



JOURNAL OF TOURISM, SUSTAINABILITY AND WELL-BEING

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AIMS & SCOPE

The **Journal of Tourism, Sustainability and Well-being (JTSW)** is an international open-access academic journal in the tourism field that publishes high-quality, refereed articles that advance science widely available so that tourism can serve the society, enhance a sustainable development of the destinations, and positively impact the well-being of stakeholders.

JTSW offers itself a multidisciplinary and all-inclusive bridge between theoretical and practical aspects of tourism and the emerging interdisciplinary aspects that can revolutionise the tourism and hospitality industries. While the JTSW maintains its traditional focus on original research, both conceptual and empirical, that clearly contributes to the theoretical development of the tourism field, it also has a far more inclusive and broadened scope to keep up with the new problems that challenge academics and practitioners working in private, public and non-profit organisations globally. JTSW encourages research based on a variety of methods, qualitative and/or quantitative, based on rigorous theoretical reasoning and supported by a strong methodology. Criteria for evaluation include significance in contributing new knowledge, conceptual quality, appropriate methodology, technical competence (of theoretical argument and/or data analysis), and clarity of exposition.

JTSW promotes research on a broad range of topics that explore major trends in the study of relationships between tourism, sustainable development of destinations and well-being of tourism-related stakeholders. Contributions can be from all disciplinary perspectives, with interdisciplinary approaches especially welcomed as far as they apply to the tourism research field. All policy, planning and management aspects of tourism are also encouraged.

The journal is published as a quarterly international review in open access, mainly composed of thematic special issues. The publishing schedule is the last working day of March, June, September and December. Any interested scholar can submit a proposal for the guest-edition of a special issue to the Editor-in-Chief. The proposal should follow the guidelines provided in the Guide for Guest Editors. Each article must follow the publication rules as in the Author Guidelines. The Guest-Editors and the Editor-in-Chief are responsible for the implementation of a double-blind review process. This method ensures that the author(s) and the reviewers remain anonymous to guarantee a fair and impartial review of the submitted manuscripts.

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EDITORIAL

This second issue of 2022 is composed of five articles, mostly of qualitative nature. The first article uses an innovative approach, system thinking, to explore the importance of policy-making activities in tourism recovery of covid 19 impacts in Portugal. The second article is also dedicated to the analysis of the policy proposals to promote tourism, focusing on the state of Rondônia, in Brazil. The third article addresses the topic of educational tourism and how it can positively impact tourism-related education with subsequent social, economic and environmental benefits to destinations. The fourth article is a contribution to cultural sustainability. It explores how giving aesthetic value to the urban landscape, and cultural identity may enhance the attractiveness of a historic centre through outdoor cultural routes. The last article intends to contribute to the literature on festival events and empirically shows how the cognitive image of the event can increase tourist satisfaction.

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COVID-19 Impact on Tourism: The System Thinking Approach Applied to the Case of Portugal

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ABSTRACT

This work applies systems theory and tools to build a flexible framework for sustainable tourism in Portugal due to the Covid-19 impacts. The objectives are (1) to explore the cause-effect relationships between and among the variables involved; (2) to develop a causal loop diagram that resumes the role of tourism stakeholders and (3) to identify policy directions to enhance Portuguese tourism. Tourism recovery in the country will depend mainly on interlinked factors of economic, social and health fields. Its complexity requires new approaches in tourism research, such as system thinking models and testing tools such as neural simulation. As well as statistical data and tourism official documents, a panel of European specialists has been used. The proposed approach is innovative as it helps the integration of tourism theory with other fields, and outlines policy solutions to the situation in Portugal which can be dynamically adapted. A qualitative analysis pointed out how crucial are the policy making activities (rebalancing measures) counteracting the causes and negative consequences of the problem.

KEYWORDS

Tourism, System Thinking, Sustainability, Crisis Management, Recovery.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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1. Introduction

Due to the present pandemic, tourism management has raised safety and health policy issues as priorities around the globe. Widespread travel restrictions have caused a massive drop in demand and according to the UNWTO (2021) tourism suffered its deepest crisis in 2020 with a drop of 74% in international arrivals. The collapse of international travel represents an estimated loss of more than 11 times the loss from the 2009 global economic crisis.

