do you consider the quality of the service provided by your employees to the customer?
- 4. What tools do you use to measure customer satisfaction?
- 5. Have you implemented strategies for your employees to provide quality service and what are these strategies?
- 6. How do you evaluate service quality?
- 7. Have you lost customers because of your staff's attentiveness?
- 8. What corrective actions do you take if this situation occurs?
- 9. What kind of advice or training (for your employees) would you like to receive in order to improve customer service?

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- 10. Would you like students of Business Innovation and Marketing to do their internships in your company in order to carry out a customer satisfaction improvement project?
- 11. Would you like professors from the Business Innovation and Marketing course to carry out an analysis and development of strategies for quality in customer service?

Designing the evaluation instrument for the focus group

Business activity	
Industria service	commercial
Company size	
Micro (1-10 employees) (11-50 employees)	small
Years of staying in the market	
1 to 2 years 3 to 4	5 to

- 1. What is customer service for you?
- 2. Do you consider it necessary to measure the satisfaction of the service you offer to your customers?

Yes _____ why? No____ why?

3. Do you measure customer satisfaction?

Yes_____ No____ (Why?)

- 4. If yes, what tools do you use to measure customer satisfaction?
- 5. What benefits has this information given you?
- 6. What changes have you made since you started the company so far, considering the monitoring of customer service?
- 7. How do you perceive the customer service-sales-loyalty relationship?
- 8. Have you sought expert advice to assess customer service, and what kind of advice?

- 9. Have they lost customers as a result of poor quality customer service? How do they perceive the loss of customers?
- 10. Brainstorm what customer service quality measurement tools you are familiar with.
- 11. What customer loyalty strategies do you use to retain customers?
- 12. How do you evaluate and how often do you evaluate the quality of service you provide to your customers?
- 13. What aspects of customer service do you evaluate?
- 14. what benefits have you perceived when you evaluate the quality of service and implement improvements?
- 10. what is the best way for your company to carry out a customer satisfaction improvement project?
- 11. Would you like professors of the Business Innovation and Marketing degree to carry out an analysis and development of strategies for quality in customer service?

Theoretical Framework

Customer service refers to all those activities and processes that a company undertakes to meet the needs and expectations of its customers, from service and follow-up before, during and after a purchase, to problem resolution and complaint handling. Customer service is not only about answering questions or solving problems, but also about creating positive experiences and building relationships to foster brand loyalty. can involve providing personalised attention, maintaining clear and effective communication, offering quality products and ensuring that customers feel valued and listened to at all times. Attracting and retaining customers is critical to a business, attracting new customers allows you to increase your customer base, which in turn can lead to higher sales and profits. Retaining existing customers is equally important, as their loyalty can generate recurring revenue over time. Both strategies are essential for a company's longterm growth and success.

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Due to the interest shown by companies to meet the quality and needs of customers in terms of the service provided, the need arose to define the term quality in service (Llorens and Fuentes, 2000), undoubtedly, we can confirm it every day when 'customers buy from the company that offers the highest value perceived by them; that is, they evaluate the difference between all the benefits and all the costs of a market offer in relation to the offers of the competition' (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012) p. 13.

Thus, we can mention the importance of quality in products or services, from the business point of view, is related to the extent that a good or service meets the needs and expectations of customers, this perspective is not limited simply to meet technical specifications, and includes reliability, aspects such as durability, functionality, safety, and customer's point of view on the excellence of the product or service, in the business environment, quality is not only a desirable feature, but a fundamental strategy for long-term success. It involves the execution of production or service delivery processes and standards that ensure consistency and uniformity in the delivery of products or services free from defects or errors. It also involves the company's ability to adapt and continuously improve in response to changing customer feedback and needs.

Quality in products or services is also closely linked to brand reputation and customer satisfaction. High quality products or services not only generate satisfied customers, but can also help differentiate a company from its competitors and build a loyal and brand-loyal customer base.

