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Proposal for a Tourism Competitiveness Model for Business Entrepreneurship in the Department of Boyacá Post-Covid 19

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Abstract

Background: The department of Boyacá, Colombia, faces market conditions on supply and demand, in the post-Covid-19 era that require the proposal of a tourism model applicable to both short and long-distance destinations. Method: This article proposes a tourism competitiveness model for the intricacy of the tourism sector, accentuating the transversality and interaction of all the actors involved. It considers the influence of the internal and external environment, backed up by the country risk factor, which can significantly impact tourists' decisions about destinations in Boyacá. Results: The model is structured in three phases: evaluation, qualification, and the decision that a potential tourist faces when selecting their destination. Conclusions: The model's application in this context provides insights into the impact of supply conditions and adequate preparation on the long-term competitiveness and sustainability of the regional tourism sector, and consequently, on local communities.

Keywords: *Competitiveness, Tourism Models, Business Entrepreneurship, Covid-19.*

Introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the tourism sector has become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing worldwide. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourism rebounded to 87% of pre-pandemic levels during the period from January to September 2023, marking a 13% increase compared to 2019 figures. The report indicates that 975 million tourists traveled internationally between January and September 2023, marking a 38% increase compared to the same months in 2022, though a 13% decrease from 2019 levels. It is estimated that international tourism revenues could reach 1.4 trillion dollars in 2023, representing approximately 93% of the 1.5 trillion dollars obtained by destinations in 2019. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has indicated that, by geographical area, the Middle East continued to demonstrate a leadership position in the recovery process, with an increase in arrivals of 20% compared to pre-pandemic levels during the initial nine months of 2023. Europe, the world's most popular destination region, achieved 94% of pre-pandemic arrivals. This resurgence can be attributed to the robust intra-regional demand. Africa demonstrated a 92% recovery of pre-crisis visitors during this nine-month period, while the Americas registered a 88% recovery. In Asia and the Pacific, arrivals increased to 62% of pre-pandemic levels. By subregion, Central America (+4%) and Southern Mediterranean Europe (+1%) continued to exceed pre-pandemic levels in January-September 2023. In this context, international tourism is on track to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels in

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2024 despite the economic challenges and uncertainty arising from significant geopolitical tensions and conflicts.

According to data from the Colombian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT) in 2020, 2019 was a year of record tourism figures in Colombia. The number of non-resident visitors to the country exceeded 4.5 million, marking an increase of 2.7% compared to 2018. Positive outcomes were also observed in key economic indicators, including hotel occupancy at 57.8%, nominal revenues of travel agencies (3.7%), hotel revenues (10.6%), international connectivity (17 new routes and 39 new international frequencies), and passenger mobilization within and outside the country (41.2 million passengers). According to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism (MINCIT), Colombia emerged as the third nation in the Americas to demonstrate a remarkable recovery in international tourist arrivals during the initial quarter of 2023. This figure marks a substantial increase of 18% compared to the same period in 2019, which was just prior to the onset of the pandemic. This inquiry seeks to identify the factors that have contributed to Colombia's notable recovery in international tourist arrivals following the global health crisis. According to the Colombian Ministry of Health, the effective management of patients, in conjunction with strategies delineated by phases such as timely care and mass vaccination, facilitated a safe economic reactivation, augmented the health system, and enhanced infrastructure. Furthermore, advancements in transportation efficiency, characterized by reduced travel times and costs, have expanded the accessibility of tourist destinations, facilitating visits to previously under-explored areas (Barroso & Flores, 2006).

The proliferation of destinations, the enhancement of infrastructure, and the heightened awareness of the locality of services have culminated in a proliferation of options for tourists, thereby engendering heightened competition among service providers in the tourism sector. This heightened level of competition has prompted providers to offer more comprehensive value propositions, encompassing factors such as trust and experience in tourism services, as well as environmental and geopolitical considerations.

This underscores the necessity for a comprehensive examination of the elements and frameworks that have precipitated heightened competitive dynamics within the tourism sector. This examination is particularly crucial for emerging countries such as Colombia, and the department of Boyacá specifically, where a confluence of factors, including diverse climates, topographies, cultures, consumer behaviors, economic conditions, and per capita income, along with potential security concerns, collectively influence the tourism landscape. This analysis aims to equip stakeholders with the knowledge necessary to proactively prepare for the contingencies that may emerge in the future. The existing body of literature delineates various models of competitiveness for long-distance tourist destinations (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000). However, these models are often underutilized or misinterpreted in developing countries like Colombia, particularly in regional contexts. The implementation of these models is hindered by the dynamic nature of the tourism sector and the specific challenges it faces.

