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RESEARCH ARTICLE

TOURIST OBSERVATORY AS A COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY IN THE STATE OF GUERRERO MEXICO

***Dr. Hernando Avilez Pineda, Dra. MA. Elvia Chavarría Solís, Dra. Teresa de J. Rivas Pérez,
Mtro. Ángel de J. Jaimes Compeán and Dr. Jorge E. Muñoz Sánchez**

Faculty of Tourism, Autonomous University of Guerrero, Mexico

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ABSTRACT

Tourism activity supports the economy of many countries and regions; in the state of Guerrero tourism has been its potential for the last 70 years. Efforts to promote greater tourist flows for an offer that exceeds 30 thousand hotel rooms in the three consolidated destinations of the state: Acapulco, Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo and Taxco; have not been sufficient to maintain the hotel occupancy that guarantees the desired profitability, so that the implementation of a tourism observatory, currently in the making, would strengthen the knowledge of the tourist reality of Guerrero. As such, the objective of the research was the implementation of the Tourism Observatory, which generates the information that will help to establish competitive strategies. The methodology adopted consisted in the documentary review of the execution and operation of international and national observatories, in analyzing their structures for the collection of consistent, comparable, periodic and timely statistical data. Data collection instruments were developed, structured according to the particularities of coastal destinations and magic villages. Eight categories with 99 variables are evaluated. The results of the survey allow to know the opinion of the demand, which will provide decision-makers, public and private sector with the tools to innovate, adapt and monitor the trends of the issuing markets, which is expected to motivate a solid and growing interest in the destinations of the entity. It will be relevant to monitor the demand, making it possible to know the whole tourism of the host spaces of the state, impelling it to renew its image and competitiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

A growing number of destinations around the world have opened up to tourism and have invested resources, always advocating to raise the prestige, hostess and quality of service, making it a key sector for socio-economic progress through the creation of workstations and business, the generation of export earnings and the execution of infrastructure. During the last six decades, tourism has experienced a continuous expansion and diversification, becoming one of the largest sectors and growth in the world, World Tourism Organization (World Tourism Organization, 2015). Despite the strong shocks that occasionally occur, due to economic turbulence, tourism has experienced virtually uninterrupted growth; the arrivals of international tourists to reports of the World Tourism Organization, (Annual report world tourism organization. 2016) were of the world order of 1, 235 million. Mexico, which had fallen back to the 15th place in the ranking of the countries with the highest number of visitors,

in the last three years, once again ranked among the ten with the most international tourist arrivals: 35.2 quality of life of the inhabitants of Tourism, Secretariat of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism. Mexico, 2016) which leads to finding new ways to innovate to make their destinations more attractive and competitive, that is, to sustain their actions in best practices that potential tourists can be attracted by their warmth, degree of satisfaction and desire to return for the quality of its components of the whole tourist, so, emerges the emergency of constantly assessing the variables of tourist flows to destinations. Traditionally, most statistical tourism indicators have been physical (monetary) and have focused on the description and measurement of visitor movements associated with receiving tourism. However, nowadays there is a new dimension on access to information, for example, open data and unconventional sources (Lichtle, 2014). Tourism as an economic activity represents a rebound of the economy, on which dozens of countries depend on global and local levels. The state of Guerrero houses three tourist destinations with the symmetry that two offer the product of sun and beach. Acapulco whose genesis is from a small fishing village stands

*Corresponding author: Dr. Hernando Avilez Pineda,
Faculty of Tourism, Autonomous University of Guerrero, Mexico.

out acceleratedly in the 60s, of the twentieth century as a world-class tourist center and Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo that emerges as a public policy Integrally Planned Center. Both present dissimilar characteristics by their configuration, demand, management and orography, besides the magical town of Taxco whose attribute is cultural, triad already consolidated. The state of Guerrero has a coastline of 513 km in the primitive stage, impelling it to generate actions that strengthen it to make it competitive. Therefore, the implementation of a tourism observatory would leverage strategic solutions in the short and medium term. In this sense, the objective of the research is to know the relevance of the inputs that a tourist observatory in the state of Guerrero would contribute to boost tourism flows that can balance the ups and downs that are manifested in the flows to known tourist destinations and others that try to emerge in uncertain scenarios. A Tourist Observatory would make it possible to obtain consistent information from the entire tourist industry with scientific rigor that contributes to the improvement of all the components of the receiving destinations that allow optimal management of the interest of visitors by exploring their own perceptions of the selected destinations.

