

Original article

Methodological proposal for the design of tourism products in the destination Cuba

Propuesta metodológica para el diseño de productos turísticos en el destino Cuba

Proposta metodológica para a concepção de produtos turísticos no destino Cuba



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ABSTRACT

Based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, approved in 2015 by the United Nations, the Development Plan of the Ministry of Tourism towards 2030 and the Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution for the period 2016-2021, which describe the projection of tourism in Cuba with offers related to the sociocultural, historical, environmental and economic value, this research aims to make a methodological proposal in order to design tourism products that consider the dimensions of sustainability. In order to achieve the proposed objective, several methodological approaches for the design of tourism products were studied and, as a result of the gaps detected, a new proposal was developed. In this way, an attractive possibility of economic activation was created for the government and the operational sectors, generating benefits for the adjacent communities and their administrations, in addition to providing a new business alternative that allows taking advantage of and preserving the community's heritage.

Keywords: sustainable development; tourism product; tourism.

RESUMEN

Sustentada en la Agenda 2030 sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible, aprobada en el año 2015 por la Organización de Naciones Unidas, el Plan de Desarrollo del Ministerio del Turismo hacia el 2030 y los Lineamientos de la Política Económica y Social del Partido y la Revolución para el período 2016-2021, que describen la proyección del turismo en Cuba con ofertas relacionadas con el valor sociocultural, histórico, ambiental y económico, la presente investigación tiene como finalidad realizar una propuesta metodológica en aras de diseñar productos turísticos que consideren las dimensiones de sostenibilidad. Para lograr el objetivo planteado fueron estudiados diversos enfoques metodológicos para el diseño de productos turísticos y a raíz de las brechas detectadas se realizó una nueva propuesta. De esta manera, se creó una atractiva posibilidad de activación económica para el gobierno y los sectores operativos, que generara beneficios para las comunidades adyacentes y sus administraciones, además de proveer de una nueva alternativa de negocio que permite aprovechar y preservar el patrimonio de la comunidad.

Palabras clave: desarrollo sostenible; producto turístico; turismo.

RESUMO

Com base na Agenda para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável de 2030, aprovada em 2015 pelas Nações Unidas, no Plano de Desenvolvimento do Ministério do Turismo para 2030 e nas Orientações da Política Económica e Social do Partido e da Revolução para o período 2016-2021, que descrevem a projeção do turismo em Cuba com ofertas relacionadas com o valor sociocultural, histórico, ambiental e económico, esta investigação tem como objetivo fazer uma proposta metodológica a fim de conceber produtos turísticos que considerem as dimensões da sustentabilidade. Para alcançar o objetivo proposto, foram estudadas várias abordagens metodológicas para a concepção de produtos turísticos e, como resultado das lacunas detectadas, foi feita uma nova proposta. Desta forma, foi criada uma possibilidade atrativa de ativação económica para o governo e os sectores operacionais, gerando benefícios para as comunidades adjacentes e as suas administrações, bem como

proporcionando uma nova alternativa empresarial que permite tirar partido e preservar o património da comunidade.

Palavras-chave: desenvolvimento sustentável; produto turístico; turismo.

INTRODUCTION

The growth of tourism has led it to be studied as a phenomenon of a complex nature due to its economic, sociocultural and environmental impacts, and it is now considered a possible factor of transformation and a structural component of a country, territory, region or specific locality.

The interest in tourism is largely due to the extremely significant influence and impacts that tourism activities exert on the environment in which they take place. In this sense, the impacts of tourism are the result of a complex interaction of phenomena, which are manifested in the link between tourists, the destination area and its population. From this interaction arises the so-called carrying capacity, which is the threshold or tolerance limit beyond which the facilities become saturated, internal and external customer satisfaction decreases, the resident population feels discomfort due to the excessive increase in tourists, urban localities are affected, and there is noise and environmental pollution, among other variables (Quintero Santos, 2004).