In addition, markets had significant decreases in their overnight stays: in 2020 all main markets recorded decreases above 65%, especially the Irish (-89.5%), United States (-87.7%) and Chinese (-82.8%). In Europe, arrivals declined by 70% representing over 500 million fewer international tourists, while the Americas had a drop of 69%. Even in the early days of the pandemic, EU officials estimated that the European tourism industry was losing 1 billion € per month due to fewer arrivals from China. Every month, there have been significant decreases of stays in tourist accommodation establishments. Therefore, the latest UNWTO Panel of Experts survey showed a mixed outlook for 2021: almost half of respondents (45%) envisaged better prospects, while 25% expected a similar performance and 30% foreseen a worsening of results. The overall prospects for a rebound in 2021 have worsened. Most experts do not consider a return to pre-pandemic levels happening before 2023, with 43% of respondents anticipating recovery in 2023 but 41% anticipating 2024 or later. Regarding tourism experiences, experts forecast a growing demand for open-air and nature-based activities, with a higher interest in domestic tourism and local travel.

In this context, despite classical science having researched and reached great results through analytical thinking, more and more research has become intangible in order to deal with contemporary complex challenges (Jakulin, 2017; Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2021). Today, a systemic approach may be suitable to deal with complex questions, such as tourism in a global society. Several realities should be understood in a holistic way as Covid-19 has demonstrated that travel and tourism are sensitive to external disruptions. A system thinking approach, embedded in strategic foresight and scenario planning, is crucial to ensure long-term resilience and should be explored as a methodology to anticipate disruptions in the complex travel and tourism system (Postma & Yeoman, 2021).

Given the instability of this pandemic, a resilient approach to the future is necessary. Thus, this work establishes a framework to understand and manage complexity and adaptive system thinking applied to Portuguese tourism. It applies Systems Theory for building systems thinking on sustainable tourism to help: (1) explore the cause-effect relationship between and among the variables involved; (2) develop a causal loop diagram (CLD) that explains how tourism participants respond to the complex structure of tourism policy; and (3) identify policy actions for tourism recovery in Portugal and the mitigation of threats post Covid-19.

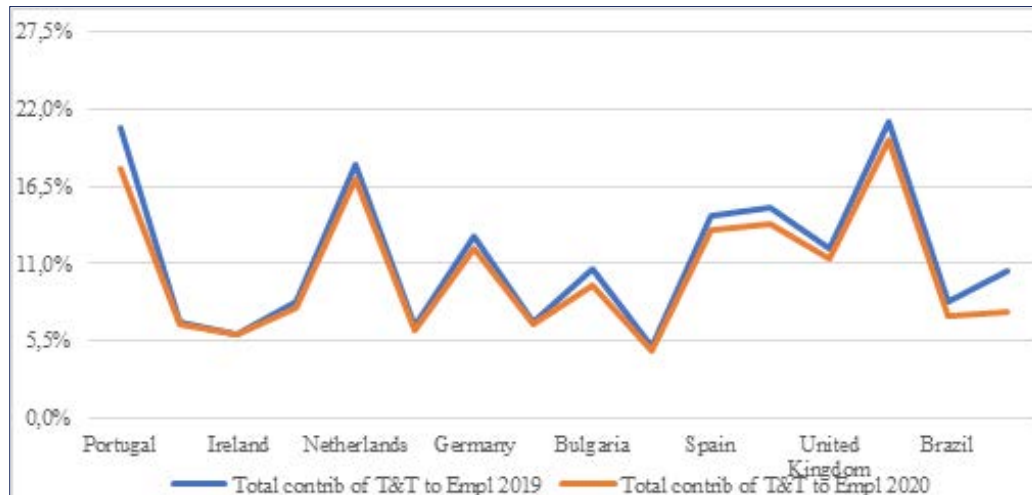
Its structure is as follows: section 2 presents the impacts of the pandemic on tourism sector in terms of employment, GDP, international vs. domestic visitor spend, and trust/security and raises the contribution of Systems Theory in searching for solutions; section 3 investigates the proposed methodology in terms of its origins and goals, and then applies it to tourism in Portugal; section 4 discusses results and outlines policy solutions for tourism recovery, including a new perspective from applying systems thinking approach. Finally, section 5 concludes the research referring limitations and future directions.