The outsourcing of the economy of the state of Guerrero

The state of Guerrero has cemented its economy and regional development in tourism investments, with a strong tendency to the tertiary sector on which its financial structure depends. Tourism at the national level, however, presents trends and styles different from those that the sector was accustomed to. To say of Mexican Institute for Competitiveness (Mexican Institute for Competitiveness, 2013) the economic rise in other regions of the country has not only increased the number of tourists, but has created new destinations, thus increasing competition. Additionally, innovative business models have been developed based on the use of technologies, taking advantage of social networks, e-commerce and smart hotels, thematic among others that need to be evaluated. The tourist destinations of the state of Guerrero have had serious fluctuations of instability in their hotel occupancy. Acapulco with an offer of 19,483 rooms and Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo with 7,850 and Taxco approaching 1,000 hotel rooms, have not exceeded 50% occupancy in the last decade, Secretary of Tourism Promotion (Secretary of Tourism Promotion, 2016) which has influenced in economic lag and greater instability in the employment on which depend directly and indirectly the guerrerenses, by his accentuated tertiary of the economy; where 72.92% of its economically active population depends on services, National Institute of Statistic and Geography (National Institute of Statistic and Geography, 2010).

What makes it imperative to know what is the reality of the tourist destinations of the entity, information that safely, efficiently and with a high degree of reliability would provide a Tourism Observatory, with the addition of pretending to be a reference in Latin America to have as mission to measure in the end-of-year season 2017 environmental variables such as; environmental impacts, solid waste management, wastewater, water quality consumed among others. In addition to complying with the precepts of the international year for the development of sustainable tourism, such as: raising awareness about the contribution to the development of sustainable tourism; work with stakeholders to make the sector a catalyst for positive change; and encourage change in policies, business practices and consumer behavior in the receiving destination

(Annual report world tourism organization, 2016). The implementation of a Tourism Observatory would pose challenges and challenges in the short term; bring to fruition a collegial effort to create the first Tourism Observatory with permanent headquarters in the Academic Unit of Tourism of the Autonomous University of Guerrero, which would contribute to the construction of strategic indicators and priority contents, which would eventually trigger a Tourism Research Center in the Academic Unit of Tourism. Providing a professional development space for researchers and academics, as well as professional training for students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the implementation of the tourist observatory of the state of Guerrero, the diverse documentary information was analyzed, however, the one contained in the authorized documents and proposed as a roadmap for the implementation of tourist observatories in the Mexican Republic of the Secretariat of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism. Mexico, 2013), was objectively examined. Likewise, the methodology was strengthened with the conceptual argumentation to expose its nature and expected scope in the design and implementation of the tourist Observatory (Avilez *et al.*, 2014). The instruments developed were precise when considering the methodology proposed in the documents of the Secretariat of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism. Mexico, 2013). as the advantages of tourism research generated by the observatories, which identify problems, maintain contact with the market, reduce the waste, develop new sources of income, improve promotion, improve the image of the destination, consequently with the information obtained by monitoring indicators must have certain basic characteristics, relevance, accuracy, credibility, timeliness and accessibility to the database that in the Tourist Observatory of Guerrero can be found in the webside www.otegro.gob.com Finally, we proceeded to identify the most frequent indicators in the observatories studied, such as the one in Argentina, Euskadi in Spain, at a national level in Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Mexico City, to determine which are the variables that most concern decision-makers in international and national tourist destinations, what importance is assigned to the different aspects of supply and demand in other latitudes, Secretary of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism. Mexico, 2013). The suggested indicators were decisive for configuring the instruments that were developed to determine the categories and variables that are predominate in the entity's destinations.

Theoretical approach

It is essential to consolidate the model of sustainable tourism development, which makes compatible the growth of tourism and the benefits it generates, through the preservation and improvement of natural and cultural resources. Additionally, it is necessary to strengthen the impact of tourism on the social welfare of the receiving communities, in order to improve the living conditions of the tourist populations. In this sense, all the development policies of the sector should consider criteria focused on increasing the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction and social inclusion, Mexico Tourism Sectoral Program (Tourism Sector Program, 2013-2016). Therefore, the Tourist Observatory of the State of Guerrero, is an institutional instrument at the service of tourism activity with social responsibility whose central purpose will be to generate strategic, accurate and relevant information for the competitive and sustainable tourism development of tourist destinations and territories with tourist vocation of the state.

