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STRATEGIC DETERMINANTS FOR ECOTOURISM FROM COVID-19 PANDEMIC

DETERMINANTES ESTRATÉGICOS PARA EL ECOTURISMO A PARTIR DE LA PANDEMIA COVID-19

DETERMINANTES ESTRATÉGICOS DO ECOTURISMO APÓS A PANDEMIA DE COVID-19

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Abstract

The objective of the article was to describe the strategic determinants or success factors of the tourism offer in the Colombian Amazon region, after the start of the covid-19 pandemic. The methodology implemented is based on the collective construction of knowledge of businessmen and experts in economic and tourism issues with different data collection techniques adjusted to the paradigm of complementarity. In this way, new scenarios of strategic action of companies in the tourism sector are presented, translated into the articulation of cultural knowledge and the needs of users, the rethinking of the traditional marketing strategy, the strengthening of information systems, and the emergence of the need for a balance between technical and ethical rationality in the management of each business. The main purpose of the determinants is the consolidation of the following paradigms: permanent learning of the internal market, the supremacy of orientation towards demand over any other, and the use of prospective to permanently improve the service.

Keywords: Amazonia; culture; ethics; environment; user.

JEL: D47; L83; M31; Z32; Z33

Resumen

El objetivo del artículo fue describir los determinantes estratégicos o factores de éxito de la oferta turística de una región de la Amazonia colombiana, luego del inicio de la pandemia covid-19. La metodología implementada parte de la construcción colectiva de saberes de empresarios y expertos en temas económicos y turísticos con diferentes técnicas de recolección de datos ajustadas al paradigma de la complementariedad. De esta forma, se presentan nuevos escenarios de actuación estratégica de las empresas del sector turístico, traducidas en la articulación de los saberes culturales y las necesidades de los usuarios, el replanteamiento de la estrategia de *marketing* tradicional, el fortalecimiento de los sistemas de información, y el surgimiento de la necesidad del equilibrio entre la racionalidad técnica y ética en la gestión de cada negocio. Los determinantes tienen como fin principal la consolidación de los siguientes paradigmas: el aprendizaje permanente del mercado interno, la supremacía de la orientación hacia la demanda sobre cualquier otra, y el uso de la prospectiva para mejorar el servicio permanentemente.

Palabras clave: Amazonia; cultura; ética; medio ambiente; usuario.

JEL: D47; L83; M31; Z32; Z33

Resumo

O objetivo do artigo foi descrever os determinantes estratégicos ou fatores de sucesso da oferta turística em uma região da Amazônia colombiana, após o início da pandemia de covid-19. A metodologia implementada assenta na construção coletiva do conhecimento de empresários e especialistas em questões económicas e turísticas com diferentes técnicas de recolha de dados ajustadas ao paradigma da complementaridade. Desta forma, apresentam-se novos cenários de atuação estratégica das empresas do setor do turismo, traduzidos na articulação dos saberes culturais e das necessidades dos utilizadores, no repensar da estratégia tradicional de marketing, no reforço dos sistemas de informação e na emergência do necessidade de equilíbrio entre racionalidade técnica e ética na gestão de cada negócio. Os determinantes têm como finalidade principal a consolidação dos seguintes paradigmas: a aprendizagem permanente do mercado interno, a supremacia da orientação para a procura sobre qualquer outra e a utilização da perspectiva para a melhoria permanente do serviço.

Palavras-chave: Amazonia; cultura; ética; meio ambiente; usuário.

JEL: D47; L83; M31; Z32; Z33

Introduction

After the opening of the borders as part of the peace agreements consolidation between the National Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the tourism sector in the department of Caqueta and especially in its capital Florencia, gains strength through the establishment of businesses that provide consumers with new ways to satisfy needs focused on disconnection from the urban context and recreation based on the rural sector benefits and the biodiversity of the area (Mayor office Florencia, 2020).

The tourism boom in the region has caused this sector to increase its participation in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Caqueta from 1.23% to 5.23% since 2013 (Mayor Office Florencia, 2020). This was due to the number of companies providing tourism services, which have been created by people's interest in discovering new destinations and visiting different options when traveling (Center of Tourism Thought, 2017).

According to the 2020-2023 municipal development plan of Florencia called "Biodiversity for all" out of 82 tourism establishments that were registered in 2013 to 2019, there are 185 active businesses, of which, one company has a quality certification to carry out adventure sports; there are three hotels with sustainability certificates and one certified tour operator (Mayor's Office of Florence, 2020).