The objective of this article is to propose a competitiveness model for tourist destinations that is based on a clear understanding of each of the components that make up the tourism sector, its dynamics, and its current situation. The proposed model is predicated on several phases that concern the value chain, taking a journey from the offerors, service providers, to the consumer, involving the first impression and qualification of potential demanders, their decision-making capacity, and the conditions of the offer. Colombia faces considerable challenges in the tourism sector due to the geopolitical dynamics and internal conflict that have persisted for over five

decades, resulting in visitor mistrust. In light of these challenges, the model is structured around a fundamental aspect of decision-making when considering a visit, termed "country risk." This concept is pivotal in determining the growth and development of the sector across various regions. The model's conclusion encompasses the social and economic ramifications it engenders throughout the value chain. The model under discussion incorporates novel concepts and aims to elucidate the dynamics of the tourism system, predicated on competitive factors that engender its sustainability over time. The model is characterized by its comprehensive and systematic approach, which involves the delineation of its characteristics and attributes. These attributes will serve as a foundation for the development of novel strategic approaches to organization and management.

Method

The proposal is supported by a documentary review of articles published in scientific journals, which were found in databases, using the following phrases: "Models of tourist destinations" or "Tourist destinations" as a search term. A total of 151 articles were identified in Scopus, 395 in Dialnet, 1,165 in ProQuest, and 200 in Redalyc. A content analysis of these articles revealed the presence of models pertaining to tourism competitiveness, along with an examination of the components and variables that comprise these models.

Due to the substantial volume of articles, 30 were selected and critically reviewed, with each variable proposed by different authors analyzed based on the postulates set out by Richie and Crouch (2000), Dwyer and Kim (2003), and Dwyer and Kim (2003), in order to fulfill the objective of the analysis. Moreover, documentary information was utilized to examine the behavior of world tourism and of Colombia during the past six years.

Databases Consulted

The study required exhaustive research for data from the scientific community in order to get access to the most relevant articles on the field of study of tourism destinations and models (Table 1).

DATABASES	ARTICLE NAME	AUTHORS
REDALYC	Competitiveness Models for Tourist Destinations in the Framework of Sustainability. 2008	Mara, R; Varzin, G.
REDALYC	Proposal for a model of competitiveness of tourist destinations. 2012	Jimenez et al.
REDALYC	Competitiveness in cultural tourism: case study. 2021	Villa-HERNANDE, Y et al.
REDALYC	Determinants of tourism competitiveness in Mexican sun and beach destinations. 2017	Amaya , C et al.
REDALYC	Application of an objective quantitative model for measuring the competitiveness of tourist	Rodriguez-Anton, J et al.

	destinations. 2016	
EBSCO	Events and meetings tourism in mature tourist destinations: a pillar for the restructuring of the tourism product of Puerto de la Cruz (Tenerife). 2014	Perez, C; Escobar, A
DIALNET	Theoretical analysis of the competitiveness models of tourist destinations. An approach to the competitiveness of Mexican tourist destinations	Ortiz, F; et al.
DIALNET	The competitiveness models of tourist destinations as benchmarks for evaluating the competitiveness of magical towns. 2020	Ortiz, F
DIALNET	Smart tourist destinations	López de Avila, A; Garcia, S
DIALET	From geographical location to tourist destination. 2018	Somoza, X.
SCOPUS	Bibliometric study in SCOPUS on nature tourism in the management of tourist destinations. 2023	Sanchez, A et al.
SCOPUS	Tourism and Covid-19. Analysis of scientific productivity in Scopus. 2022	Batista, E; Rivero, A
SCOPUS	Variables e indicadores para evaluar el nivel de desarrollo de los destinos turísticos cubanos. 2024	Márquez, I et al.
SCOPUS	Gobernanza en destinos turísticos: el caso de los destinos turísticos inteligentes (DTI) en España. 2024	Gómez-Bruna, D; Thiel, Ellul, D.

Table 1. Databases Consulted in the Process Of Research.

Results

On a global scale, the tourism sector has experienced unprecedented growth in recent years. Consequently, in Colombia, there is an ongoing need to develop strategies for differentiation, cost optimization, and a well-defined approach to offering this type of service. This section presents several concepts that contribute to the provision of innovative tourist services. In this regard, it aligns with Porter's (1980, p. 34) observations. The strategic leveraging of factors such as associativity, collaborative endeavors, and the cultivation of synergies can serve as decisive competitive advantages in the selection of a destination. This assertion is further bolstered by the notion of specializing in one's strengths or in activities in which a region possesses a distinct advantage, a principle that has been instrumental in the differential development of regions over

time. Consequently, a nation or a region should specialize in those activities that are more advantageous, given their conditions and the possession of the productive factors. This assertion is further substantiated by the seminal work of David Ricardo (1817).

Tourism Competitiveness

The notion of competitiveness, however, is not a recent development; it has been conceptualized and refined over the course of centuries. An initial approach is proposed by Galindo (2008), who argues that the term "competitiveness" is at least three centuries old. Adam Smith's (1776) theory of absolute advantage, which relates to international trade and the benefits for all actors participating in the process, is a foundational text in this area. In this work, Smith advanced the notion that satisfaction of human needs is best achieved through the efficient management of production costs. The pattern of trade between countries has been studied from the classical theory of international trade. The neoclassical economists refined this theory, leading to the development of the theory of international trade (Heckscher, 1919; Ohlin, 1933).