Nevertheless, positively, each year this sector retains the quality of being one of the engines of social transformation, conceiving new experiences that indirectly change the lives of its consumers, thus establishing a tool to favor the economic development of the world, generating opportunities for entrepreneurship, new jobs and an increase of incomes. This activity represents the dynamic need to satisfy the intrinsic desire of human beings to experience, feel, perceive and explore beyond the known (Quintero Santos, 2004).

In Cuba, in the years 2017 and 2018 the entry of travelers had an upward behavior between: 5559116 and 5769792 tourists respectively. However, the behavior in 2019 was 5488560 tourists (Onei, 2020) mainly due to the bankruptcy of Thomas Cook. Despite this, this indicator generated an important contribution to the Gross Domestic Product, which has turned the sector into a driving force of the national economy.

Ratifying it as a prioritized activity within the development strategy designed by the State to obtain in the short and medium term foreign exchange earnings that contribute to economic recovery and enable its reinsertion on radically new bases in the international economic market, the supply of the Cuban tourism product is being conceived seeking, as a key element, the achievement of a stable and balanced demand in order to guarantee a continuous flow of tourists throughout the year, the systematic elevation of the average length of stay and a high rate of repeat visits (Gutiérrez Castillo & Gancedo Gaspar, 2019).

A product that considers the nature, history and culture of the destination, that involves the community and the participation of non-state activity as a complementary tourist offer, where the quality of services is improved, advanced technologies are used, generating benefits without destroying resources, guaranteeing the sustainability and dynamism of the economy, diversifying the issuing markets and customer segments, as well as its offers to increase Cuba's competitiveness in these markets.

To this end, Cuba has abundant tourist attractions, untapped natural resources, a welcoming idiosyncrasy, an indigenous historical heritage, prolific artistic and cultural life, and political stability and security for tourists. However, they are not taking advantage from these elements for more effective destination marketing. There is an aging of the optional portfolios of the Travel Agencies, lack of creativity in the design of tourism products in relation to the trend of the new type of traveler and little differentiation of these in relation to the competition, in addition to not taking into account how to minimize or eliminate the negative impacts that tourism activity is generating.

Therefore, this research was developed with the purpose of making a methodological proposal in order to design tourism products that consider the dimensions of sustainability, contributing to the differentiation of its tourism offer, contributing to the achievement of the strategic projections of the Ministry of Tourism, of easy implementation and self-management and responding to the specific demands of the environment. The principles and legal framework of the Ministry of Tourism, the Head Office and the Superior Organization of Business Management for the commercialization of destinations are considered for the design.

This helps to increase the visibility of the destinations, their positioning in the market and the attraction of investors, suppliers and clients.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the development of the research, theoretical, empirical and statistical methods were used, as well as techniques and tools of Industrial Engineering and other related specialties, among which are the following:

Theoretical methods

- Analysis-synthesis: for the analysis of the information obtained through the review of literature and specialized documentation, as well as the experience of the specialists consulted
- Inductive-deductive: in the design of the methodological instrument to arrive at fundamental considerations about the object of study
- Hypothetical-deductive: used in the formulation of the idea to be defended in the research and in reaching conclusions

Empirical methods

- Direct observation: to characterize and describe the object of study
- Heuristic search: to find out about the subject in various bibliographic sources
- Brainstorming: for the generation of new ideas

Statistical methods

- Correlation analysis between variables and authors and hierarchical clusters to study the relationships between them. Kendall's concordance method, SAATY matrix and weighted voting, among others

Techniques and Tools

The Statistics Program for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 20.0), the VOSviewer software, the *Decision* program and Ucinet 6 were used to process the information and obtain the results. Besides, there were used BCG matrix, the Force field and the Pestel, among others.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the analysis of the methodological approaches, the following variables were considered because of their inherent quality in the activity of designing tourism products:

Table 1 - Variables analyzed for the study

External diagnosis					
Macroenvironment	Microenvironment				
	Market	Competition	Suppliers	Intermediaries	
Internal diagnosis					
Product portfolio	Economic indicators			Internal customer	
Inventory of resources and attractions					
Product					
Objectives	Idea generation	Concept	Structure	Risks	Concept test

Source: Prepared by the authors

The authors invited for comparison were: Kotler (2000), Santesmases (2007), San Martín (2006), Machado Chaviano (2013), Reyes Vargas et al. (2017), Cardet Fernández et al. (2018), García and Quintero (2018), Garrido (2018), Ramírez Hernández (2019), Urreta (2019) and Sánchez Sosa et al. (2020).