On the other hand, according to the Index of Departmental Competitiveness 2020-2021 the department of Caquetá ranks fourth among 33 regions of the country in the environmental sustainability enabling conditions indicator, with a score of 6.09 out of a total of 10 possible points. This is lower than others such as Amazonas, Guaviare and Santander, which lead this category due to their amount of natural assets, forested areas, increase in CO2 emissions, inventory of protected areas, adequate disposal of solid waste and reduction of their deforestation rates (Private Council of Competitiveness, 2020). This means to have greater opportunities for the development of nature tourism or ecotourism.

In contrast, low levels of innovation management are visible within the same index. The department in question ranks the position 20 and 26 with a score of 5.19 and 1.42 out of 10 possible points in the categories of sophistication and diversification and business innovation and dynamics respectively (Private Council of de Competitiveness, 2020).

In turn, López et al. (2020) recognize that in this region there are some difficulties with regard to the access to decent work by the social nuclei of the areas where the opportunity for the development of ecotourism is greater. According to the authors, the 52.1% of families carry out informal activities for economic sustainability. Informality is reflected in daily or laborer work in the private sector, independent work and domestic service. Even so, within the expectations of labor insertion in Florencia, "nature tourism is assumed as a good possibility for which they consider the need for training to contribute to obtaining quality of life" (Lopez et al., 2020, p. 234).

Below, some theoretical references that support this research are presented.

The integration of sociocultural strategies for companies in the tourism sector based on digital marketing is a prevailing need in environments where knowledge management and the importance of user experience are emerged. Therefore, according to Charan (2021), the competitive advantage of organizations must shift to convergent spaces of key elements such as technology, continuous learning, and immersion to the digital age.

Currently within business dynamics, marketing stands out as a strategic tool for organizations, It is a social and administrative process focused on the planning and development of activities to identify customer needs, satisfy their needs and establish valuable relationships to create and capture value for them (Armstrong y Kotler, 2012; Basto et al., 2019). Management inside companies generates significant challenges, especially due to the accelerated development of society, evidenced in changes in the way of thinking, acting and living of individuals (Barrientos y Lesmes, 2018) in the context of *marketing* evolution and globalization.

In the same route, the lack of environmentally friendly marketing models is evident, as a result of the purposes framed in various types (Aragon et al., 2019), therefore digital marketing becomes important, stood out in the current era thanks to the

exponential growth of advanced digital communication tools and technologies, which is seen in the organizational strategic component, and contributes to brand loyalty, and to have a wide communication channel to be able to contact its users. (Bricio et al., 2018, p. 108)

Likewise, the current situation as a consequence of the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic affects the tourism sector and generates social economic, economic and cultural impacts, which change the dynamics of society, migrating towards the exhibition of marketing trends from short to long term (Menchero, 2020; Navarro et al., 2020; Pulido y Cabello, 2020; United Nations Organization [ONU], 2020).

It is clear that marketing trends are changing at an accelerated pace, the personalization of the service allows customers to participate more actively, aiming to satisfy their needs and effectiveness in their retention effectiveness, through multiple channels, and the digital era, which

develops on its responsible attitudes and respect for corporate and human values (Kotler et al., 2017). Some of the digital marketing trends are: a) voice searches; b) chatbots; c) artificial intelligence; d) personalization of content; e) Omni channeling; f) social networks; g) inbound marketing (Acosta y Martínez, 2018).

In the particular case of sociocultural strategies, it is necessary to stand out their relevance in the educational context, since they play a role as a transversal axis to energize the participation of institutions in the community formation. In this way, these actors will become managers of long-range strategies formulation, which are related to the training processes, thanks to the social, economic and cultural impacts (Lopez et al., 2020).

Nature tourism is an umbrella brand that began its boom in Colombia, thanks to the signing of the Peace Agreement with armed illegal groups (Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, 2018; Presidency of the Republic of Colombia, 2016). Furthermore, nature tourism adopts determining principles to create harmonious relationships between all components of the economic system and the environment, seeking to promote the conservation of nature, the strengthening of regional culture and the participation of the community to achieve the improvement of their quality of life (Jafari, 2005; Nel and Llanes, 2016).

As an effect, it is expected that this type of tourism, through the relationship man-nature in harmony, contributes to the overcoming of the environmental crisis, the protection of nature and provides economic contributions for local communities in sustainable environments (Arguello et al., 2017; Barrera et al., 2020; Chiu et al., 2016; Hernandez et al., 2017; Sahebalzamani & Bertella, 2018). Accordingly, it is necessary to think of a regional economic reactivation, which allows determining success factors to be considered from the formulation of sociocultural strategies, possibly through digital marketing, improving the operational dynamism of companies in the sector, based on their ability to know how to manage and take advantage of technology to adapt it to the new reality. It seeks through innovation and digitalization, first, to create and market memorable experiences that allow economic entities to remain in the market, second, to use online platforms to acquire competitive advantages, ease and agility when communicating and/ or

reaching customers, and finally, the application of health protocols effectively and efficiently (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2020).