Initially, these models presupposed the presence of perfect competition, a supposition that would subsequently be contested and surmounted in the emerging body of new theories of international trade (Helpman & Krugman, 1985; Jacquemin, 1982; Krugman, 1990; Posner, 1961; Vernon, 1966). Grant (1991) contends that a commonality among these theories is their emphasis on explaining the increasing trade between countries with analogous characteristics rather than on elucidating the patterns underlying that trade. This initial link gives rise to disparate concepts of competitiveness, rendering it multidimensional and dynamic. According to the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), competitiveness is defined as the capacity to engage in competition or rivalry for the achievement of an objective.

According to Ferraz et al. (1996), competitiveness is defined as an organization's capacity to formulate and execute competitive strategies, while simultaneously maintaining or augmenting its market share in a sustainable manner. These capacities are influenced by a combination of internal and external factors, including management practices, administrative processes, human resource management strategies, government policies, public infrastructure, and the interplay between supply and demand. Porter's (2015) concepts further bolster the notion of competitiveness, emphasizing the pivotal role of innovation and enhancement in fostering organizational prowess. These companies gain competitive advantages over their competitors by effectively managing the pressures and challenges they face.

According to Rubio and Baz (2015), the competitiveness of each business unit is contingent upon its internal structure, particularly its organizational framework and its capacity to generate sales that exceed those of its competitors. In contrast, Hassan (2000) asserts that competitiveness is contingent upon the effective management of the value chain. Consequently, the implementation of sustainable strategies by destinations is associated with enhanced growth prospects. In this author's view, tourism competitiveness encompasses all the capacities of the tourist destination to innovate, integrate, and create differentiating products that leverage its resources, without neglecting its position with respect to the competition.

According to the Centro de Pensamiento Turístico de Colombia, 2024, the Índice de Competitividad Turística Regional de Colombia, or ICTR, is presented. ICTR defines tourism competitiveness as "the capacity of a destination to insert itself into markets in a sustainable way, through the articulation of public and private actors and the creation of differentiated products of high quality, innovative and attractive. These efforts are intended to generate positive

experiences and high added value for tourists and visitors. Consequently, the competitiveness of a destination is founded on the strategic planning and management of comparative and competitive advantages. This approach is intended to promote socioeconomic development while preserving the cultural and social resources and ecosystem services of the destination.

In the specific context of tourism competitiveness, Crouch & Ritchie (1999) assert that: "It is the capacity of a nation to create and generate value, and this generation of value improves conditions and well-being through an adequate management of advantages and processes, because elements such as the proximity or the attractions of the destinations are involved, but all these elements must be integrated within an economic and social model."

According to Enright and Newton (2005; 2004), the competitiveness of a tourist destination is contingent upon its ability to attract and satisfy potential tourists. In contrast, Croes and Rivera (2010) propose an alternative theoretical framework, positing that competitiveness is reflected in the quality of life of the residents of the tourist destination, represented by real per capita income.

Nevertheless, the prevailing concept of tourism competitiveness, as articulated by Ritchie and Crouch (2005), underscores the significance of a tourist destination's capacity to attract and retain visitors, thereby augmenting their expenditure. This, in turn, fosters the attraction of additional visitors, while ensuring the provision of memorable and gratifying experiences for suppliers, all in a financially lucrative manner. This approach, when implemented, is expected to enhance the living conditions of residents and preserve the natural capital of the destination for posterity.

It is evident that the tourism sector must be cognizant of its competitive landscape, which encompasses a myriad of management, economic, financial, production, and innovation concepts. These concepts must be implemented through strategic direction to create and develop an environment that facilitates income and the sustainable development of organizations. This is imperative for the consolidation of the tourism sector. Table 2 offers a range of definitions for tourism competitiveness.

Author-date	Concept
Kozak & Rimmington (1999)	« The competitiveness of tourist destinations is the essential element of the tourism system ».
Dwyer et al. (2000)	«Tourism competitiveness encompasses price differences together with currency exchange rate movements, productivity levels of the various components of the tourism industry, and qualitative factors affecting the attractiveness of a destination.»
D’hautesserre (2000)	“Competitiveness is the ability of a tourist destination to maintain its position in the market and improve it over time”.
Heath (2003)	“Competitiveness is the ability of a tourist destination to have products and services available that others do not, to generate a better experience and to which the visitor gives more priority.”
Dwyer & Kim (2003)	“Competitiveness is the relative ability of a destination to understand the needs and profile of tourists, in order to provide better services and goods than other similar destinations, in the aspects verified”
Enright & Newton	“A tourist destination is only competitive if it has the capacity to

(2004)	attract and satisfy tourists, and competitiveness is determined by factors specific to tourism such as the range of factors that influence tourism service providers.”
Gomezelj & Mihalic (2008)	“The competitiveness of a tourist destination is the ability of a country to create value in such a way as to increase national wealth through the proper management of its assets and all the processes that make it attractive”
Hong (2009)	“Tourism competitiveness is the ability of a destination to create, integrate and provide tourism experiences that generate value in goods and services that are of significance to tourists. The experiences generated for tourists generate the resources of a destination and keep that destination ahead of other destinations in the market”

Table 2. Definitions of Tourism Competitiveness

Source: Own elaboration, based on Gandara et al., (2013).

