

DETERMINING FACTORS OF SUSTAINABILITY AS A STRATEGY DIMENSION OF MEXICAN TURISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Ismael M. Rodríguez Herrera

Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes (México)

Juan Ignacio Pulido Fernández

Universidad de Jaén

This work starts from a review of the recent economic literature based in which the role of the tourism is recognized as an important instrument for the economic development.

In order to be able, certain basic conditions have to be fulfilled which allow us to take advantage of the positive effects that tourism generates. Among these conditions is important to highlight the need to incorporate the sustainability as a important premise of the touristic development.

The objective of this research is to know the situation of Mexico with regard to sustainability incorporation as a strategic value of its process of touristic development. Mexico is considered a world touristic potential and a proof of that is its stand out position in the ranking of the principal receptor countries of the international tourism that emits the UNWTO. In concordance with this, the national touristic policy has seen in the tourism an important motor that impulse the national development; overcoat, for its characteristic as a generative activity of foreign currency. We can highlight the importance of tourism in the national economy through its contribution to the PIB (Gross Domestic Products for its initials in Spanish), which during 1995-2005, increase to an average of 8.16 percent according to the Satelital Count of Tourism presented by the National Institute of Geography, Statistics and Informatics (INEGI).

Nevertheless, the reality shows that, in a simultaneous manner to the impulse that is been given to tourism; the model of touristic development has been impulse evidence serious problems of unsustainability: in spite of the presence of the concept in the Mexican touristic policy and the academic discussion that about the topic has been developed in the paste few years in the country; aspects about which are going deep in the recent work. Therefore, it becomes imperative and urgent to modify this situation, if it is pretended to continue as a touristic leader in an international level.

With this background, the research proposes to identify and analyze those factors that are determining for the procurance of the Mexican tourism sustainability and simultaneously,

establish an order of priority, in order to contribute to the improvement in the decision making of the involved agents in the development of tourism in a national level.

The considered methodological proposal establishes that the fulfillment of a Delphi analysis, which was developed with the participation of 34 national experts connected directly with tourism topics and proceeding from a variety of sectors (academic, business, public functionary, consulting and non government organization –NGOs–) This exercise of consulting that included two rounds, concluded with the establishment of 334 items, divided into 15 categories (see table I).

Table 1
CONSIDERED CATEGORIES AND NUMBER OF FACTORS PER CATEGORY

Category	Ítems	Determining Factors
Environmental aspects	18	13*
Planning Aspects	29	8
Participation of the local community	26	4
Coordination among the variety of actors.	24	0
Training	22	3
Integration of touristic product	25	2
Regulation and legislation affairs	18	4*
Marketing factors	24	0
Sociocultural affairs	24	4*
Factors related to the arrangement	18	0
Economical financial factors	26	0
Financial and technical assistance	20	3
Sensitization	17	3
Aspects of certification	23	2
Other factors	20	6
TOTAL	334	52

* Includes a factor with a medium of 5 and recorrido interquartile of zero

Source: The authors own elaborations.

The Management of information was made through charts and in order to analyze the data we used as statistics variable the median, as a central tendency, and the interquartile journey, as a dispersion measure.

Between the 52 factors pointed by the Experts as determinants, three items are prominent to obtain the highest level of consensus between the participants and to be considered as essentials to fulfill the sustainability of the Mexican Tourism. The mentioned factors are: i) sustainable exploitation of the resources and related to the fragile ecosystems; ii) application and carried out of legislation and normatively without distinction; avoiding bad habits as corruption, political favors or impunity; y iii) absolute respect to communities that decide the “non development” of touristic activities in theirs territories.

As one of the principals’ conclusions of the research, highlight the urgency to work in the implementation and practice of the sustainability paradigm, through the development of appropriate and right instruments and mechanisms; and the coincidence of participants respect to distinguish the sustainability application in small projects and big touristic destinations. In case of the big touristic destinations, the principal obstacles to their implementation, according to the participants points of view, are the economist vision of tourism; as soon as the political interests and prevalent economics.

Furthermore, attracts our attention, the location of the successfully cases that were mentioned by the interviewed experts; overcoat the fact that the majority are located in the southeast of the country; fact that deserves to be analyzed.

Moreover, it has to be highlighted that the establishment of the 52 factors as determinants for the acquisition of the sustainability of Mexican tourism, do not leave apart the analyzed items.

Completely the opposite, one of the biggest lessons learned to develop the recent work is that the sustainability is a very complex process and that its implementation requires a holistic and a whole vision that considers the diversity of the actors involved. According to the previous words, it is difficult to establish a final list of factors, but it is possible to establish an order of importance in the participation in pro of the sustainable touristic development.

Independently of the establishment of the definitive factors for the Mexican Tourism Sustainability, we got a big amount of ideas and topics, important to the criteria and vision of the experts, as the determination of the principal role that the experts give to the local communities, or the relevance of planning for the tourism improvement.

Related to this, some topics of interest have been delimited, as the community participation and the topics that become detached from it, among them: the governance, the empowerment, the construction of the social capital or the appropriation of the projects by the local community part. All of them are potential lines of research for future studies.

In conclusion, the recent research has generated enough information to know which are the factors that regulate the sustainability of the Mexican Tourism Model, which opens the door to the design and the implementation of strategies that allow to empower the positive aspects and delete o minimize, the most dangerous factors.