Currently, in Colombia, eco marketing is constituted beyond a simple ideology, due to its conceptualization as a green movement guided towards the ecological awareness of society and the protection of the environment (Martinez, 2019). Eco marketing is a process that arises from the need to formulate and implement important strategies for companies in pursuit of nature conservation, from the production of goods and the provision of services in a friendly way, in order to the reduce the damage to the environment (Castellano y Urdaneta, 2015).

Nature marketing is known by other concepts: green marketing, green marketing, ecological marketing or environmental marketing (Salas, 2018). Fuller & Butler (2015) perceive eco marketing as the integral element that is part of strategic management, whose purpose is the identification of the needs of market segments and the satisfaction of the concerned parties with the least wastage of natural resources. (Palm y Cueva, 2020).

Given the importance of green *marketing*, it is necessary in this new pandemic reality to reach consumers' homes through digital tools, in order to achieve the objectives, set by each organization (Docavo, 2010).

In this way, it arises the need to verify if there are future strategic options to involve into the management of these businesses, in order to strengthen their competitiveness and consolidate the tourism sector as the main cluster of the municipality, since currently its economy is based on the development of other sectors that do not provide added value and innovation according to the regional competitiveness indicators of recent years (Private Council of Competitiveness, 2020). The research question is formulated as follows: What are the success factors or strategic determinants that will be present in the commercial and competitive dynamics of businesses in the tourism sector in the municipality of Florencia-Caqueta after the start of the covid-19 pandemic?

The main objective of this research was to describe the strategic determinants of businesses in the tourism sector in the municipality of Florencia that will be present after the start of the covid-19 pandemic. To achieve this, three specific purposes were defined: 1) diagnose the business

management conditions of the tourism sector in the municipality with a market approach and the information systems used for the contact with their audience, 2) analyze the trends that emerge in the tourism sector of the municipality of Florencia from what was proposed by theoretical references and the experience of experts, and 3) propose a system of opportunities for the implementation of strategic determinants for the sector under study in the “new normal” (Lew y Herrera, 2020, p. 146).

This document is organized as follows, initially the theoretical references on which the researchers based for the exercise of scientific inquiry are presented; next, and the methodological framework of the research is established. Then, the results are analyzed according to the objectives of the study and a discussion of them is included in light of the theoretical conceptualization proposed. Finally, the conclusions that answer the general objective are stated and future lines of research are proposed.

Methodology

This research was carried out from the mixed methodological approach or perspective that according to Hernández y Mendoza (2018) is characterized by the sequential presence of processes derived from qualitative and quantitative information, making use of certain techniques and instruments, seeking to consolidate more reliable and understandable data for the researcher (Flick, 2007). Consequently, in-depth interviews and focus groups were applied, with the aim of describing the strategic determinants of the tourism sector from the pandemic. The type of study chosen was descriptive, taking as a starting point the knowledge, experience and perceptions of entrepreneurs and experts in the field, based on categories of analysis and some variables around the development of business management, the use of marketing strategies, among other aspects; likewise, the analysis and evaluation of the characteristics and particularities of the object of study were carried out (Bernardo et al., 2019).

Three phases of the research were defined, each of them focused on achieving a specific objective. The first phase of diagnosis presents the description of the current conditions of the ecotourism businesses management in the region under study. In the next phase of analysis, the results of the

first phase were reviewed, through focus groups with experts from different areas of knowledge and types of professional experience. Finally, in the propositional phase, a system of opportunities or success factors for companies in the sector is exposed after the events in the area of biosafety developed from 2020 in the entire world. This was socialized by the businessmen and from this activity emerges the discussion that contrasts what was exposed by the theoretical referents.

The unit of analysis was chosen according to some inclusion and exclusion criteria. Initially, in the case of entrepreneurs (first phase), the following conditions were taken into account for their participation: 1) people in charge of the tourism business management with at least two years in the local market, 2) entrepreneurs with disposition and will to participate in the study, 3) businesses with an active commercial register, 4) businesses with an employment capacity greater than or equal to three collaborators. In total, 30 individuals were identified and chosen. At this point, it is clarified that the instrument used for the interviews was formulated as a semi-structured questionnaire with 12 open questions, which were submitted to the measurement of validity and reliability indicators by experts in linguistics (evaluation of the instrument shape) and marketing (analysis of technical aspects), achieving acceptable rates of application.