Tourism Competitiveness vs Covid 19

The global pandemic of Coronavirus disease (Covid-19) led to a significant decline in global tourism, with Colombia experiencing a similar decline. This was due to a number of factors, including the permanent compromise to health security, the lack of implementation of government strategies, travel bans, and the fear among potential visitors. Consequently, the tourism sector has been compelled to implement a paradigm shift to revitalize its operations. This transformation involves the implementation of strategic initiatives designed to enhance the sector's performance.

According to the findings of the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), a global authority on competitiveness rankings, Colombia attained the 58th position out of 64 countries in its World Competitiveness Yearbook 2023. This is depicted in Figure 1. It surpassed the average of 9.4%, and its rating in the aggregate competitiveness index (ACI) increased by 0.38 percentage points from 45.88 to 46.26. It is noteworthy that between 2011 and 2020, Colombia's ranking had a downward trend, moving from the 52nd position to the 58th position. From 2021 to 2023, its average ranged between 46 and 52, indicating that, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the country's competitiveness remained relatively stable.

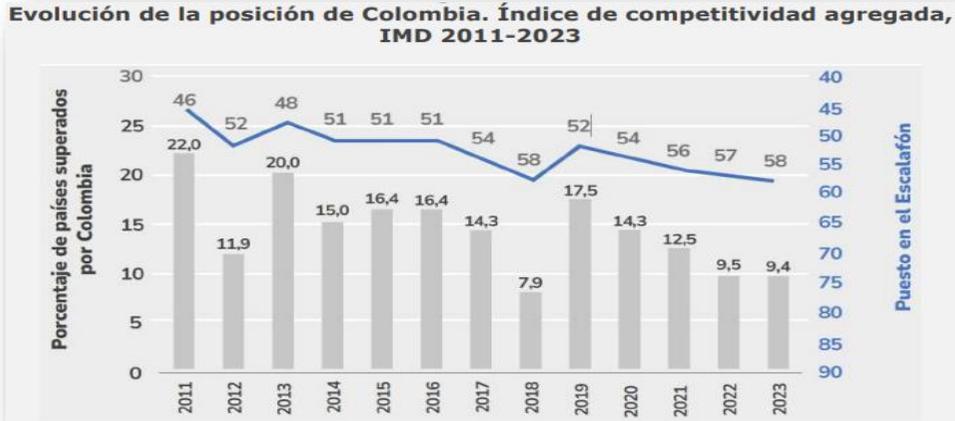


Figure 1. Tourism Competitiveness Index for Colombia 2011 To 2023

Source: IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook, editions from 2011 to 2023

Models of Tourism Competitiveness - Richie and Crouch (2000)

The model (Figure 2) comprises five fundamental factors of competitiveness and 36 associated attributes. It is regarded as the most comprehensive, rigorous, and complex approach in comparison to alternative models (Zehrer et al., 2017). The model proposes supporting factors, such as infrastructure, accessibility, and supply, which must provide an adequate stay for the visitor. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge the necessity of factors and resources that contribute to the allure of a destination, encompassing elements such as climate, cultural milieu, market dynamics, event diversity, and entertainment options.

A comprehensive destination management approach entails a multifaceted analysis encompassing the following domains: resource management, market analysis, financial planning, human resource development, organizational structure, service quality, and visitor experience. The formulation of a destination policy and the development of a comprehensive planning strategy are instrumental in delineating the system, elucidating its underlying philosophy and vision, and implementing competitive analysis and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

The determinants of travel decision-making are defined by a set of qualifiers and amplifiers, including location, safety, image, perceived value, and the representation of the destination brand. The model posits that comparative advantages stem from inherited resources, while competitive advantages can be cultivated. Both types of advantages influence the sustainability and competitiveness of a destination.