To understand and intertwine the concept it is mentioned that 'the importance of product quality in the public mind has resulted in it becoming a top priority for most organisations' (Juran & Gryna, 1995 p. 11).

Customer loyalty is a business strategy designed to keep existing customers engaged and loyal to a specific brand, product or service. Rather than focusing on acquiring new customers, customer loyalty seeks to strengthen relationships with existing customers so that they will continue to buy repeatedly and become brand advocates.

'A good approach to a given loyalty programme requires a reflection on each and every one of the phases leading to its implementation' (Arranz & Gómez, 2014). Along with satisfaction surveys because they are tools used by companies to collect information about customers' opinions on their products, services or experiences. These surveys usually contain a series of questions designed to evaluate aspects such as product or service quality, customer service, response times, facilities, customer follow-up, among others.

The main purpose is to obtain direct feedback from customers to understand their needs, expectations and perceptions about the company, this allows the company to identify areas of opportunity and make corrective actions to increase customer satisfaction and strengthen relationships with them, the key to design these surveys is to design clear and meaningful questions to ensure that the survey is easy to understand and answer, can be conducted online, telephone or within the facilities, among others, so we can emphasise the importance of customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers offer the company the promise of increased profits and reduced operating costs' (Dutka, 2001).

In Chihuahua, the Escuela de Negocios Competitivos y Economía Solidaria (ENCES) supports with courses and trainings that serve as strategies for customer use in micro and small enterprises (MSMEs), a competitive advantage that contributes to the development and strengthening of business enterprises, enabling them to better understand the needs and expectations of their customers. By collecting and analysing data on customer satisfaction, perception of service quality and areas for improvement, businesses can adjust their practices and processes to deliver more personalised and satisfying experiences. This not only helps retain existing customers, but can also attract new through customers positive recommendations and reputation. By understanding customer preferences behaviour patterns, companies can develop new products or services that better meet market needs. This gives them a competitive advantage and allows them to differentiate themselves in an increasingly saturated business environment.

Another important benefit is improved operational efficiency and value for money. By regularly assessing customer service performance, companies can identify inefficient or redundant processes and take corrective action to improve productivity and reduce costs. This is crucial for MSMEs, which often operate with limited resources and must maximise every opportunity to ensure their long-term viability. Development and Competitiveness Directorate (n.d.)

Results

Relevant responses from the panellists in the focus groups are presented below:

Table 2 Tabulation of responses				
Relevant aspects	Qualification	Measuring tools	Improvement strategies	
Customer service	Excellent to good	The vast majority mention that they do not use them	Introduce and promote the use of tools	
Quality	On average good	The vast majority say they do not use them	Defining clear quality standards for products or services	
Customer satisfaction	Good to fair	The vast majority say they do not use them	Create customer loyalty and rewards programmes	
Evaluation	If you rate the service	They do not have tools	Establish a system for collecting and analysing evaluation data	

Source: own elaboration

Qualitative analysis of the focus groups

The objective of the focus groups is to identify the evaluation tools and strategies most commonly used by the MSMEs for customer service in order to propose strategies to improve customer service. Annex table 2. The participants of the first focus group have an entrepreneurial profile and work in areas such as: medicine and pharmaceuticals, leasing of flats, marketing and advertising services, insurance and bonds, advertising design. Most of them provide a service, but they are also traders of products aimed at the final consumer.

The members of the second focus group are involved in services such as banquets, internet, shadow teachers, as well as an architectural firm, and in the commercial sector they sell tamales, American clothing and car lots.

According to the data obtained, the companies have been established for an average of five years in the market, and the workforce ranges from three to thirty employees.

The number of employees may increase in the case of marketing and advertising agencies, as it depends on the size of the project to be developed, but five members of the second group have no staff.