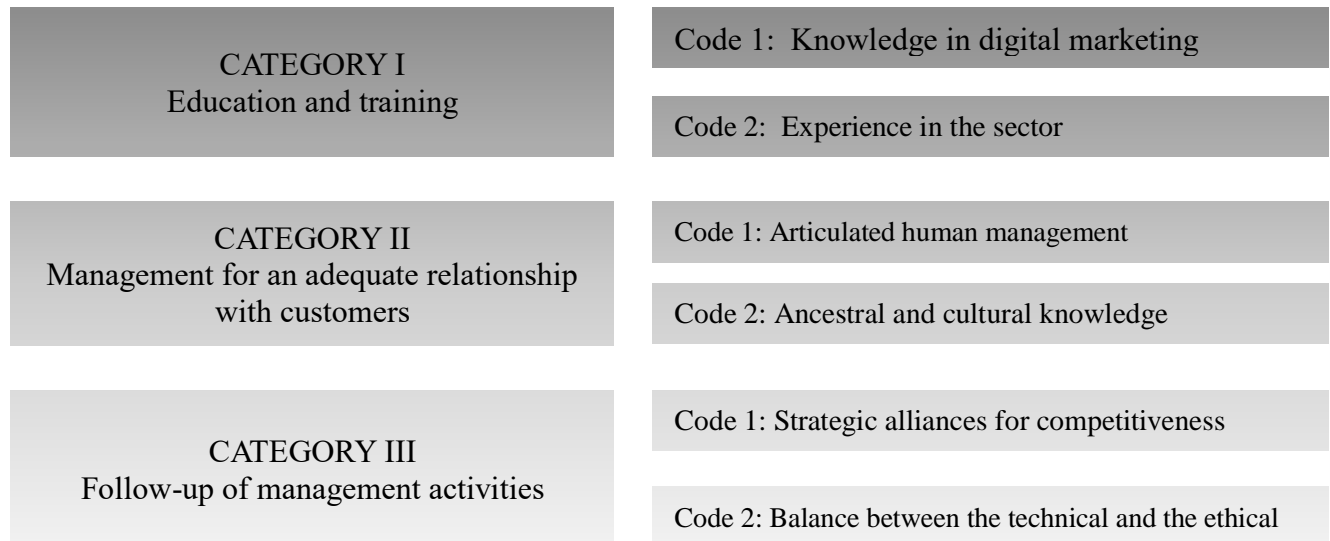
With regard to the focus groups development (second phase), non-probabilistic sampling was applied in the same way and criteria were defined for the selection of experts: a) with permanent residence in the city of Florencia; b) with academic training, that is, professionals in administration, marketing, social communication, or environmental engineering; and, c) with knowledge and experience in the work with communities for tourism and local culture development. Here, ten experts were chosen as follows: two managers of tourism agencies, a public official of the departmental administration tourism office, three research professors of public universities, and four independent professional consultants in the areas of tourism and marketing.

The execution of the two focus groups began with a set of guiding questions implemented by a moderator, there knowledge, perceptions and experiences about the tourism sector and its relationship with digital marketing and work with rural communities were shared. These were developed through the Meet platform out of the set of Google services, with the aim of getting in contact with all participants in a simple way and allowing to facilitate interaction, assuming

biosafety protocols due to the pandemic contingency. The topics covered were i) analysis of the diagnosis resulting from the interviews with entrepreneurs, ii) expectations and future perceptions of the regional tourism sector and iii) propositional aspects for the sector from the effects of the pandemic. With the results from the interviews and the focus groups, the researchers fulfilled the last phase, explaining the system of opportunities, which emerged from a triangulation and categorization process as presented in Figure 1, codes and themes that were related through semantic networks with the support of the Atlas Ti software. (version 7.0).

Figure 1

Categories of study analysis



Source: Own creation

Results

Diagnosis of business management conditions.

In this first phase, four aspects of inquiry were addressed: strategic thinking and its application in the business; knowledge and development of digital marketing; human talent management and current service conditions. The managers of the tourism companies in the city of Florencia develop an improvised administrative process without a pre-established sequence, based on the principles of strategic planning. Their strategies are designed and executed without considering the external conditions of the environment which are part of the uncontrollable aspects and settings for the businesses. Although they consider some ideas coming from the market, their decisions are made by the imitation of actions of other competitors. As such, they do not develop a logical sequence that allows the schematization of the three thoughts (critical, creative and metacognitive) that an effective strategic process involves (Garrido, 2020).

Based on the above, the financial approach prevails within organizational objectives. Managers base their management on the economic performance of the business over a given period. This limitation of the business vision causes all marketing and commercialization activities to focus on the achievement of resources that in real time become liquidity to cover the expenses and budgets that must be met month by month as part of fulfilling their agreements with suppliers and paying salaries to their employees.