2. Literature review

In the past, the tourism industry bounced back from various crises and outbreaks (Novelli, Burgess, Jones and Ritchie, 2018). But today, in the aftermath of Covid-19, there is a perception that the future of tourism sector is uncertain. The OECD considers rebuilding tourism a priority, due to its importance for the global economy (OECD, 2020a). This sector must become more sustainable and resilient in the future. The Covid-19 pandemic, staying at the center of the world system, inflicted a major shock on global travel and trade and closely interrelates with both economic and public policy governance spheres. The economic impact is connected to the disease restrictions, whereas the policy governance is connected to the vaccines' development/distribution asymmetries as well as to the pandemic management within national states (World Economic Forum, 2021).

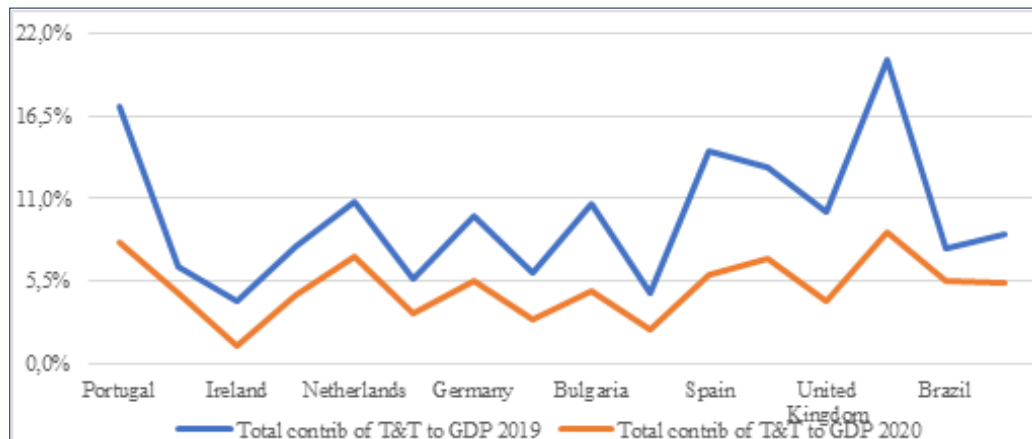
The unforeseen events, associated with the pandemic impacts, reinforce the need for research methods that deal well with the complexity and dynamics of tourism. Interactions between tourism systems and their environments is an area that requires deep research. For instance, during the pandemic, the global health system has proven to feed back into the tourism and economic systems with negative effects. The following charts show some of these effects on employment, GDP, and domestic vs. international spend (World Travel & Tourism Council - WTTC, 2021). From 2019 to 2020, there was a higher impact in GDP than in employment (figures 1, 2). Regarding the international vs. domestic visitor spend, figure 3 shows a considerable loss in international tourist spend.