The entrepreneurs consider it important to provide quality in customer service and agree that they must emphasise its measurement, which is why they are concerned and busy training their employees so that the service they provide to their clients is better and better. They say that in this way they are able to know what is being done well and what needs to be improved, in addition to using the information to solve the faults that arise, through the creation and implementation that contribute to the development and permanence of the company in the market. For this reason, the businessmen agree on applying a survey for post-sales followup, which is one of the main tools they use to measure the quality of the service provided to their customers, and which consists of three to five questions and is sent by e-mail. In the case of the leasing area, the businessman considers that tenants are satisfied with the agreement and the treatment they are given, since in all cases they remain in the property until the contract is terminated.

For their part, two of the panellists stated that they have not paid much attention to the use of tools to evaluate the quality of customer service, however, when reviewing the rating that customers make, through Google Maps, it reaches five stars, this criterion being the highest, so indirectly this tool is the one they use, especially those who are dedicated to the pharmaceutical industry.

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The rest of the panellists have used satisfaction surveys and pre-service surveys, the latter with the aim of detecting whether they come by recommendation and their application carried out both physically and electronically, storing the information collected in databases, as well as using complaint and suggestion boxes, emphasising that none of them buy or hire any 'paid' tool or software to monitor, evaluate or measure the quality of customer service.

With respect to the second group, three of the participants indicate that they use the exit survey, while in the case of the shadow teacher, she only presents monthly reports on the progress of the work done with the child, while the representative of the architectural firm claims to carry out a follow-up survey of the work, and two of the panellists agree with the first group in the sense of using social networks, and only one does not carry out the measurement.

The entrepreneurs recognise that measuring the quality of customer service allows them to improve and obtain information to adapt the forms of customer service and create strategies that contribute to work to ensure customer retention and loyalty and increase sales and income.

In terms of making changes in the ways of monitoring and evaluation, they comment that fortunately they have always had customers, but not loyal customers, i.e., they did not keep the same ones and many did not repeat the purchase, the reason being that there were no actions to retain them and make them loyal, so they opted to strengthen communication mechanisms, attend and monitor interactions and metrics on social networks, in addition to new customer service strategies and, today, in the words of the entrepreneurs: 'happy together'.

For those in the health sector, they have opted to create a 24-hour hotline to provide 24-hour service, especially in emergencies, in response to patients' suggestions, which has had excellent results.

In the case of flat leasing, establishing clear policies has allowed them to maintain a captive market. Others mention that they changed the way they approached the client, for example, changing the phrase 'what do you want' to 'how can I help you' or 'what can I do for you'. Others comment that talking less so that the customer does not get lost with so much information, being specific in what the customer wants to hear has yielded positive results.

Box 3



Figure 1

Focus group using Gesell camera at the Technological University of Chihuahua

Source: (Own elaboration)

In the second focus group, they say that measuring customer service led to the expansion of the range of products they offer, inventory control processes, concern and care for the training of workers with the intention of personalising customer service and even restructuring the staff of suppliers. In addition, to develop new advertising campaigns, discount programmes, but above all to develop a culture of honesty and transparency with their customers.

As for customer loyalty, this has been maintained and increased with the changes made after evaluating customer service satisfaction (the customer feels that there is personalised attention) and therefore there has been an increase in sales.

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Two focus groups are carried out for the saturation of categories, which results in coincidences in the answers of the panellists of both groups, and in the appearance of strategies that allow validating the approach and objectives of the research, and it is not necessary to carry out one more focus group.

Box4



Figure 2

Focus group participants, observation from the Gesell chamber at the Technological University of Chihuahua

Source: Own elaboration

Qualitative analysis of the in-depth interview

The aim of the in-depth interview is to identify whether entrepreneurs use tools and strategies to evaluate customer service, which will allow them to propose strategies to improve customer service. See table 2. appendices.