Applying the Ucinet 6 software, the correspondence between the variables and the authors was examined, arriving at the conclusion that the most treated variable is *Product*, specifically the relationship with its design, followed consecutively by the external diagnosis, the inventory of resources and attractions and finally the internal diagnosis, as shown in figure 1.

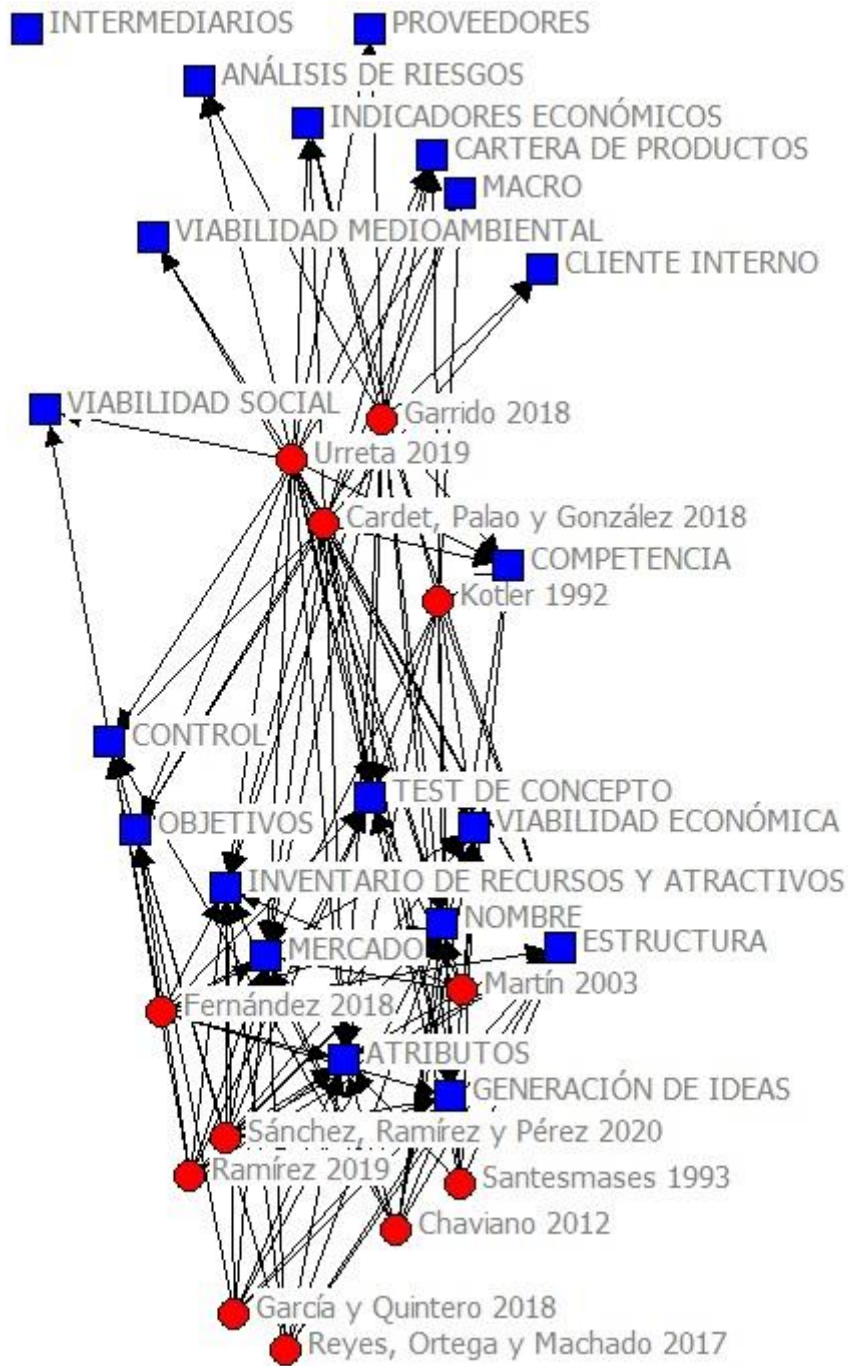


Fig. 1 - Author-variable relationship network
Source: Prepared by the authors

At the conclusion of the analysis, the methodology proposed by Cardet Fernández et al. (2018) was selected, as it is the one that has a more participatory nature, favors the materialization of a better management of the performance of the managers of the design process in order to meet the needs of customers through an offer of relevant, competitive and sustainable products.

However, it is evident that it lacks phases that make the process viable, it does not provide feedback with a focus on continuous improvement from the implementation and adjustment of deviations that may occur and shows the dimensions of sustainability in a very implicit way. In addition, it does not take into account the suppliers to adequately carry out the logistics in the provision of the services that make up the product or the product risk analysis as a way of preventing critical events. Once the analysis was completed, the proposal was adapted and structured in 4 phases, 7 stages and 7 steps.

Phase I. Preparation

Objective: to create the necessary organizational conditions for the development of the design of tourism products.

Stage 1. Involvement and design team

It consists of involving all members of the tourism entity in order to achieve optimal communication between them and the researcher. The workers are informed of the purpose of the study and its importance, ensuring a high degree of commitment from the beginning. The need to reduce resistance to change is emphasized, preventing invalid results from being obtained.

Create a multidisciplinary team that facilitates the generation of ideas and the execution of the work, according to their competence coefficient. To this end, it is proposed to use *Decision* software as a tool for decision making, based on the application to candidates of a survey to determine the degree of competence.

The population of individuals must be taken into account for the selection of the sample, as well as the rules of impartiality for the preparation of the expert group.

Techniques: direct observation, documentary review, conferences, brainstorming, group work, surveys, interviews, among others.

Phase II. Diagnosis

Objective: Characterize the current situation.

Stage 2. External diagnosis

Step 1. Analysis of the macro and micro environment

Macroenvironment

Collect and analyze information about the external environment, taking into consideration how its components may evolve (economic, demographic, technological, political-legal, socio-cultural, environmental) and how this evolution may affect the competitive position of the destination under study. In other words, if they may represent opportunities or threats for the entity.

Pestel analysis is proposed as a technique.