Figure 1. Total contribution of travel & tourism to employment 2019-20

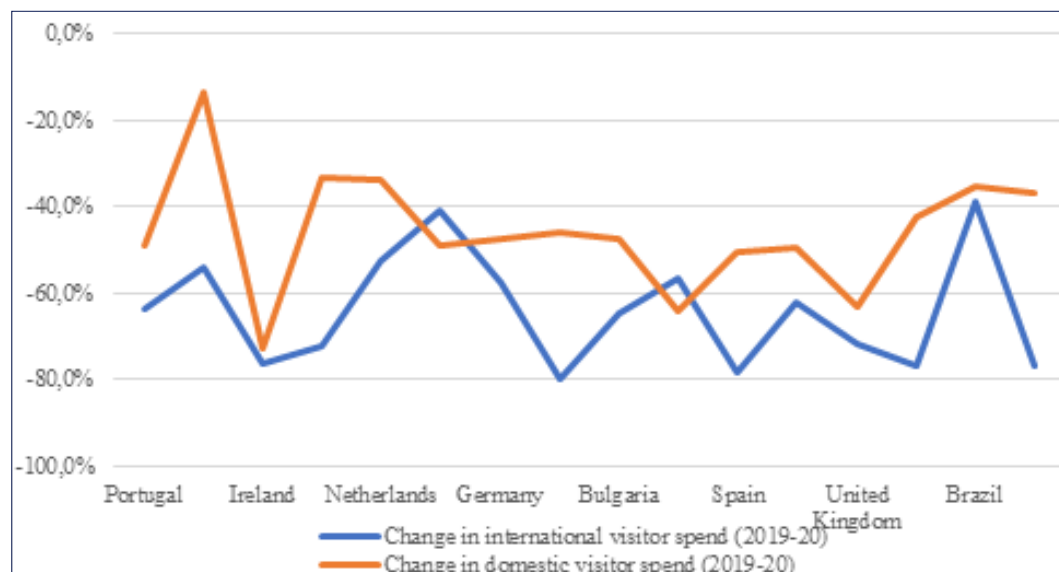


Source: WTTC (2021)

Figure 2. Total contribution of travel & tourism to GDP 2019-20



Source: WTTC (2021)

Figure 3. Comparison of international vs. domestic visitor spend (2019-20)

Source: WTTC (2021)

However, this crisis was also viewed as a catalyst toward pushing global sustainability forward and promoting the fight against climate change. Is this an optimistic view applicable to tourism, i.e., will the Covid-19 crisis push tourism forward? In the recent webinars of *The Economist - Sustainability Week* (The Economist, 2021) there is a conventional belief that social and environmental concerns drop down the pecking order when the economy is in contraction. But recent data suggest that sustainability is a core value that does not get side-lined even in the face of economic and health related crises.

2.1 The systems theory

The global scale and interlinked economic and health nature of Covid-19 crisis demand new approaches in tourism studies. Systems Theory (ST) offers a general framework for integrating different fields (Baggio, 2008; Bertalanffy, 2015; Choi, Song, Kim & Lee, 2017; Higham & Miller, 2018). Thus, it can help the integration of tourism theory with other scientific fields to study appropriate ways to rescue the tourism industry from this unprecedented crisis. An important contribution of ST to tourism research is in its differentiation between open and closed tourism systems: "Closed tourism systems consist of systematically connected functions, such as those that are related to tourist attractions, services and facilities, transportation, information and directions, and tourists." (Choi et al., 2017, p. 3). Other researchers conceptualized tourism as "an open complex system with all its elements, and an optimal methodology to explain the relations among them." (Jakulin, 2017, p. 208).

Such work generated explanations of the tourism system and its subsystems through a causal loop diagram and a simulation model in conjunction with the system dynamics. The ST tool thus could be said to support systemic solutions which could strengthen decision-making. Roxas, Rivera and Gutierrez (2018) added that tourism is an entire system of its own, characterized as complex and dynamic requiring sustainability considerations.

Exploring global trends has continuously shaped the future of tourism, shifting travel habits and tourist expectations. These elements and relationships include the impact of external shocks such as natural calamities, security threats, technological growth, and infrastructural developments (Werthner & Klein, 1999; Prideaux, 2000; Knowles, Diamantis & El-Mourhabi, 2004; Cooper, 2006; Horner & Swarbrooke, 2007; Palom, Calbó, Llausàs & Lopez-Bustins, 2010). ST can help discern new approaches to key policies for tourism crisis management. These include restoring traveler confidence, providing clear information to travelers, supporting tourism businesses to adapt, promoting domestic tourism, supporting safe return of international tourism, developing measures to address gaps and maintain capacity, and strengthening cooperation within and between countries (OECD, 2020a).

Based on the previous insights, the pandemic crisis will be analyzed in Portugal to discover which dynamic problems affect the tourism sector. These can be explored via the identification of balancing and reinforcing loops. Data from official documents and interviews with European experts (considered as a panel of experts), who participated in the referred event (*The Economist - Sustainability Week*), were gathered to study the variables involved and their effects.

2.2 The tourism system

Beyond the tourism economy, the pandemic has triggered a global economic crisis which in turn will have consequences on tourism recovery. The road ahead seemed brighter as progress on vaccines lifted hopes but darkened when the new Omicron variant emerged towards the end of 2021, and tighter safety measures were reintroduced. Therefore, challenges remain because recovery can be uneven across countries and sectors and the problem may be continuous.