The following questions can be answered openly and provide experiences or examples that contribute to the analysis of the strategies that entrepreneurs use for customer service The indepth interviews were carried out with a total of eight entrepreneurs; three of them have been in the market for eight years, and the rest (five) have been in the market for 2, 5, 7, 14 and 35 years, respectively. Of all the interviewees, 50 % have a service business.

Regarding the quality of service offered by employees to customers, the assessment is as follows: two entrepreneurs consider it to be excellent, two more consider it to be good, another two consider it to be good, while of the two remaining participants, one states that it is average and one more defines it as 70%.

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As for the tools they use to measure customer satisfaction, there are varied responses: one of the entrepreneurs says that he installs cameras in the customer service area to observe the performance of his employees, in addition to consulting the comments written on social networks; another entrepreneur indicates that he carries out the assessment by monitoring personal treatment; he also mentions that he monitors this aspect through comments expressed by salespeople in digital surveys; and only three of the participants agree that they consider the process of evaluating the quality of the service.

Two entrepreneurs agree that they carry out constant supervision of employees, and four identify training as an essential measure, one states that a reward system for employees to ensure motivation for good performance cannot be missing, and finally, only one of the interviewees acknowledges not using any strategy.

The interviews focus on whether the lack of attention from the team of workers to the clients causes a loss or decrease in the client portfolio, the answers to these questions are recorded as follows: five people recognise that it is a fundamental factor and that it does have a considerable influence, one of them attributes it to the lack of merchandise and two comment that they do not identify any situation within the company's operations that could be linked to it.

In addition, they are asked about the corrective actions they take when they detect the loss of a customer, a result associated with poor customer service or bad service, and they respond that they resort to dismissing or changing the employee's area, actions that reinforce supervision, contact with the affected customer, or have mediation between the customer and employee, in addition to talking to the employee involved about the consequences of their bad performance.

In response to the questioning about the acceptance of the entrepreneurs to receive advice from professors of the Business Innovation and Marketing degree at the Utch (Technological University of Chihuahua), to analyse and develop strategies focused on strengthening the quality of customer service in order to guarantee it, all the interviewees stated that they agreed to receive advice

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Box 5



Entrevista a mercado barbe

Figure 3

In-depth interview with businessman in the city of Chihuahua

Source: own elaboration

Conclusions

According to the results of the focus groups and interviews with entrepreneurs in Chihuahua, it is important to evaluate customer service, as it is through the use of these tools (exit interview, customer follow-up, and constant supervision of employees) that relevant information is obtained on the perception of customer service and and business opportunities strengthened, reflected in increased profits. Likewise, in the analysis of the application of improve strategies to service, employee of implementation reward programmes, constant training, among others, stand out.

It is recommended that companies link up with the education sector, specifically with the Business Innovation and Marketing degree programme at the Technological University of Chihuahua, through the internship process included in the curriculum. The internship is the four-month period in which students develop projects and/or proposals for improvement in the productive sector, with the aim of putting into practice the professional skills acquired throughout their academic preparation, and thus generate added value to the business community, achieving a bilateral benefit. According to the Technological University of Chihuahua (n. d.), students carry out two internships throughout their studies: the first one in the last term of the Technical University Degree (TSU) and the second one in the last term of the Bachelor's Degree.

During these internships, students develop a project within a company, which allows them to gain work experience before graduating.