Microenvironment

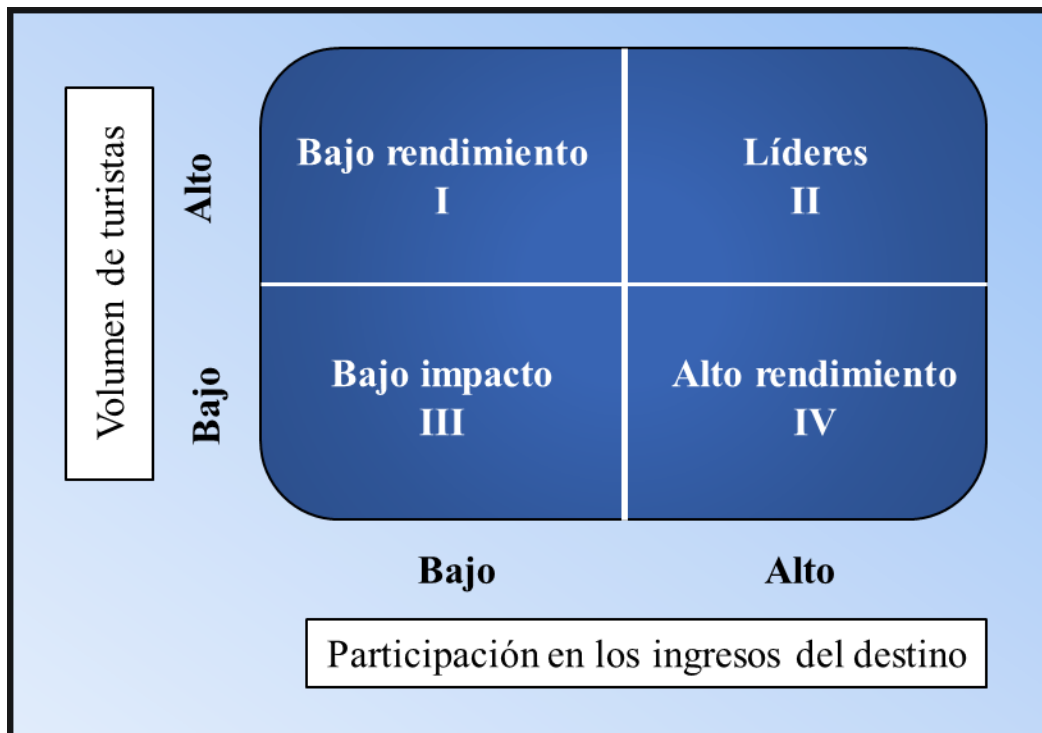
- **Market**

It is suggested to address the market analysis, considering the following elements: market evolution and forecasts, market characteristics and the organization's market share.

Market evolution: it focuses on the analysis of the number of tourist arrivals by market to the destination analyzed, as well as the division by type of tourism (how many buy nature tourism, city tourism, sun and beach tourism, among others).

Market characteristics: it is recommended to consider the following elements: customer classification, satisfaction, demand analysis (trend, seasonality and projection).

It is suggested that a socio-psychological study be carried out to classify customers, knowing their habits and characteristics according to the segment to which they belong (per capita income, likes and preferences, average age, main motivations, among other variables), in order to create a customer profile. For this purpose, the customer pyramid or the following classification matrix can be used.

**Fig. 2** - Customer classification matrix

Source: Ruiz Quesada (2014)

- **Customer satisfaction:** As a general rule, consumers compare perceived service with their service expectations. If the perceived service is below expectations, consumers will be disappointed. If the perceived meets or exceeds expectations, consumers will request it again. Because desires and expectations change over time, it is necessary to perform an analysis that measures service quality, taking into account the dimensions for sustainable tourism, so it is proposed to use the SERVQUAL model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (Morais Pena et al., 2013) that operationalizes service quality through the difference between customer expectations and perceptions, valuing both in three dimensions (economic, sociocultural and environmental).

According to these authors, service quality is the consumer's overall judgment of the excellence or overall superiority of the product or service. Thus, a customer will evaluate negatively (positively) the quality of a service in which the perceptions he/she has obtained are lower (higher) than the expectations he/she had.

After the application of SERVQUAL, a tool that facilitates the creation of action plans is the graph to compare customer expectations and perceptions. Perceptions are placed on the X-axis and expectations on the Y-axis. The objective of this graph is to identify in which quadrant each of the points (P; E) is located, since each quadrant implies a different treatment.

- I. Explore and monitor: these are the aspects that are very important for the customer and that are well evaluated according to his/her perceptions.
- II. Improve: aspects that are very important for the client, but are being poorly evaluated, so each of the points represents an area of opportunity for the object of study that should be applied.
- III. Monitor: aspects that are of low importance and evaluation, which should be monitored as any of them may become important over time.
- IV. Check investment of resources. It includes aspects that are not of great importance to the client and that are receiving very good evaluations.

- **Demand trend:** The concept of trend refers to the general direction of the variable in the observation period, i.e., it is the long-term change of the series mean. To perform the demand trend analysis, the use of the SPSS or Statgraphics Centurion computer system is suggested, due to its reliability, operability, speed, flexibility in the handling of primary information and graphing possibilities.

- **Seasonality:** Seasonality of demand can be understood as periodic and rhythmic fluctuations of the variable in shorter periods of time, generally associated with the seasons, although by extension they apply to any time interval within the year. Similarly, it is recognized as a seasonal index, the measure of those movements of a time series that recur with little more or less regularity, in the same months of successive years (Ruiz Quesada, 2014). There are several ways to measure seasonal variations and it is corroborated that the Average Percentage method is the most widely used for this purpose, so it is the suggested method for its calculation or the use of the SPSS computer system.