Schiefloe (2021) analyzed the pandemic crisis from the perspective of wicked problems theory. His work was based on an observation of national and global effects of the pandemic and a study of relevant theoretical contributions. The author confirmed that this crisis fits to the main characteristics of wicked problems theory and cannot be approached by standardized analytical techniques. As with other wicked problems, it represents a challenge where all possible solutions may lead to unknown negative consequences. The concept has thus become extensively used in policy analysis and research on safety and vulnerability. Several emerging problems do not fit into established functional sectors and then cannot be defined and controlled through formal regulations or increased funding.

Another issue to consider is that tourism has a multi-sectoral dimension, with linkages to a myriad of other economic activities along its value chain (Kampel, 2020). The pandemic crisis has highlighted the inter-relation between various stakeholders and sectors including private enterprises, protected area visitors, communities, etc. Tourism services are often interdependent and a crisis in one sub-sector (such as aviation) can have follow-on effects on the tourism value chain. A key challenge as the sector looks to re-open is how to get all these interlinked parts working together again. Recovery will require they work together toward thriving businesses, healthy ecosystems, resilient livelihoods, and sustainable tourism economies. The role of local communities is critical in this journey, as the restrictions on international travel may stay longer than anticipated.

Tourism does not have to be only a trip across the country or flying abroad. It can be visiting a local farmer's market, eating at a restaurant close to home or hiking at a state park on the weekend. Thus, it remains a goal to promote safe and natural destinations to attract more tourists in the current context. These issues should be understood to increase safe tourism in order, not only to stimulate it, but also to relaunch the regional economy. Even if the negative impacts of this crisis are inevitable, it opens a window of opportunity to create new models of tourism activities (agritourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, sport tourism, etc.). There is a considerable potential for the growth of rural and slow tourism, as ways to achieve sustainable tourism development (Ulucak, Yücel & Koçak, 2019).

3. Methodology

3.1 The system thinking approach

A system can be described as a group of multiple factors that interact with each other. For researchers with qualitative backgrounds, engaged in structural development of models, ST provides a framework for grasping complexity and change. Systems thinking, through causal loop diagramming, can support researchers to evolve from conceptual understanding of unidimensional problems to systematically testing policies and proposing scenarios. Homer and Hirsch (2006) used system dynamics to study healthcare delivery, interacting diseases and risks to provide a realistic sight of overall epidemiology and policy implications when addressing problems of managing capacity and patient flow.

The ST approach has been applied to tourism since the beginning of the 1980s. Leiper (1979) used ST to develop a holistic framework for understanding and managing tourism. In his view, the tourism system

comprises geographic and social elements. Geographically it consists of tourist-generating places, transit routes, and destinations. Socially it includes the tourists themselves, tour operators, and service providers at the destination. These supply-side components have been considered as the destination functioning system. It means that a change in a component will condition the behavior of the others by means of feedback cycles and delays, resulting in nonlinear outcomes (Jafari & Xiao, 2016).

Tourism has been understood as an open system, connecting human and environmental subsystems in interaction (Leiper, 1990). A tourism system is “an arrangement of people, places, and organizations in certain roles...identified by naming the geographical extremities” (Pearce, 1991, p. 540). In this perspective, the tourism system evolves toward an increasing state of complexity whilst keeping and reinforcing its differentiation. Models with focus on tourism destination reveal that economic benefits are frequently affected by negative social and environmental effects on the host communities.

For tourism management, the ST functionalist approach may be suitable in an operational sense. System thinkers are committed to a holistic understanding of a phenomenon and equipped to identify the variables and structures of the current crisis and find strategic insights to solve the matters at hand. It can be an appropriate research methodology leading to alternatives that will stabilize the tourism system via identification of feedback loops (reinforcing/balancing). In the case of reinforcing loops, the values of all the variables in the loop change in the same direction. This type of connection implies that the variables in the loop continuously change, either in a virtuous cycle or in a vicious cycle (Choi et al., 2017).

