

Rural-Community Tourism: Study of the Competences of Professional Human Talent in Tourism of the Cotopaxi Province

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Abstract

Rural-community tourism today represents an opportunity for income and sustainable development for communities, given the richness of their resources and touristic potential of the country, which in turn become attractions that benefit from the economic activity of the sector. Tourism has been considered a strategic axis for the nations of the world, proof of this is the recognition given to the human talent that works in this sector through international organizations (UNWTO, ILO, UNESCO) generating an interest every time higher. The objective of the study was to identify the competencies of human talent that the National University of Chimborazo and the National University of the Armed Forces ESPE propose in the tourism careers, in the provinces of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi. The methodology used was of the mixed or multi-method type. It has an explanatory sequential design. For data collection, a scalar type multiple-choice questionnaire was applied. Theoretical documentary analysis was carried out. The results were analyzed in a quantitative and qualitative way through contrasting or triangulation methods. It was concluded that the improvement of community-based rural tourism requires instrumental, personal, systematic, and complementary skills.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Rural-community tourism nowadays represents an opportunity for income and sustainable development for communities, given the wealth of their resources and touristic potential that in turn become attractions that benefit from the economic activity of the sector. As it is already known, Tourism has been considered a strategic axis for the nations of the world, proof of this is the recognition that through the international organizations [1, 2] dedicated to the study of this sector which have granted a great preponderance to management by competencies in human talent.

The [1] identifies an increasing number of destinations worldwide that have been oriented to the development of tourism and investments, which are

increasing. This determines a high potential for a boom in tourism labor opportunities for locals. Tourism then becomes a key condition in the sustainable development of countries, due to the generation of income provided by this concept, which implies increasing a greater number of jobs in those tourist establishments that foreign and national visitors receive. Tourism contributes as well to increase the nation's income in addition to the execution of the relevant infrastructure in this sector. It is important to indicate that, in the last six decades, tourism has expanded and diversified, thus becoming a sector with fast economic growth in the world. From a competitive perspective, tourism has become a strategic factor, due to the efforts made by countries to be competitive to achieve a greater

number of tourists[3,4and5] in correspondence to this, tourism plays an important role for social advantages such as increased employment, internal promotion of countries and opportunities for tourist destinations. In addition to these factors, it is worth noting the interests of the countries in maintaining the sustainability of tourism, thus generating plans and strategies aimed at sustainable development, where economic, social, ecological is on the first international agenda [6 and7].

However, the implementation of tourism activities in rural/community areas of countries in Latin America has placed strong expectations as part of a change, both socially, economically, and ecologically. From this perspective, everything points to the consolidation expressed in the global consensus on the issue of rural community tourism permeated by national public policies and has established a development model that frames the implementation of programs and incentives linked to tourism taking into account the human resources that work in this sector so important for the development of the countries [8 and9].

In this sense, rural / community tourism responds to growth processes that aim at sustainable development, territory management, development of skills in human talent, and the valuation of heritage in general. In recent decades countries have been interested in the rural and community sector given the increasing importance they have, on the other hand from the field of tourism and hotel management it is important to point out the human talent component contributes to the growth of tourist establishments to through labor activities as an innovative trend of improvement when considering tourism expansion, the incorporation of employment of people in this sector, in the economic field the substantive income for the improvement of

Description

The approach that dominates the international world (educational, social, economic, tourism) has proposed since the last two decades (under the

communities, considering own resources as a competitive advantage [10]. In another order of ideas from the link with the tourism market, this aspect leads to the establishment of innovative mechanisms that determine in one way or another the potentializing means that are derived specifically from those products of the provinces, being the interest of this research work to address in first instance the state of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi.

Attending to the innovative trends of the moment, rural / community tourism is a priority for the Ecuadorian regions. To develop this branch of tourism in Ecuador, it is necessary to know the profile of competencies that is evidenced in the labor activities of the tourism and hotel professional that provides services in the housing sector in this sector (rural / community) by its good practices[11].

It should be noted that the tourist establishments in the rural / community field suffer from qualified personnel (labor competencies) for the attention to the tourist and consequently to guarantee the service in this area so important for the economy of a country. According to [12] in their research, in recent years the need to strengthen the increase in labor competition and the improvement of the quality of service provided by tourism companies, also both conditions are closely related. But it is striking that the improvement of quality is not enough to face the effects that globalization has on the sector. The impact of the human factor has been analyzed and investigated in the rural and community tourism sector, but it has been verified how it is subsequently not incorporated into the systems of measurement and improvement of the quality of the service, encouraging an increase in the economy of the recipient countries and tourism drivers.

leadership of UNESCO) initiatives that are committed to demonstrate the competencies of professionals as an axis of contribution to the constant development of those needs that need to be addressed (in this case sector services in tourist establishments) and where human talent constitutes a

source of development in interrelated societies [13]. Therefore, it is determined that Rural - Community Tourism (TRC in the future) represents an opportunity for income generation and development for rural communities located within the framework of the Cotopaxi provinces, addressing with greater emphasis the registration of those establishments of accommodation where the tourism and hotel professional offers its professional services [14].