In this way, marketing activities are based on the establishment of one or more sales targets, moving away the achievement of other objectives such as brand positioning and the possibility of strategic alliances for collaborations when generating greater demand for their business. From the above, the absence of a fixed *marketing* department or area within these organizations, which implements actions aimed at generating value for their audiences, is evident. This weakness leads to the administrator or manager to act as a community manager, a public relations officer, among other responsibilities; in addition he has to be a seller and provider of their own services.

Regarding strategies as a relevant concept for the development of digital marketing, one-third of the population claims to know and apply it as a series of activities to improve the management of tourism businesses through the design and publication of content on social media is primarily used with the ultimate goal of generating sales. However the remaining two-thirds of businessmen refrain from such actions due to the conditions outlined by Menchero (2020) as a result of the pandemic's consequences, such as mandatory lockdowns, the closure of airports, land terminals, and border areas, which prevents both the arrival of foreign tourists and the movement of domestic tourists, as well as the inaccurate information transmitted by various mass media, outlets contributed to generating panic among the public.

The lack of self-awareness among entrepreneurs regarding the comparative advantages established in the business over time is recognized, a similar situation posed by Aragon et al. (2019), which reduces the likelihood of attracting tourists known as "unique experience hunters" (García y Salvaj, 2017). This condition within the sectorial framework is related to the short-term vision of tourism business managers, focused on revenue collection, liquidity generation, and the monthly payment of their expenses and costs, distancing them from true financial and marketing management that, on one hand, provides value to their capitalist partners and, on the other, grants benefits to their users.

In terms of human management, it is expected that individuals entering the tourism businesses in the city of Florencia, Caquetá as collaborators will develop proactive skills not only for generating ideas to attract new customers but also to promote the service or product offered or sold therein, respectively. For the entrepreneurs, human talent, regardless of their position, must perform the functions of a supernumerary; this implies the existence of flexibility within the management to carry out some type of work, from operational actions as part of the service, or even tactical actions such as replacing the manager during their absence in the business setting. All the entrepreneurs agreed on defining the main objective of each employee in their position as the possibility of directly supporting the achievement of an effective increase in sales. In this case, any employee would be able to contribute to the commercial area, always motivated by collection and service provision.

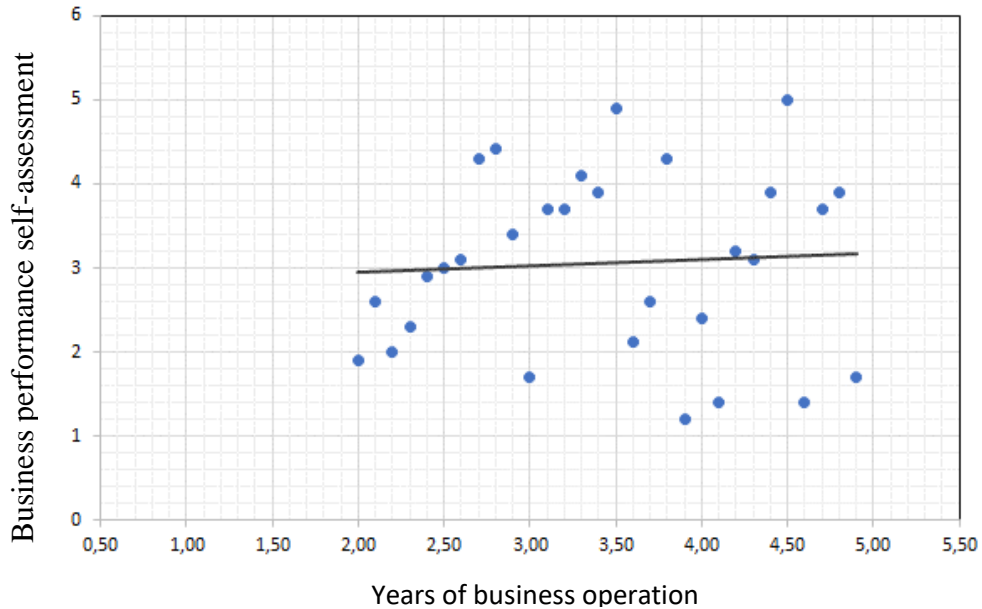
Compared with the previous, the intention of entrepreneurs to incorporate new strategies to generate added value, reduce negative environmental impacts, change the traditional marketing approach, and focus their business dynamics on digital marketing is confirmed (Martinez, 2019). Nevertheless, it is necessary to raise their awareness regarding business management. The current human talent in this type of organization is not adequately trained for the development of digital marketing; for example, 74% of the administrators in the study confirm that sociocultural strategies are suitable for training their collaborators and the community (adjacent to the place where tourism services are provided) through non-formal education (seminars, workshops, certificate programs, courses, among others) to support marketing management. Likewise, 15% propose the option of exchanging experiences from cases of companies where these processes are implemented, and 11% believe that the correct alternative should have the support of the national government in financial terms.