3.2 Feedback loops

A complex system is an interlocking structure of feedback loops. This loop structure surrounds all decisions, public or private (Jakulin, 2017). The interaction among its components, and between the system and its environment, allow an understanding of the whole system. Interdisciplinary system dynamics has helped several researchers (Sterman 2001; Richardson 2011; Lin, Palopoli & Dadwal, 2020) to explain complex systems using causal loop diagrams as an analytical tool to support the recognition and visualization of crucial variables and their connections. Lin et al. (2020) explained that causal loop diagrams (CLD) contain two basic qualities. They comprise both variables and directional links representing causal interactions. The links demonstrate a “cause and effect” relationship such that the root variable will influence another variable in a relation.

Causal linkages can display two polarities: positive (uniform direction) and negative (contrary direction). A positive causal link, such as ‘innovation in tourism will attract new tourist markets’, indicates that two connected variables will increase or decrease jointly (in the same direction). A negative polarity amid two variables entails a diverging relationship (in opposite direction), such as ‘growth in Covid-19 infection risk reduces income from tourism and consequently represents a threat to jobs in the hospitality sector’.

In this study, the problem can be resumed as ‘Covid-19 pandemic affected the tourism businesses in Portugal and policy solutions are required to recover it’. One of such solutions was the ‘simplified lay-off’ (in Portugal Decree-Law No. 10-G/2020 with subsequent amendments, consolidated legislation) that established an exceptional and temporary measure for the protection of jobs, within the scope of the Covid-19 pandemic. The next stage is to identify what other variables affected tourism during the pandemic. In addition, there is the identification of variables of the adjoining systems that affect the primary variables. Then, all relevant variables will be brought together in a graphical representation as nodes and links. When all these are represented, the feedback loops can emerge in a meaningful way. Then, a narrative about the impacts of Covid-19 on tourism industry can be defined, with its consequences and prospects being discussed.

A debate on threats and possible scenarios depends on discerning the feedback loops into two categories: reinforcing loop, if an action produces a result that influences more of the same action resulting in growth or decline; and balancing loop, if there is an attempt to change some current state (the way things are) to a desired state (goal/objective) (Kim 1992; Kirkwood, 1998). Reinforcing and balancing loops are the two foundational structures of systems thinking.

A balancing loop tends to counteract changes to systems. Whilst seeking goals, balancing loops provide stability and push towards equilibrium. After drawing a CLD by exploring and combining these archetypes, researchers are encouraged to analyze the structure and behavior of a complex system (Akers,

2015). The methodology is also used here to examine the decrease of tourism growth in Portugal due to this unforeseeable pandemic.

3.3 Research design and new challenges to tourism

New tourism dynamics and companies were created in recent years, increasing the diversity of this sector's offer. This can be continued, considering the intention of many residents to take vacations within the country. Domestic tourism, which accounts for around 75% of the tourism economy in OECD countries (OECD, 2020b), is expected to recover more quickly. Several practical and administrative resolutions could promote the investment in this type of tourism and, in the medium-term, reshape territorial public policies. Main actors and regional decision-makers should use this opportunity to build a more sustainable future to tourism. It offers the main chance for driving recovery, particularly in countries, regions, and cities where the sector supports many jobs and businesses. This also envisions a shift towards additional digital offerings, for a better balance between local, national, and international visitors.

More destinations and events are now hosted online, for consumers to stream, rather than visited in-person. With the help of companies like Airbnb, short-term rentals are on the rise. Vacationers feel safer staying at a private house than a hotel. Mountain and river destinations provide easier access to socially distanced outdoor activities (Bryant, 2020). While air travel declines, many Portuguese people say they will be more likely to travel by road than plane this year. Another impact of this crisis is that it takes time for travelers to return to their old mobility. People are affected by anxiety and insecurity for a long time, so they become used to staying still and local. This trend further extends the tourism industry's re-instatement time.

When it comes to restoring confidence and stimulating demand, countries are in different phases. While some are adjusting policies to address the gaps and tourism businesses' needs, others recognize the need to start preparing tourism recovery plans. For example, *Turismo de Portugal* transformed its destination's communication from #CantSkipPortugal to #CantSkipHope, a message adjusted to the present context of uncertainty. There has also been a focus from marketing departments in collecting more information on the markets and providing it to companies on a weekly basis, developing digital contents and training the national operators in each market.