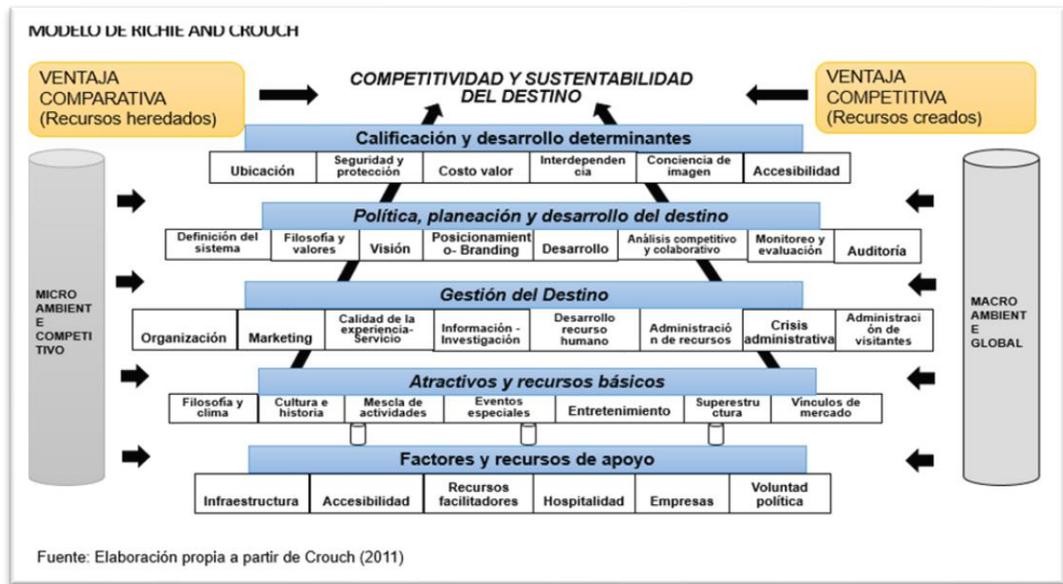


Figure 2. Competitiveness Model for Long-Distance Tourist Destinations

This model has served as a foundational framework for the development of other models of competitiveness of tourist destinations, including those of Dwyer et al. (2003); Heath (2003); Hong (2009); Goffi (2013); and Cucculelli et al. (2016). However, it is regarded as a complex model because it evaluates quantitative and qualitative elements with equal importance, which hinders its replication in other empirical studies (Jiménez et al., 2012; Amaya et al., 2015).

Despite its rigorous model, which emphasizes the competitive and global microenvironments, the model is exclusively designed for long-haul destinations and is only applicable to countries with a high level of tourism and well-being. This situation is not analogous to that of some Latin American countries, given the cultural and security complexity, which are key elements when choosing.

Dwyer and Kim's integrated model (2003)

The model posits four major variables: resources, destination conditions, situational conditions, and demand (Figure 3). Each of these dimensions is directed towards a shared objective: enhancing competitiveness. The resources variable, as defined by the authors, encompasses resources acquired by the destination, resources endowed by the destination, resources developed through its culture, customs, or traditions, and resources created over time. These resources enable the destination to differentiate itself from competitors, a distinction referred to as "created resources" and "inherited resources." The interplay among these resources fosters the creation of conditions that enable a tourist destination to enhance its competitiveness.

The second variable, designated as destination management, involves the involvement of government and industry, which will serve as a support system to improve socioeconomic prosperity and competitiveness. In this section, adequate planning and efficient management of resources will reduce risk. The effectiveness of this variable is contingent upon the provision of favorable conditions by governments for business development, which in turn facilitates the

enhancement of destination development. Situational conditions are tied to the availability of resources and to governmental and business conditions, climatic or cyclical events that can be remedied over time and will generate greater or lesser demand. The authors further underscore the significance of internal and external demand as crucial components in analyzing visitor preferences when selecting a destination.

Finally, effective management of these four variables will enable enhanced monitoring through continuous analysis of pertinent indicators. Such analysis will reveal whether suppliers are maintaining competitiveness and whether socioeconomic conditions are demonstrating signs of improvement.

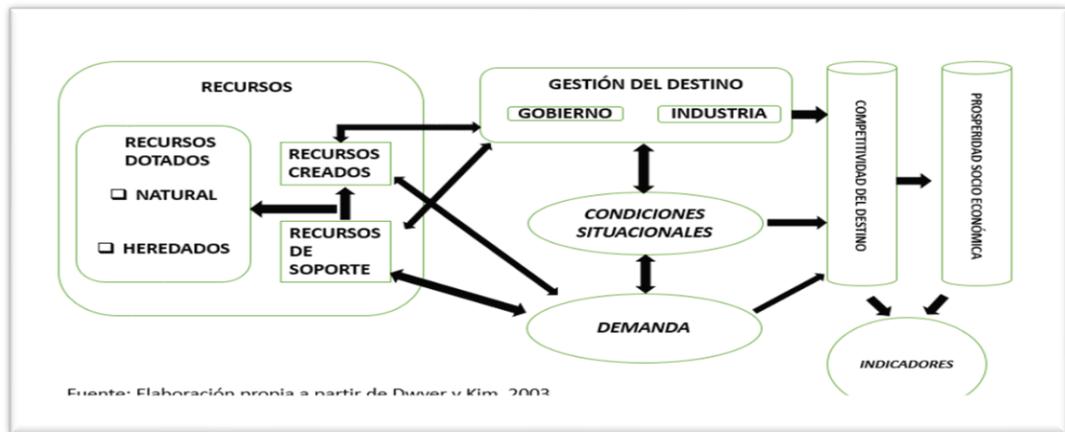


FIGURE 3. Integrated model of Dwyer and Kim (2003)

The proposal: a model of tourism competitiveness for Colombia: The case of Boyacá

The model enables the analysis of a destination's competitiveness through a three-phase examination of the value chain of the destination, encompassing the interaction of various actors in the process, as well as the occurrence of normal events and the potential relationships that emerge between the tourist and the destination at various stages.