Based on the foregoing, it is pointed out in a timely manner through information issued by [15] that rural and community areas in tourism for Ecuador which presents the absence of programs for local/national development, the great potential existing in natural and cultural resources is not taken into account, in addition there is no systematic process of continuous training of professionals who have an interest in the service they can provide in establishments in this sector, thus avoiding increasing sustainability and local-regional-national tourism development. It should be taken into account that in recent decades, innovative processes have been generated in countries due to the growing demand of this sector, especially by a population that wishes to experience another type of recreation as usual, therefore, the increase in the component "natural" denotes the concept of healthy life and greater health, which makes it possible to strengthen this sector for the world, however, for this, it is necessary to consolidate information on the tourism sector that comes from the provinces, based on the guidelines that the It is aimed at strengthening sustainable development in the field of rural-community tourism, in addition to recognizing the imperative need in the processes of professionalization of human talent that this entails [16].

Another aspect of interest in this study is that the project responds to the objectives established in the National Plan for a Lifetime Development, emphasizing Objective 4 which states consolidate social and solidarity economic sustainability with the diversification, differentiation, and breadth of the exportable offer; the opening of new markets and their diversification taking in to account non-traditional land alternative markets, to take

advantage of regional markets and attract related investment such as community tourism, gastronomy (National Development Plan 2017-2021-A Lifetime).

Objectives of the research

- Describe and know which are the generic competencies most applied by the students of tourism UNACH - ESPE during the academic period 2019 - 2020.
- To analyze and interpret the model competencies presented by different authors, which promote community-based rural tourism development.
- To propose a set of professional and/or labor competences of the human talent working in the tourism sector in the framework of the study of rural and community tourism.

II.

METHOD

By virtue of the objective and the questions raised. The methodology developed was of a mixed nature. Sequential explanatory design (DEXPLIS). Described by [17] as a set of systematic, empirical, and critical research processes involving the collection and analysis of quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative (interpretative) data. In other words, it was based on two phases.

In the first phase, descriptive research was applied, referring to the preparatory diagnostic stage, which made it possible to organize and order the results and descriptions, characteristics, procedures and other variables of phenomena and events [18]. The second phase was of an interpretive documentary type.

Population and sample

In the provinces of Chimborazo and Cotopaxi, there are different universities. The National University of Chimborazo UNACH (24700 students) is located in this area. University of the Armed Forces ESPE (22229 students). Both universities have a population of 46929 students. Of the UNACH universities, a sample of 4 university courses was considered. From the University ESPE, 3 university courses were

considered. Both courses of the tourism career with interest in the field of knowledge of rural/community tourism. All with an average of 30 students per academic year. The total sample was 210 Tourism students. Students from the 2019 - 2020 academic year. The sample was intentional. No statistical calculations were applied to the sample [19]. The criteria of interest for researchers was considered to be knowledgeable on the part of the actors. Priority was given to the level of qualification that would give professionalization skills in this sector[21].

Data collection instrument

For the data collection in the quantitative phase, a scalar-type questionnaire was used. A questionnaire with five answer options. Several competencies were presented. The response options were 100%, 75%, 50%, 25% and 0. The results were analyzed descriptively, using the percentage of the highest representation according to the object of study[22].It is available in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire applied to students of tourism. 2019-2020

Study of the Competences of Professional Human Talent in Tourism of the Cotopaxi Province						
Universidad Nacional del Chimborazo UNACH / Universidad Nacional de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE						
Names and surnames: _____						
Date: ____ / ____ / ____						
It is the basis for the professional skills of human talent, applied in tourism careers.		Options				
What is the percentage that you would impose on each of them?		0	25%	50%	75%	100%
Innovation and creativity						
Incorporation of ethical and legal values						
Responsibility and entrepreneurship initiative						
Interpersonal skills.						
Teamwork						
Written communication						
Ability to apply knowledge in practice						
Oral communication						
Ethical and professional responsibility.						
Use of information and communication						
Planning and time management						
Critical Reasoning						
Problem-solving						
Ability to adapt to new situations						
Awareness of ethical values						

The questionnaires were sent to the institutional emails of the participants of the tourism races. In this way, the situation is made manifest. After the diagnostic execution and on the basis of it, the execution of the next phase was planned.