- **Demand projection:** The use of the SPSS or Statgraphics Centurion computer system is suggested for the application of the different exponential smoothing models due to its advantages, related to the speed of processing, flexibility in the handling of primary information, the possibilities of

graphing, in addition to automatically determining the smoothing constants, which minimizes the forecast error measurement.

Market share: It refers to the percentage of sales of the destination under study in relation to the sales volume of the sector.

It is suggested to do it based on the behavior of annual tourists in the destination, in correspondence with the number of annual tourists in the sector.

Once this has been analyzed, it is proposed to determine the market reserves to be exploited by the destination, which is no more than the difference between one hundred and the market share.

- **Competition**

The product's competitors should be evaluated in order to know its position within the competition. To this end, the following variables should be taken into account: products offered (analyze their impact in terms of: local prosperity, quality of employment, social equity, customer satisfaction, territory, energy, water and waste management, protection of cultural heritage, cultural offer, contribution to local development), prices, market share and target markets, distribution channels, promotion, economic-financial situation, among others.

In order to perform the analysis, the competitor evaluation matrix is proposed.

- **Intermediaries**

The use of intermediaries is essential to reach the final consumer, so it is necessary to carry out a systematic analysis and follow-up of everything that is affecting these distribution channels to study how this is influencing the marketing of the product and, at the same time, propose actions for improvement.

In the analysis, stages are suggested to enable the destination under study to make decisions about the selection of its intermediaries: Tour Operators and/or Travel Agencies, according to their classification and characterization.

- Classification of intermediaries

It is carried out taking into account the volume of tourists that they move according to the modality of sale (to facilities, excursions, among others) and according to the participation in the destination's income.

The classification can be made according to quantifiable parameters (actual quotas, pax, volumes of income or others, depending on the object of study) by means of a Pareto Diagram that groups them into three: A, B and C, and allows the destination to identify which intermediary is the most convenient for the marketing activity.

- Characterization of intermediaries

Once classified, the intermediaries must be characterized within the groups. With this purpose, the indicators that influence the operation and that must be taken into account are established; these may vary in the different destinations under study, depending on: the type of tourism they exploit, the type of markets they operate in and, in general, in correspondence with the commercial objectives and strategies established.

Subsequently, they are evaluated using the Differential Analysis Matrix.

- **Suppliers**

Suppliers are classified into two groups:

1. Logistics: they supply the raw materials and materials for product manufacturing
2. Services: they offer services to complement the product

To perform this analysis, it is suggested to know the level of flexibility they have, as well as their classification and characterization, ensuring that at the time of making the product, it is conceived without flaws and with the required quality.

For the flexibility analysis, it is proposed to study the behavior of the technical-organizational requirement indicator related to the object of work, which will make it possible to know what possibility the facility has of adopting certain changes without incurring high costs and within a rational period of time.

Flexibility of the work object

$$FOT = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{\left(1 - \frac{1}{POi}\right) Wi}{\sum_{i=1}^n Wi}$$

where:

Wi: Coefficient of importance

POi: Number of different materials that can be used in the product's manufacture

The classification is proposed to be developed using the Pareto Diagram, taking into account revenue and/or pax volume. This makes it possible to direct, differentiate and concentrate procurement efforts where they are most effective.

Step 2. Inventory of resources and attractions

Make an inventory of the resources, attractions, accesses and activities existing in the area under study, taking into account the following factors:

- Type of resources: natural, tangible and intangible heritage, among others
- Degree of conservation: high, medium, low
- Vocation: what can it be used for? Example: contemplative visit, recreation, among others
- Current use: park, cultural center, museum, square, restaurant, bar, gazebo
- Utilization: whether it is used by the tourist or others
- Tourist load capacity: number of customers per hour

Subsequently, evaluate these resources through the Attractiveness Index Matrix, which is based on input information from the previous characterization.

Stage 3. Internal diagnosis

Gather information on the aspects of the object of study that are strategically important. This internal analysis will make it possible to identify strengths and weaknesses, which will respectively constitute sources of competitive advantage or those that need to be corrected or strengthened.