In contrast to other tourism models, which exclusively consider activities and resources, the model proposed in figure 4 integrates each component with the Country Risk dimension, assigning it a significant weight. This factor is particularly relevant in the context of the Republic of Colombia, where the internal public order situation significantly impacts destination selection, both in terms of external and internal demand. The objective, therefore, is to refute the premise proposed by authors, who assign equal importance to all its components, focusing the results on enhancing competitiveness.

In the specific case of Colombia and Boyacá, the component Qualifier is of particular importance, affecting the trust generated by the supplier, their experience, and the moments of truth when offering the service. In addition, it impacts other situations that are far from reality in current models.

The proposed model draws from existing models, but it is distinguished by its unique nomenclature and structural design. Its objective is to provide a more accurate representation of the day-to-day interactions between tourist suppliers and tourists. Its structure can be interpreted

from left to right, commencing with the Qualifiers and Dilemmas presented by the visitor, progressing to the provision of the service, which encompasses specific supply conditions, and concluding with the impact that this value chain can exert on the living conditions of the suppliers and the community at large. It is imperative to interpret the model from the bottom up, emphasizing the paramount significance and the meticulous examination of the Country Risk component. The subsequent sections delineate the intricacies of each dimension and factor:

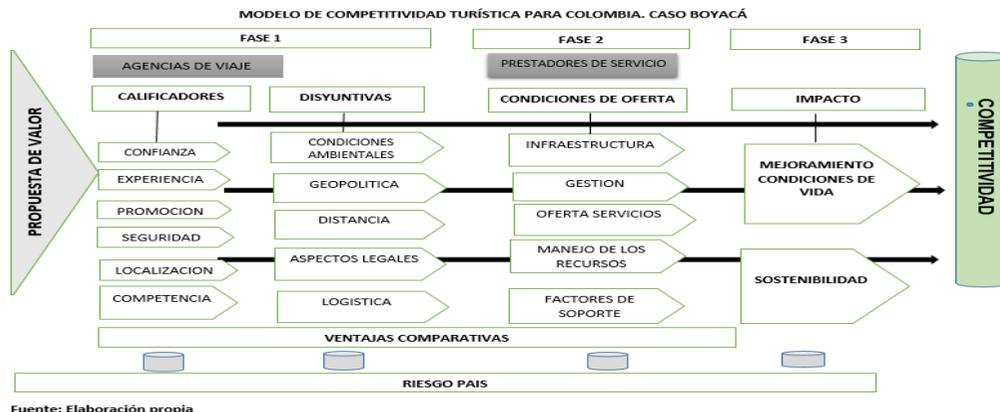


Figure 4. Proposed Tourism Competitiveness Model for Colombia, Boyacá Case

Country Risk

Due to the geopolitical situation and internal public order in Colombia, this model is structured around the major dimension of Country Risk. Colombia's history has been marked by a series of events in the political and economic spheres since its emancipation in the second decade of the 19th century. These events have led to seven civil wars in that century and instability in the public order sphere since the second half of the 20th century. This instability has significantly reduced productive development, triggering a substantial decline in top-level sectors such as road construction, education, health, and hotel infrastructure, among others.

Phase one. Qualifiers and Disjunctions

In this phase, considerable importance is attributed to travel agencies, which are responsible for the promotion of the country or destination to be visited. The seamless continuity of the value chain is contingent, to a considerable extent, on the capacity, inclination, and caliber of service exhibited by these agencies. The potential tourist receives the information provided by the agency, which must generate trust and offer options that meet their needs.

This phase is further segmented into two distinct variables: qualifiers and trade-offs. Potential visitors receive firsthand information at various points of promotion, such as consulates, embassies, and travel agencies, at both the global and national levels. Through these trade-offs, the tourists can decide which places to visit.

At this stage, the value chain that forms part of the Tourism Competitiveness Model for Colombia begins, specifically in the case of Boyacá. The efficiency with which each party executes its role is a critical factor in determining the progress of the region towards the subsequent phase.

The Qualifiers

The model posits that trust, experience, promotion, safety, location, competence, and environmental conditions serve as qualifiers. While adequate promotion by travel agencies is imperative, it is equally crucial for tourists to have confidence in their ability to have a positive experience. This necessitates guidance on the most suitable locations to visit and the implementation of fundamental safety measures.