Based on the results obtained in the first phase, the qualitative phase was initiated [23]. Documentary analysis was applied, with different authors, related to the issue of rural-community tourism competencies [24, 25 &26].

III.

RESULTS

Results Quantitative

After applying the questionnaire to the students of Tourism at UNACH and ESPE The respondents showed a significant sample of the preliminary study on the competences of the tourism professional. With a total of 7 university courses (average of 30 students) Some of the competencies are configured in the ideal profile of [29] for the performance of the tourist activity in the rural community (See figure1).

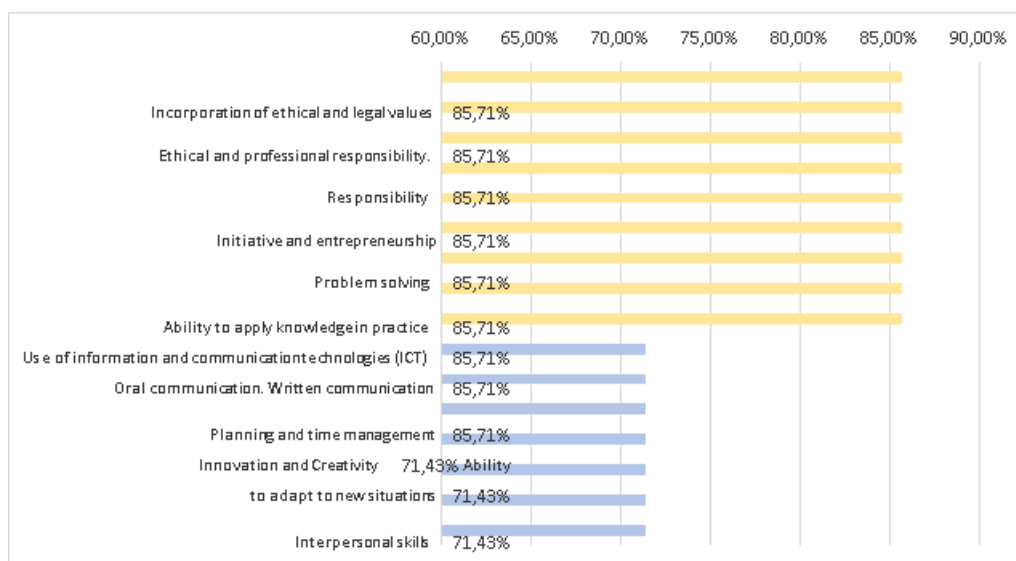


Figure 1. Results of the questionnaire applied to students

The results show that 85.71% is the highest percentage (see figure 1). The majority of the participants' skills are in incorporating ethical and legal values, ethical and professional responsibility, initiative, and entrepreneurship, problem-solving, ability to apply knowledge in practice, use of information and communication, oral communication, written communication, and planning and management of time. These were the competencies most highly valued by the respondents.

In this way, the first objective of the research is answered.

Ethics, problem-solving, and communication makeup the standards of education in the tourism sector according to [30]. [31] The fundamental requirement for the management of the organization is to have adequate availability of qualified human capital. The study of tourism is determined as a profession with a clear commitment and conviction to change. Interdisciplinary training is reflected in the first nine competencies. The capacity for agreement, panoramic vision, and creativity are competencies recommended by [32] but are not provided in the results. They stand out as a rigid curricular structure in university careers.

Next, competencies, innovation and creativity, the ability to adapt to new situations, interpersonal skills,

teamwork, critical reasoning, decision making, and awareness of ethical values represent minor values. With a percentage of 71.43%, little importance is given to labor relations, group work, and awareness. This is in contrast to [33], where the main qualities of the tourism profession are found in teamwork.

Labour relations are found at different levels of organization in tourism companies [34]. These relationships should be considered but are not applied. In this way, the necessary skills of the graduate can be fully utilized. Special needs at those levels that make or influence strategic decisions, where policies and lines of human behavior are defined.

Qualitative phase

After a descriptive analysis of the results in the quantitative phase, The results showed the most applied skills and those least valued by the tourism students. At a documentary level, the theoretical underpinnings of [35] and [29] were read. These authors indicate that competencies can be subdivided or organized. The opportunity to organize competencies serves to improve the profile of professional practice [36].

The Republic of Ecuador has certain regulations regarding rural community tourism. Government policies in Ecuador for the promotion of tourism

development are expressed in the PLANDETUR report, which refers to the need to promote the development of human talent derived from academic institutions, this implies the need to consolidate prospective agendas that point to improvements in student performance at a high level of preparation. Analyzing what is established in article 280 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, one of the fundamental axes for the development of public policies, programs, and projects require the execution of programs that are linked to the necessary competencies between the central government and governments.