Construction of the Observatory's methodological showcase

Local scope	Acapulco tourist area.	
Methodology	Quantitative	
Type of study	Longitudinal, with seasonal variations, that is, selection of Low and high seasons.	
Collection technique	Survey by sampling in points of tourist affluence; that is to say CLT's modified (Central Location Test)	
Study Universe Tourists	Men and women 18 years of age or older; visitors (non-residents) of national or international origin with temporary stay in the city subject to study (sampling by stages).	
Sampling unit	Point of tourist affluence, located within each stratum subject of analysis and classified in the following typology: I. Hotels (according to service categories). II. Arrival-departure areas (Airport and / or Truck Stations). III. Tourist sites (according to Municipal Tourism Inventory). IV. Entertainment centers (day and night). V. Other sites with tourist flow. • Beaches • Malls • Gastronomic runners	
Analysis unit	Strata, geographic polygons that concentrate the supply and the tourist demand in the destination: Traditional Acapulco Golden Acapulco Diamond Acapulco	
Type of sampling	Probabilistic (Stratified, multi-stage, randomized with systematic jump and work sampling on tourist flows).	
Parameter estimators to the sample size	- Proportions, for variables that define the profile of the visitor. - Averages (arithmetic mean), for variables that measure evaluation and satisfaction establish - Choose the largest calculated sample (because it contains the smallest).	
Calculated sample size	A total of 1410 effective surveys were applied, distributed equally by each unit of analysis; that is, 470 cases for each tourist stratum subject to evaluation.	
Error range	Once the sample is obtained, the error resulting from the sampling practice corresponding to said sample is calculated.	
Reliability	- The size and distribution of the established samples allows having a 95.1% confidence level in the trend of the results and a margin of error added to totals of $\pm 2.7\%$ for the destination and $\pm 4.8\%$ for each stratum subject of analysis.	
Reliability	- These parameters are sufficient for studies of this nature.	
	Formula for proportions	Formula for averages
	$n = NZ^2 \alpha / 2 P (1-P)$	$n = t^2 \sigma^2$
	$(N - 1) e^2 + Z^2 \alpha / 2 P (1-P)$	e^2
	To ensure the randomness of sampling and the selection of informant, the following stages were met: 1. On a broad list of sampling units, a random selection of starting points for each stratum, considering the typologies of sampling units. 2. On each starting point, work plans were established for each enumerator, for each field day, which will contain: - hours schedule and end of working hours. - Time in which you should be applying a survey. - Interval of time to apply the following survey. - Gender of the prospect to start work. Month of birth to make the consulted eligible. 3. Criterion of systematic jump: if the interview was effective (complete) it let at least three prospects pass and that the interval of weather. In the cases of null survey (reject or participate) it was left pass only one candidate.	
Starting Points	Based on the selection of inflow points in each tourist destination, starting points were defined, so that in each of these apply a maximum of 10 surveys; that is, they settled around of 140 starting points within the random selection lists of sampling points.	
Measurement tools	Structured questionnaire It contains factors that will establish: a) Profile of the tourist (of the traveler and of his trip) b) The perception and evaluation of the offer c) The level of satisfaction of the tourist in the visit.	
Field Work	Prior to the start of the fieldwork, a pilot test was conducted in touristic prototypical spaces of destiny; about 100 surveys were applied, which allowed to identify improvements in the writing, sequence logic and tagging of variables. Average duration of 12 minutes. For the realization of this project, we counted on the active and valuable participation of a group of 35 students of the Faculty of Tourism of the Autonomous University of Guerrero.	
	The leadership, as well as the general and technical direction of the project was in charge of Dr. Hernando Avilez Pineda, Coordinator of the Tourist Competitiveness Center of the Faculty of Tourism.	
Quality Assurance	For the purpose of having an adequate execution of the different processes involved in this research project (from its conceptualization and Quality methodological design, field logistics and application of surveys, to assurance coding, capture, debugging and processing of the statistics results) for the three coding, capture, debugging and processing of the statistics results) for the three (Concept Neurona S.A. de C.V.). For audit and quality assurance work.	

For the achievement of this purpose it will do so through the observation of the whole tourist; exercising the functions of collection, generation, ordering, processing, storage and analysis of all information directly and indirectly related to tourism activity within the state of Guerrero, which enables the creation of a critical path from where alternatives to activate the competitiveness of destinations recognized from Guerrero, In this sense, to consolidate the Tourist Observatory, all efforts will be encouraged and stimulated to begin a turning point in

the tourist activity of the state of Guerrero, contributing to reinvent and build a new stage accentuated by the harmonization, coordination and concurrence of the collective effort of all the interested and involved actors of the tourism sector, assisted with the substantive and objective tasks of the Tourist Observatory. To implement within the tourism scope, processes such as, the continuous improvement of the tourist activity, of the reforms to the tourist infrastructure and its implementation, of depletion of the waste in the tourist

Timeline corresponding to the random selection of the elements that will make up the sample.