Another issue identified was the current conditions of the services. In this context, personalization is not prioritized to avoid excessive resource expenditure. As a result, a standardization strategy has been implemented to set prices that cover a specific capacity without taking into account a proper market segmentation, that is, awareness needed to recognize the differences among various audience groups

Closing this section, the correlation between the self-assessment of managerial performance of each business (provided by each entrepreneur, rating their management on a scale from 1 to 5) during the year 2020 (the start of the pandemic) and the years of operation were measured, based on a linear trend line. In this way, a scatter plot (Figure 2) was designed and the correlation coefficient was calculated.

Figure 2

Correlation between years of operation and managerial self-performance at the beginning of the pandemic



Source: Own creation.

Despite identifying a positive correlation between both variables, their low relationship ($X^2 = 0.06282671$) stands out, leading to the consideration that the effects of the new conditions exposed by the pandemic, regardless of the years of operation of each business affected all members of the tourism sector's supply equally.

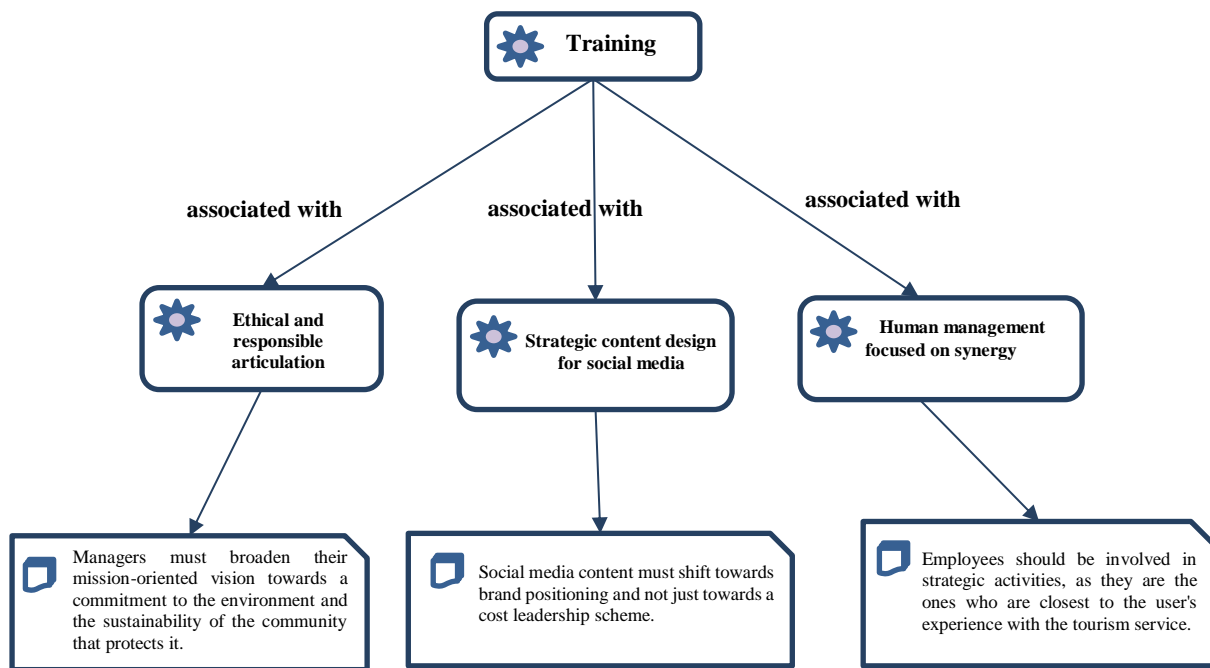
Analysis of the trends manifesting in the tourism sector

Considering the lines of action and the conditions under which the management of tourism companies in the city of Florencia, Caquetá, is developed, it is necessary to investigate the different trends that open up the description of determinants that can be implemented in the coming years as fundamental pillars to achieve suitable competitiveness indicators in accordance with what is proposed by public agencies and the organizational objectives of each of the businesses in the sector. The following are the crucial points and consensus established by the experts in the focus groups as mentioned in the first item of the results.

In Figure 3, the aspects that will endure over time and in the development of the management of the entities under study are analyzed. These are related to the ongoing training of human capital, the coordinated exercise of human management to provide proactive frameworks for the benefit of the business, and the establishment of strategies that position brands from the migration of organizational communication to the digital era.