Decentralized freelancers for decision-making based on the development of the country, Article 293 bases the importance of the formulation and execution of the National Development Plan that determines without prejudice the powers and autonomy from its actors, in the same way, the tourism law in its article 3, it raises as principles of the tourist activity the initiative and community participation indigenous, peasant, montubia and afro Ecuadorean, with its culture and traditions preserving its identity, protecting its ecosystem and participating in the provision of tourist services in attention to the established in the regulation of community tur centers, these elements undoubtedly constitute the backbone base analysis and interpretation of the subject under study developed. Likewise, the revaluation of tourist attractions and products that the province of Cotopaxi has, also determines the interest of research work to promote the development of work skills in the professional in this area.

Based on the skills needed to improve rural community tourism. The researchers respond to the second objective of the research. Four categories supported by various authors are analyzed. The competencies can be organized into categories to improve human talent. As a first category, the instrumental competencies of [37], as their name suggests, have an instrumental function. They are identified with cognitive, methodological, technological, and linguistic abilities that enable

basic academic development for university students. They are related to cognitive skills, the ability to learn and manage ideas and thoughts. Methodological skills, to manage the environment: organize time, make decisions, solve problems, and implement learning strategies. Technological skills related to the use of information and communication technology.

The second category is personal skills. For [38] personal competencies are characterized by language skills. These skills are oral and written communication and knowledge of a second language. Personal competencies are aimed at facilitating social interaction and cooperation and are related to communicative and critical skills. They include skills related to the ability to relate to others, to work in a team, to express one's feelings, and to have an ethical and social commitment. For [39], personal skills are subdivided into individual and social skills. Individuals are related to the ability to express feelings, critical and self-critical skills. Social skills are related to the ability to work in a team or to express social or ethical commitment.

The third category is systemic skills. Systemic competencies are the fusion between instrumental and personal competencies. According to [40], these competencies allow us to approach reality in its complexity of relationships and not as a set off isolated facts. For [41] they imply a mixture of understanding, sensitivity, and knowledge, allowing the individual to relate and group all the parts of a whole. This type of competence includes abilities and skills related to learning autonomously. Developing creativity and being able to adapt to new situations.

As a fourth category, researchers, complementary skills are recognized. The authors [42] define complementary competence as the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in tourism practice. The ability to use ICT, digital communication, self-esteem, foreign language skills, and self-confidence.

Finally, based on the four categories. Instrumental,

personal, systemic, and complementary competence, is collected from a theoretical scientific perspective to redefine and update the generic competences exposed in Ecuadorian higher education. The competencies exposed by the experts demonstrate the strategic importance within the framework of sustainable development agendas. The development of the capacities of the people who provide their services raises the quality of tourism. These services, in all their essence, enable the development of the country.

IV.

CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that the development of skills in the hotel tourism professional in the framework of rural community tourism and based on the literature consulted points to a professional who demonstrates in his daily activity and performance.

This is the answer to the third objective. A set of professional and/or labor competences of the human talent working in the tourism sector is presented. All within the framework of the study of rural and community tourism (See Table 2).

Table 2. Necessary Competencies to Improve the Professional Human Talent in Tourism of the Province of Cotopaxi

CATEGORY	Competences
INSTRUMENTAL	Organization and planning capacity Knowledge of a foreign language. Computer knowledge in Tourism Ability to manage information Problem resolution Decision making. Ability to apply knowledge in practice
PERSONAL	Teamwork I work in an international and multidisciplinary context Skills in interpersonal relationships Recognition of diversity and multiculturalism Ética and Legal Values
SYSTEMIC	Autonomous Learning Critical thinking Adaptation to new situations Creativity. Leadership. Problem resolution Knowledge of other cultures and customs Initiative and entrepreneurial spirit Quality
COMPLEMENTARY	Ability to apply theoretical knowledge in tourism practice ICT use Communication Self-Esteem Demonstration Knowledge of a second foreign language Self confidence.

It is concluded that the new trends that affect the development of rural and community tourism is key to the development of the countries taking into

account that much of this commitment is acquired by the human talent of the recipient country through the demonstration of the competences of the human

talent providing strategic directionality to address knowledge in all its phases (theoretical and practical). Not only because the study will identify those incomes that comes from tourism, but also because it provides inputs for the incorporation of new products through the knowledge of professionals and the community. Also because strengthening the professional that drives tourism will ensure the increased knowledge in the tourist area and consequently by the inclusion of technology and innovation.

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