Complete pollster name _____ Survey Start time _____ Date _____
 Place _____ Code _____
 Observations _____

00 - 60 8:00 - 9:00	61 - 120 9:01 - 10:00	121 - 180 10:01 - 11:00	181 - 240 11:01 - 12:00	241 - 300 12:01 - 13:00	301 - 360 13:01 - 14:00	361 - 420 14:01 - 15:00
01 8:00 - 8:22	04 9:11 - 9:34	07 10:23 - 10:46		12 12:23 - 12:46	14 13:11 - 13:34	17 14:23 - 14:46
02 8:22 - 8:46	05 9:35 - 9:58			13 12:47 - 13:10	15 13:35 - 13:58	18 14:47 - 15:10
03 8:47 - 9:10	06 9:59 - 10:22				16 13:59 - 14:22	19 15:11 - 15:39

Random number table:	
6	1
13	2
12	3
5	4
18	5
17	6
14	7
16	12
1	13
7	14
15	15
4	16
3	17
19	18
2	19

activities and of the total quality, that promote and innovate the image of the tourist destinations of the state, especially Acapulco, which was the route for the genesis of the tourist destinations of Mexico. It is recognized that various federal and state efforts in recent years have not contributed to tangible improvements, perhaps, only marginally, without being able to stop a gradual deterioration of the image of competitiveness of tourist enclaves, as well as the offer of accommodation, considered by the service providers themselves as worn-out and obsolete, together with the high rate of informal and temporary employment, which affects the quality of life of the inhabitants. In this sense, it emphasizes that Acapulco is not yet certified as a clean municipality, with all its social, economic and public health implications. Even at this time, few establishments have the possibility of being certified in processes; very few have distinctive "H" = hygienic handling of food granted by the Secretary of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism of Mexico, 1990). And "M" program modernizes, management system for quality improvement Secretary of Tourism (Secretary of Tourism. Mexico. 2002). Thus, for efficient and effective destination management, it is not enough to promote and configure innovative and attractive offers for the market. The human factor is essential and fundamental to enhance the destination and generate satisfactory stays.

What is a Tourist Observatory?

A tourist observatory gathers and integrates a group of specialists in tourism and other disciplines, associated and supported by various organized sectors, by public, private and social institutions by educational, research, dissemination and communication institutions whose purposes will be: Observe,

monitor, verify, count, measure, order with respect to specific scales and, where appropriate, experiment; as well as develop capacities to transfer experiences and best practices, talent for the methodological management in the generation of knowledge, its learning and diffusion, ability to form work groups, besides achieving a certain leadership in the management of collegiate bodies that contribute to the decision-making and inclusion of internal and external consulting activities, with respect to the entire tourism sector and thus contribute to the development and evolution of tourist destinations, particularly in the state of Guerrero (Avilez *et al.*, 2014). To consolidate the Observatory, it will actively participate in the efforts to start a new stage in tourism activity for the state of Guerrero, contributing to reinvent and build this new cycle indicated by the harmonization, coordination and concurrence of the collective effort of all stakeholders and involved, cooperating with the Observatory in what is appropriate to implement within the tourism field, processes such as

- To work in favor of future generations and the future of the planet.
- Of continuous improvement of the tourist activity.
- To contribute to the reflection and analysis of reforms to the tourist infrastructure and its fine tuning.
- Reduction of waste in tourist activities.
- 5 Of the Total Quality in the tourist activity.
- Increase in productivity in tourism.
- Increase in the effectiveness of tourism activity.
- Of sustainability in the tourist activity.
- Of competitiveness in the tourist activity.