It is imperative for tourists to have a clear understanding of their destination, the means of transportation they will utilize, the access areas, the ease of communication, the proximity to hospitals or first-rate medical centers, and the risk forecasting. A study conducted by Colombia Productiva, a subsidiary of the Colombian Ministry of Industry and Tourism, identified ten risks in 2019 (Table 2). To attract more travelers to emerging destinations, tour operators must address these risks.

Risk	Justification
Lack of promotion of the destination	Isolating a tourist destination from government promotion and support triggers a lack of preparation among operators, a decrease in the flow of travelers and the loss of opportunities for entrepreneurs.
Contamination and degradation of the destination	The deterioration of landscapes or a bad reputation due to poor sanitary conditions can lead to a reduction in the number of tourists, as well as possible health problems for visitors.
Not speaking a second language	Although it is not a new problem, the increase in foreign tourists makes it essential to maintain a dialog with them; otherwise, the language barrier can have a negative impact on the arrival of travelers.
Lack of dissemination of the preventive measures that visitors and guests should take:	Anticipating the conditions of the terrain, the appropriate clothing and equipment, the climatic season and other external variables.
Impact on the destination due to illegal hunting and fishing activities	The intensive and uncontrolled use of these practices will degrade into the loss of native ecosystems, one of the attractions most sought after by nature travelers.
Mass tourism in nature reserves	With the increase in the number of visitors to natural parks and areas of ecological importance, it is becoming difficult to control their impact over time, affecting the environment and, subsequently, making the destinations less attractive to visitors who respect them.
Loss of identity of the culture of the minority populations of a destination	With the increase in the number of visitors to natural parks and areas of ecological importance, it is increasingly difficult to control

	their impact, which affects the environment and, consequently, makes destinations less attractive to visitors who respect them.
Allergic reactions or health problems due to weather conditions	Perhaps some of the most common risks are those associated with the effects on the body of various variables. To minimize this, it is best to report any allergies, species of insects or animals or abrupt climate changes.
Lack of adequate infrastructure for the tourist activities on offer	In addition to the risks of overexploitation, the infrastructure of a destination is key to its proper growth and the visitor experience. Bridges, accommodation and health centers must be taken into account.
Weak tourist appeal of a destination	Attempting to exploit or overburden tourist destinations that do not yet have the necessary capacity to receive the arrival of foreigners can trigger several of the aforementioned risks, hence the importance of proper planning and evaluation of a site in the territory before offering it as a destination.

Table 3. Risks Described by Tour Operators in Different Regions of Colombia

Source: Own elaboration, based on the Colombia Productiva report, 2019

The Dilemmas

The environmental conditions, distance, legal aspects and logistics are considered, and the value chain continues with decisions or alternatives that the visitor will make according to the appropriate guidance they have received, so that they can choose a place depending on the characteristics that Colombia and Boyacá have to offer, such as the different thermal zones that range from a warm climate, not necessarily on the beach, as Colombia offers this type of climate even within the Andes mountain range, to snow-capped mountains. Distance is another decisive factor, as Colombia is a large country.

Phase two: Conditions of supply for hotel service providers

This phase of the study focuses on hotel service providers in Colombia and the department of Boyacá. The model underscores the imperative for maintaining optimal conditions to ensure a positive visitor experience. It is composed of five distinct variables: infrastructure, management, service offering, resource management, and support factors, and posits that the presence of these conditions is instrumental in facilitating access for tourists, with the availability of adequate roads, comfortable transportation options, and accessibility by various modes of transportation, including land, air, and sea.

The model further emphasizes the importance of optimal management of the concepts of distance/time and distance/cost. Vera (1997) further elaborates on the necessary conditions, underscoring the significance of proximity to amenities, designated rest areas, the presence of support staff or guides, and the assurance of safety, health, adequate facilities, recreation, and rest areas that are designed to generate satisfaction and pleasure among visitors. The following conditions must be accomplished.

- a. The resources available to the tourist destination must be managed properly and efficiently, so the staff in charge play a vital role in the way they promote, provide and manage both tangible and intangible resources to ensure the place to be visited functions properly. Large areas or quantities of fixed assets are not required if they are not managed properly. It is about making the most of the resources available, creating policies for the protection and care of the environment, providing ongoing training for human resources, understanding and enhancing the strengths of the destination and minimizing its weaknesses, developing an efficient marketing policy, promoting and developing synergies, all accompanied by constant monitoring and evaluation of what is being done, in order to enhance the destination and make it more competitive.
- b. The primary objective is the consumer, providing them with adequate service during their stay, helping them to have a unique experience, in such a way that the visitor values and appreciates the service received. The destination must have good accommodation and good quality food, with the added fact that the visitor will find different price options, well-prepared support staff and other services to be provided, in such a way that the promise of value is fulfilled.
- c. The service provider must offer different service alternatives, rate options and transportation options, giving tourists the possibility of choosing between several options.
- d. In accordance with the conditions of the destination, the service provider must know how to manage what they have in hand, finding a balance between price and offer, making the most of the opportunities in terms of the climate, topography, comfort and gastronomy of the region.
- e. Supporting elements, such as government support, are fundamental in policies based on improving the living conditions of service providers, reducing or incentivizing tax burdens, improving roads, implementing measures to guarantee safety, the permanent development of synergies, partnerships between food and beverage and hotel service providers, logistical support for transportation, guides will result in improving the competitiveness of the hotel offer.