Among the items to be reviewed are:

Product portfolio

It is proposed to evaluate this portfolio by business lines and products based on the marketable results of the object of study, using the method developed by the Boston Consulting Group at the end of the 1960s, known as the BCG Matrix. This method takes into account two fundamental directions: market growth rate and relative market share.

The BCG approach proposes four types of strategies, all in terms of market share. Determining which one is the most appropriate depends, among other reasons, on the product's current market, its life cycle, the resources of the object of study and the possible reactions of the competition.

Analysis of economic and commercial results

It is essential within the study of the internal environment to determine the financial situation of the object of study, for which it is proposed that the following indicators be evaluated: income, costs, gross profit, expenses and net profit, due to their influence on commercial decision-making. In addition, to analyze according to the characteristics of the object of study: the evolution of the business portfolio by lines, products and contracts, the behavior of market opportunities and the behavior of promotion; sales of conventional and national excursions and tourist services (in the case of Travel Agencies) among other indicators of interest, in order to determine fundamentally how much to improve in terms of the economic visibility of the products and, therefore, the object of study.

Personnel evaluation

For the evaluation of the personnel, it is proposed to apply an internal customer satisfaction survey, which it is suggested be processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20.0 software.

Stage 4. Diagnostic conclusions

Once the external and internal diagnosis has been carried out, competitive advantage and disadvantage factors are detected, which the organization possesses and/or faces in relation to its main competitors. These factors can be classified into threats, opportunities, weaknesses and

strengths, or they can be considered as forces that drive or hinder the marketing of the tourism product.

It is suggested that this analysis be carried out using the Force Field Matrix, since the driving or positive forces are those that bring changes to the current situation and the restricting or negative forces preserve the *status quo*, although there are techniques such as the SWOT matrix and others.

The technique consists of discovering and quantifying these forces in one direction and in another. From this description and quantification, it will be had elements of judgment to change the situation. With this method, the actions taken will generally minimize the impact of the restraining forces and maximize the impact of the driving forces.

If the change is generated, the product is designed or redesigned; if not, the gaps that prevent it are analyzed and actions are designed to close them in order to bring about the change.

Phase III. Product creation

Objective: To create a competitive, authentic and sustainable product that takes advantage of the destination's historical, socio-cultural and environmental resources and attractions.

Stage 5. Conceptual design and product structuring

Step 3. Generation of ideas

The objectives of the new product are established, which will be in correspondence with the objectives, characteristics and projections in which the object of study that manages it is framed. Then the generation of ideas is provoked, which should be based on the results of the previous analysis, taking into account the essential factors to be fulfilled to guarantee the sustainability of the product. For this purpose, work sessions can be held with the team of experts, using techniques such as brainstorming, mind maps, projected thinking, among others.

Subsequently, the ideas must be screened, for which it is proposed to apply Kendall's concordance method, selecting as priorities those that are above the upper limit (T).

Step 4. Create the product concept

After defining the selected project idea and getting to know the potential client in a deeper way, the concept is analyzed, that is, a central idea strongly associated to the first image and mental constructions that will allow shaping the whole subsequent design. And at the end of this process, the commercial name of the product will be born, which is a determining factor in the customer's purchasing decisions. For this purpose, neuromarketing techniques (*eye tracking*, electromyography, implicit association *test*, among others) can be used, appealing to the consumer's stimuli and provoking positive reactions to the product.

Step 5. Product structuring

When defining the mix of services, these must be related to the demands of the target market towards which the product is oriented, the type of product, the attractions that integrate it, the activities to be carried out, the benefits expected to be obtained, the idea and concept of the product. The mix of services will be composed of the main service, which is directly related to the satisfaction of the primary needs and desires of the target public, the secondary services that the clients receive as part of the product and that add value to the main one, and the general services, common to any type of product and that make the trip possible. Once the product is structured, the selling price is established.