Figure 3

Semantic network sector trend



Source: Own creation.

It is indisputable that all organizations must effectively manage both their own internal and market knowledge. The conditions are given, not necessarily for the constitution of marketing areas within the business, but for a continuous training process that rekindles the interest of the management and its internal public towards the orientation of the mission objectives beyond financial expectations of sales and liquidity. This management should promote a logical and systematic process that brings together each purchasing experience established by the users in the business development. Managers' mastery of market information is well recognized; their years of experience have led them to understand the process of adapting to certain changes, while they are

still neglecting those decisions that require more focus such as optimizing service structures and ensuring service quality.

The shift towards the digital era explained by Charan (2021) is summarized in changing the paradigm of financial security and betting on the establishment of competitive advantages perceived in digital environments. In this case, users have migrated from the connection of their lifestyles and dynamics to communication and the adaptation of new entertainment frontiers. Thus, competitiveness does not lie in possession, but in making that enjoyment a means to improve the consumer experience and the possibility of repurchase. The mindset of organizations shifts from traditional realms to challenging scenarios where skills to create from virtuality are implicit. The new challenge is to expand market possibilities by engaging users through content publishing exercises to achieve viral actions; this, in turn, facilitates the conditions for positioning the brand. Another necessary integration is the proper connection between the cultural and the evocation of emotions and memorable moments; here, the content strategy should be oriented towards the development of digital marketing. Klaric (2018) explains that neuro-sales processes require businesses to identify the symbolic value of each good or service in such a way that they can adapt to people's reptilian codes. In a tourist experience, it is worth understanding the possibilities of the tourist's articulation with the environment, their forms of expression, and what allows the immersion, in this case, the involvement with the cultural and the biological, that is, a whole marketing of experiences (Gomez, 2018).

In this sense, the importance of sociocultural strategies that are subject to the tactics used for brand positioning falls. Sensitivity towards culture and what it represents in the frameworks for the development of natural tourism is necessary, especially when these practices seek not only the knowledge of the space and its history by the tourist but also the skills that can be developed through contact with service supports such as community activities immersed within these scenarios, related to animal husbandry, the use of land for agricultural activities, respect for the region's traditions and ancestral beliefs, among others. At this level, the use of ethics and social responsibility subject to the developments of digital marketing is essential, which for these tourism businesses are represented by the concept of sustainability and long-term environmental care (García et al, 2021).

Definition of an opportunity system for the sector

The system resulting from the analysis of the first two objectives of the research demonstrates the existence of latent success factors that the businesses in the tourism sector of Florencia must possess. That is to say, it is necessary to review each management element one by one to strengthen it and determine the challenges that mark the development of strategies different from those that were carried out before the pandemic. First, it should be clarified that the system must be supported by three fundamental principles that are transversal within the process: 1) management as such, to provide guarantees for managerial and administrative practice under conditions of uncertainty and business challenges, 2) research, as a driving element for decision-making, and 3) monitoring, for controlling strategic actions and empowering staff to make quality variations in service. The aforementioned become the tools to continue the path towards competitiveness.

To ensure continuity in the processes, a review of the current aspects of the management of these organizations is conducted. On one hand, there is the capability of both managerial and tactical staff to commit to improving processes collaboratively. On the other hand, technological implementation is required for effective use of digital marketing. Before any creative development of the content, it is necessary to learn about the environmental factors in order to improve the strategic design. Likewise, as another input to the process, and no less important, the entrepreneur's experience applied to their upcoming management activities. When these determinants are activated, each of the system's processes begins. Within this, a set of actions influenced by three approaches are interwoven: a) the ethical, which combines the entrepreneur's willingness to align their management with the need for human talent development, b) the creative, which establishes the application of significant knowledge from everyone in each organization for the formulation of ideas that forge the construction of a creative message to position the brand, and c) the experiential, which underlies the guidelines for evaluating the user experience, taking into account opportunities for improvement and their proper implementation. The system concludes with its outputs, which ultimately are the objectives expected by the company or business with a broader managerial vision, market-oriented and influenced by the following aspects:

It becomes evident that entrepreneurs are autonomous in the exercise of their management and the direction they give to it. Undoubtedly, a market-oriented strategic development is recommended, not just the commercialization of products. Toledo (2019) explains that the influence of creativity on business competitiveness is reflected in the manager's ability to design and offer "services anchored to a reality in constant transformation" (p. 26), in which other principles such as innovation and competition are present; therefore, to achieve the objectives of survival, durability, and growth, it is necessary to rethink the actions currently being developed.