Annexes

Box 6

Table 3

In-depth interview questionnaire. Detect needs in order to provide counselling

to provide counseining		
Question	What we are looking for	
When does the company	Identify the strength of	
start operations?	the business.	
What market is the	Positioning in the market	
product and/or service		
aimed at?		
How do you consider the	Employee training	
quality of service provided		
by your employees to the		
customer?		
What tools do you use to	Traditional and/or digital.	
measure customer		
satisfaction?		
Have you implemented	To know the degree of	
strategies for your	importance of customer	
employees to provide	service	
quality service and what		
are these strategies?	Identification to als	
How do you evaluate	Identify evaluation tools	
service quality?	Identify austaman samina	
Have you lost customers due to staff attentiveness?	Identify customer service failures	
What corrective actions do		
you take if this happens?	3	
What kind of advice or	Identify training issues	
training (for your	identify training issues	
employees) would you		
like to receive to improve		
customer service?		
Would you like to have	Whether they are willing	
students from the Business	to have trainees in their	
Innovation and Marketing	company to develop	
degree to do their	customer service	
internships in your	improvement strategies.	
company to carry out a		
customer satisfaction		
improvement project?		
Would you like professors	To find out if employers	
from the Business	are interested in	
Innovation and Marketing	professional advice from	
course to carry out an	teachers rather than	
analysis and development	agencies.	
of strategies for quality in		
customer service?		

Source: own elaboration.

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Box 7

Table 4 Questionnaire for focus group. Detect needs to provide counselling		
Question	What we are looking for	
What is customer service for you?	Identify how important it is for the entrepreneur	
Do you consider it necessary to measure the satisfaction of the service you offer to your customers?	If they consider measurement relevant	
Do you measure customer satisfaction?	To find out what tools they use.	
If yes, what tools do you use to measure customer satisfaction?	Identify whether the tools are relevant	
What benefits has this information given you?	Updating tools to stay in the market	
What changes have you made since you started the company, considering the monitoring of customer service?	Identify the importance of the client for the company	
How do they perceive the customer service-sales-loyalty relationship?	Whether they are interested in seeking advice	
Have they sought expert advice to assess customer service, and what kind of advice?	Monitoring customer service	
Have they lost customers as a result of poor quality customer service?	Identify 10olos of opportunity	
How do they perceive the loss of customers?	Identify the most popular tools	
In a brainstorming session, what customer service quality measurement tools do you know?	Identify strategies to strengthen the relationship with the customer.	
What customer loyalty strategies do you use to retain customers?	Identify evaluation 10olos.	
How do you evaluate the quality, and how often, of the service you provide to your customers?	Identify key aspects of customer service.	
What aspects of customer service do you evaluate?	Utility of customer service evaluation.	
What benefits have you perceived when assessing service quality and implementing improvements?	Identify how important it is for the entrepreneur	

Source: own elaboration.

Statements

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest. They have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that might have appeared to influence the article reported in this paper.

Authors' Contribution

Minor-Avila, Dulce Carolina: Primarily responsible for the design and conduct of the research. She was responsible for the conceptualisation of the study, developed the general and specific objectives, and led the coordination of data collection activities. In addition, he supervised the elaboration of the evaluation instrument, participated actively in the analysis of the results obtained and revision of the final document.

Helo-Leos, José Roberto: Contributed to the formulation of the research methodology, including the organisation and implementation of the focus groups. He was in charge of the application of the category saturation process and collaborated in the identification of the tools and strategies most used by the MSMEs in the evaluation of customer service, and revision of the final document.

Andrew-Sotelo, María: Participated in the indepth interviews with the entrepreneurs, ensuring the quality and consistency of the data collected. In addition, she helped in the interpretation of the results and in the drafting of the conclusions of the study and revision of the final document.

Yáñez-Castañeda, Verónica: She collaborated in the organisation of the complementary activities proposed for the MSMEs and in the validation of the evaluation instrument. She also supported in the drafting of the final report and in the revision of the contents to ensure its coherence and relevance and in the revision of the final document.

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Availability of data and materials

One limitation was the limited availability of time on the part of the entrepreneurs from the city of Chihuahua to participate in the focus group at the facilities (Gesell chamber) of the Technological University of Chihuahua. Entrepreneurs were 100% available to provide relevant information for this research.

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Abbreviations

MSEs. Micro and small enterprises.

TSU. Higher University Technician.

UTCH. Technological University of Chihuahua.

References

Background

Desarrollo de Negocios – Universidad Tecnológica de Chihuahua. (s.f.).

Basics

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