In practice, there are some areas in Colombia with a very high potential for tourism, such as the eastern plains or the Colombian Pacific, but for security reasons it is not possible to visit them. Another reason that makes it difficult to visit is the distance between one place and another, concentrating tourism from external visitors in only two regions, the Caribbean coast and the coffee region. In the case of the department of Boyacá, most visitors are tourists from other regions of the country. The hotel infrastructure in the department of Boyacá is concentrated in towns such as Villa de Leiva and Paipa, which is an indicator of the potential of this department to attract tourists, if there are substantial improvements in infrastructure and a greater development of the culture towards tourism.

Phase three. Impact

This final phase is predicated on two fundamental pillars: the enhancement of the living conditions of both the inhabitants of the destination and the service providers, and the sustainability of the sector in the future. A tourism sector that is not competitive will not endure if it merely enriches a select group or if the communities involved feel exploited or if the natural or human resources available at the destination are permanently damaged.

It is imperative for visitors to recognize that their investment is directly linked to the

enhancement of the quality of life for the local population. This enhancement encompasses improvements in infrastructure, such as roads, housing, access to drinking water and public services, landscape beautification, reforestation, water body rehabilitation, waste management, and ongoing educational initiatives concerning the preservation and management of natural resources within the designated tourist destination. It is imperative for providers to recognize that the sustainability of tourism in the future is contingent upon constant innovation, the multiplication of resources, both tangible and intangible, and the highlighting of the distinctive elements that set the tourism sector apart.

The model addresses the reality of tourism currently being experienced by this sector in Colombia and Boyacá. It is therefore futile to engage in adequate promotion or pre-sales to attract the end consumer if, upon arrival in the country, there is no clarity for the visitor about the conditions of culture, traditions, or thermal floors. These elements are indispensable when it comes to being competitive.

Sustainability and Improvement of Living Conditions

The model proposes that only a tourism sector can ensure its consolidation if it is sustainable over time, understood as competitiveness through differentiation and optimal management of its costs, but, in addition, the key lies in the productivity of the industry and in solid investment inside and outside the country (Porter, 2009). Tourist destinations are open systems and maintain a permanent systematic relationship that is of vital importance for their sustainability over time. Therefore, efforts should be made to maintain an optimal environment throughout the value chain that favors and constantly develops the tourism sector with the generation of strategies that minimize the effect of threats, maintain strength and enhance opportunities.

Conclusions

In most training schools for administrative areas, the concept of competitiveness is primarily discussed in terms of the fundamental theory of Porter or other authors such as Mintzberg or Ansoff, who underscore strategy as a pivotal factor for competitiveness. However, there is often a neglect of numerous elements and variables that are essential in the competitive process.

The tourism sector has been observed to deviate from theoretical frameworks and align more closely with business realities. In the tourism sector, competitiveness entails distinguishing oneself from competitors, given the multifaceted nature of tourism, which is influenced by individuals' diverse thoughts, tastes, sensations, and incomes. Inadequacies in management within this domain can inflict deleterious and irreversible ramifications on the society and the economy that the sector engenders.

The model proposed in this article aims to elucidate the pivotal elements influencing the tourism sector, acknowledging the distinct characteristics inherent in each variable. In analyzing the competitiveness of tourist destinations in Colombia, particularly in Boyacá, the objective is not only to examine how the sector operates, but also to understand that models generally applicable in other contexts may not always be applicable to the Colombian reality, where conditions can vary significantly.

The resulting model delves into the underlying causes of observed phenomena, encompassing a comprehensive evaluation of Colombia's and Boyacá's specific conditions, as well as the economic and social ramifications that deficiencies in the tourism sector can engender. The "Country Risk" variable plays a crucial role in the model due to the particularities in terms of

security and public order. Each phase and variable in the model follow a dynamic sequence and presents a cross-cutting nature from the beginning to the end of the value chain.

A comprehensive understanding of the model's components is essential for informed decision-making, with the overarching objective being the enhancement of tourist destination selection and the provision of an experience that fosters visitor loyalty, both domestic and international. It is imperative to underscore that this article constitutes a component of the doctoral thesis project, entitled "Tourist Competitiveness: In Search of the Missing Links in Regional Culture. The Case of Boyacá, Colombia," which was presented to the University of Granada in Spain.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Consent for Publication

Both authors declare their consent on the publication of this study

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

No human resources were considered in the study data collection, so no need for consent was required from any participant.

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Availability of Data and Materials

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, upon reasonable request.

Author Contributions

The authors designed the study, collected data, selected and analyzed the dataset, wrote the manuscript, and read, reviewed, and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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