- Contribute to the efforts for continuous improvement in related processes with ecology in all inherent orders.
- From approaches to the result.
- Of improvement of the organizational climate in the tourist activity.
- Of tourist culture and service.
- Elevation of standards in tourism activity.
- To generate value to the tourism industry, both to the service provider and to the consumer; and continuously measure the value offered.
- Improvement of tourism products and work processes.
- To contribute to the reflection and analysis in the definition of strategic objectives in the tourist activity of the state.
- Cooperate in reengineering exercises in tourist activity.
- Of active presence in globalization specifically in the tourism.
- Promote reflection oriented to change and holistic vision of the activity tour.
- To establish methodological, technical and operative precedents for the analysis and understanding of the tourist phenomenon.
- Pay for the development, planning and growth of tourism activity.
- Of the economic and financial activities of tourism organizations.
- Of the financing in the tourist activities.
- Of the Cooperation of the interested parties for the conduction of the activities tourist.
- The required training, training and education.
- Deal permanently with generating spaces for growth and reflection to contribute to the
- Academic and professional learning efforts of students, academics and researchers and experts from the Autonomous University of Guerrero.
- Set methodological, technical and operative precedents in such a way that this Observatory is one of the main generators of value and that contribute to the consolidated development of tourist activity in the state of Guerrero, México
- To achieve that in the medium term, the observatory is the main reference Latin American in the matter (Avilez *et al.*, 2014).

RESULTS

The implementation of the tourist observatory gathers remarkable information that predicts competitiveness with reliable data, hence the emphasis that the observatory must be based in an academic institution that ratifies the reality and credibility to configure strategies that the destinations of the state of Guerrero concretize in actions to return the look towards the perception that indicates the demand of the products that offer the tourist spaces. The Tourist Observatory participates actively in the conceptualization, design, coordination and execution of documentary and field research activities to document paradigms with differentiated offers at national and international level, optimizing the documentary record of tourist products, for the identification of best practices in the tourist activity that contribute to the improvement of the image of the destinations of the entity. Despite the growing imbalance and uncertainty, the Tourism Observatory is a tool that evolves the tourism sector, towards

sustained growth and long postponed so that it invokes the tourism sector by involving it in making decisions based on the measurements of the established categories that will be the source of data that enjoy total credibility, by the capacity and reliability of the strictness of the observance of the protocols established in the methodological showcase for the data collection. It is estimated that it will be approximately six measurements per year in the three destinations, that is, three measurements in high seasons and three in the low season, so that, the expectation is maintained that the destinations and joint work will be emergent so that improvement procedures are reviewed, the pertinent adjustments are made and the evaluated destinations and their key actors reorient their strategies, to provide a quality and warm service with a differentiated seal, which invites visitors to continue traveling, despite the circumstances and events that invade social areas. The Tourism Observatory should eventually be seen as a reference, where investors have a clear vision of the relevance of obtaining data of this magnitude and visualize the information provided to strengthen and reinvent their tourism products, to stimulate demand and generate tourist flows.

DISCUSSION

The dimension of the tourist observatories in Mexico is diverse, there are eight projects of tourist observatories; from those who depend on the government as the state of Guanajuato whose seniority dates back ten years, being the oldest in the country. Also, all operate with varying degrees of development as the state of Guerrero in the making. However, in all the scientific and potentiality for the collection, ordering, storage and handling of statistical information for the configuration of innovative and competitive tourist products in beach destinations, magical towns and large cities is pondered. The challenge will be that all those involved will take ownership of this tool from which the inputs for decision-making emanate, propose financial, organizational and technical support that will allow its consolidation and continuity over time.

Conclusion

The Tourism Observatory of the state of Guerrero, the Foundation of the Autonomous University of Guerrero A.C. Has given the task of promoting the methodological design and execution of the profile of the tourist who visits the state of Guerrero in the destinations that make up the triangle of the sun Acapulco, Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo and Taxco. The research project has been implemented by the Faculty of Tourism of the Autonomous University of Guerrero, the methodological solidity of this investigative model allows to fully meet the urgent requirement of systematizing and deepening the understanding of the tourist that visits the entity. 35 students of the Faculty of Tourism were trained, first in mutual interviews, in the pilot tests that allowed them to appropriate the instrument, (questionnaire), on the approach and protocols of action for the approach to the visitor, to later collaborate with students of the Degree in Tourism from the National Polytechnic Institute responsible for the operation of the Tourist Observatory of Mexico City, collaborating with peers in surveys carried out at different starting points of the city, such as the Palace of Fine Arts, Museum of Anthropology, Castle of Chapultepec between others. With the purpose of having an adequate fulfillment of the different processes involved in the research project, from its conceptualization and

methodological design, field logistics and survey application, to the coding, capture, debugging and statistical processing of the results for the three tourist destinations subject to study, the UAGro Foundation had a third (Concept Neurona SA de CV), for Audit and quality assurance work.

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