Step 6. Risk analysis

Once the design has been completed, it is necessary to define the actions to be taken to counteract the possible risks that may be encountered. In this analysis process, it is necessary:

- Identification of critical events in the design environment
- Analysis of critical events
 - Impact of events on design
 - Probability of occurrence of events
 - Priority of events
- Definition of actions to be carried out
 - Preventive measures
 - Contingent (emergency) measures

Technique to be used: risk matrix

Step 7. Evaluation

The designed product is submitted to the evaluative judgment of the final customers through a market *test* applied to a selected sample, which must present a detailed description of the product (including its characteristics and qualities) in order to see the level of acceptability. If the results are not effective, the procedure is repeated from Phase II or III, as appropriate, ensuring, through the continuous improvement cycle, that customer satisfaction corresponds to their requirements.

It should be noted that in order to market the product, costs, expenses, income and the possibility of compensating the investment must be foreseen, as well as the analysis of its social and environmental viability in order for it to be profitable and sustainable. To this end, it is proposed to calculate the indicators for sustainable tourism (environmental, social and economic sustainability index).

Phase IV. Implementation and control

Objective: Evaluate the development of the product through the proposed control indicators.

Stage 6. Launch and adjustment

Once the new design has been approved, it will be launched. At the same time, it is suggested that marketing actions be carried out to help position it in the market.

Finally, it is proposed to periodically analyze general indicators, which will serve as a control support, such as: Performance of the new product, Expense per weight of operating income, Labor productivity index, Evolution of the new product in the business portfolio, Performance of the promotion of the new product, Customer satisfaction index, among others.

In addition to sustainability index indicators such as: Intensity of materials use, Per capita energy consumption, Proportion of consumption of renewable energy resources, Solid waste generation, Hazardous waste generation, Radioactive waste generation, Recycling and reuse of waste, Distance traveled per capita by type of transportation, Greenhouse gas emissions, Consumption of ozone depleting substances, Intensity of timber extraction, Area of permanently arable and arable land, Unemployment rate, Ratio between average wage of women and men, among others.

From all of the above, it can be concluded that the methodological proposal for the design of tourism products in Cuba is a tool that allows decision making based on a set of analyses that are the basis for developing projections of a new tourism product with great objectivity, reducing the risk in decision making. The proposal is based on the principle of flexibility, which allows it to be used in different types of tourism products, such as: excursions, hotel and extra-hotel offers in any destination in the country, as long as it takes into account the particularities of the destination and the specific type of activity where it is applied. However, it is necessary to emphasize that for its effective use it is necessary the creation of an information system that generally constitutes an element with insufficiencies in the tourism sector. It is also necessary to train the internal client, especially in the use of the techniques and tools developed.

The research carried out allowed to arrive at a series of generalizations:

1. The network of relationships between authors and variables made it possible to determine points in common among the methodological approaches analyzed, and the one with the most participatory character for the design of tourism products was selected.
2. The methodology proposed in this research is structured in 4 phases, 7 stages and 7 steps, through which significant elements for the design of tourism products in a destination are related, taking as a scientific basis the review of updated and prestigious bibliography in the field of the subject studied.
3. The methodology proposes methods, procedures, tools and support software that help manage the different elements that make up the methodology and improve the decision-making process.
4. The generalizing nature with which the methodology was designed makes it relevant for its validation and gradual application depending on the characteristics of the inbound tourism destinations.
5. The methodological proposal described offers a solution to the problems posed and demonstrates its practical usefulness as a tool to improve the design process of sustainable tourism products, taking advantage of historical, socio-cultural and environmental resources, which will contribute to the differentiation of the tourism offer, customer satisfaction and the competitiveness of Cuba as a destination.

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Conflict of interest:

Authors declare not to have any conflict of interest.

Authors' contribution:

Irene Esther Díaz Conde designed the methodological proposal and participated in the implementation of Phases I, II and III.

Graciela Castellanos Pallerols made contributions to the proposed methodological design and participated in Phases I and II.

Sonia Caridad Ruiz Quesada wrote the summary and introduction, and participated in Phases I and II.

Ariel Gamez Iglesias participated in the realization of Phases I and II, in the realization of bibliographic studies and in the elaboration of the reference list.

All the authors reviewed the writing of the manuscript and approve the version finally submitted.



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