There are strategic opportunities focused on the characteristics of the service elements, that is, natural sites and appropriate spaces for rest, entertainment, cultural knowledge, and community association and relationship. However, these, individually, do not generate value for users; there must be an organization and the establishment of pathways that lead to the execution of strategies that position the triad: brand, product, and service. (Portugal y Salazar, 2018).

The management of the analyzed businesses is called to incorporate new objectives aimed at achieving users 365 days a year. Therefore, Ponce et al. (2019) warn that, in order not to sacrifice the productivity of the entities, they need to adopt as a success factor the ability to anticipate the future, that is, to develop the skill to prospect scenarios that reduce levels of uncertainty and keep the business indicators in line with the pre-established goals, monitoring the quality of internal processes, and conducting a constant, relevant, and coherent evaluation. The absence of this approach to achieving competitiveness can prolong one of the issues that most affect the tourism sector, associated with the limited ability to manage the alignment between growth objectives and contributions to the development of territories.

On the other hand, it is necessary to enhance the skills of the business workers without neglecting their operational role in the service development. As employees become familiar with the context and the market, the links with the public and organizational objectives will be refined. It is necessary to apply sociocultural and training strategies focused on improving internal communication, the use of a second language, the development of creativity committees for content management to be published on digital platforms, and above all, the creation of environments of mutual cooperation between management with the tactical and operational areas. This is in line

with what Ruizalba et al. (2015) stated, who assert that tourism companies will achieve better management of their employees' knowledge through retention and training strategies.

Another interesting aspect in this discussion is compared with the findings of Morales et al. (2017) on the importance of addressing market and environmental variations, making management aware that these cannot be controllable, and therefore strategic thinking is necessary, leading to the formulation of actions that adapt to user demands. This happens because the entities under study are not structuring systems to understand their customers, or if they have them, these are not effective due to being outdated. The lack of a technological component for market information management in the tourism sector of Florence poses a threat to organizations.

In conclusion, Andrade's (2016) contributions to the information provided by the surveyed population are indisputable. Entrepreneurs require the unconditional support of the State and territorial entities. For an effective process of articulation between these two actors, a commitment to the development of the regions is essential, anchored to two challenges: 1) on the part of the organizations, to contribute to job creation and the improvement of service quality, and 2) the governmental entities, formulating and adapting public policies that bet on the financing and communication of the benefits of the territory and its business infrastructure. Shared responsibility becomes an evident potential for the sector.

Conclusions

According to the results presented, it is concluded, firstly, that, into the diagnosis of the business management conditions of the tourism sector in the municipality identifies three aspects of this that should be seen as opportunities for improvement are established: 1) the training of the entrepreneur, 2) redefining the concept of service culture focused on improving relations with collaborators and 3) the need for a follow-up plan in the entity for the development of a true strategic scheme.

Regarding the second objective, the trends that are shown in the tourism sector of the municipality of Florencia were analyzed based on theoretical references and experts opinions in the field and it was heightened an improvement scheme of the findings of the first section of results. Businesses in the sector, through management not only under the responsibility of their administrator but also of their organizational group, must strive for the exercise of continuous training, the improvement of relationships with customers in the attention and organized implementation of strategic scaffolding follow-up systems.

Facing the last objective, a system of opportunities that involves aspects for the implementation of success factors from the application of sociocultural strategies in the tourist businesses of Florencia was proposed. This articulates the principles of management, research and follow-up, on which three fundamental activities are based, a) permanent training, especially in digital marketing and strategic management, b) the paradigm shift of product orientation towards the market, and c) the scenario creation from the use of prospective for an adequate strategic business management.

This research mainly contributes to define the spaces of action and the aspects to improve of the companies in the tourism sector for the department of Caqueta, which, from the administrations, as territorial entities, bet on the consolidation of a cluster of services that supports the current and traditional agricultural regional economy, which has been pointed out as the main cause of environmental impacts in terms of deforestation. Facing these potentialities, it is aimed at the close of gaps between the conventional management systems and the new ways of managing successfully in the digital era, main challenges of the businesses analyzed.

Then, new future research opportunities focused on the capacity of organizations in the sector to develop co-branding strategies emerge in the region, as well as the follow-up to the creative dynamics that execute to connect consumers' needs with the experience the tourist promoter offers.

Ethical considerations

The present study did not require endorsement from an Ethics or Bioethics Committee since it did not use any living resource, agent, biological sample or personal data that represent any risk to the life, the environment or human rights.

Conflict of interest

All authors made significant contributions to the document and declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the article.

Statement of author contribution

Cristian Hernández Gil: original writing-draft, writing: review and edition, visualization, supervision and data curation. Edwin Eduardo Millan Rojas: software, validation, formal analysis and research. Diana Ali García Capdevilla: conceptualization, project management methodology, acquisition of research funds and resources.

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