3.3.1 Application to the Portuguese tourism system

In the field of policy analysis, the multiple-streams theoretical approach (Farley, Baker, Batker, Koliba, Matteson, Mills & Pittman, 2007; Brunner, 2008; Djordjevic, 2020) explains how issues find their place in the governmental agenda. From such perspective, in Portugal, as in other countries in the European Union the future of tourism industry depends on agendas, alternatives and public policies when a "policy window" opens (un)predictably due to a new problem or problem definition. The Covid-19 crisis was a classical unpredictable policy window that swept over society pushing aside everything stood in its path. In Djordjevic's view, the pandemic led to the identification of problems in several affected industries, followed by policy propositions as well as public support for action. The European Commission (via the European Parliamentary Research Service) and other agents such as the European Travel Commission and the National Tourist Organization (Tourism Portugal), exerted a role on how the EC should behave in the aftermath of this pandemic. Based on diverse influencers such as the Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Similar Services of Portugal and IAPMEI (Institute for Support to Small and Medium Industrial Enterprises), the EC should define the recovery fund with 10 to 20% of it allocated to tourism. Yet Portuguese representatives felt uncertainty regarding this financial support.

The OECD (2020a) issued its views on documents such as "Rebuilding tourism for the future: COVID-19 policy responses and recovery" which supported the sustainable recovery of tourism and promoted a digital transition and move to a greener tourism system. It was favorable to a sustainable tourism, green and independent from mass tourism, to be implemented after the pandemic. Yet a new tourism paradigm should keep tourism offers alive and maintain jobs. What mattered more was that jobs would have to be kept open until the end of the crisis. Problems were not managed in a timely fashion and there was a lack of policies implemented at the European level. Euro deputies valued economic diplomacy and policy makers should be more preventive and less reactive, with steps taken in favor of tourism sustainability.

4. Results and discussion

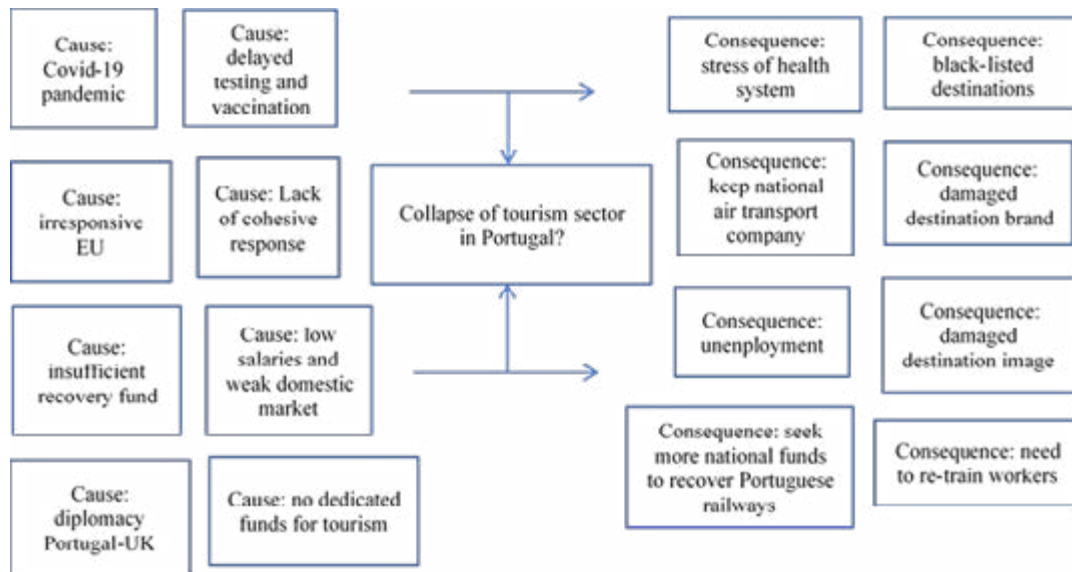
In 2020-2021, the Covid-19 pandemic was possibly the worst scenario known of disruptive effects on the tourism system in Portugal (Organization for Economic Co-operation - OECD, 2020c). Considering the first objective – *explore the cause-effect relationship between and among the variables involved* – and knowing the views of Portuguese Euro deputies and OECD key messages for rebuilding tourism, table 1 identifies the main factors for tourism system thinking. It identifies two categories of feedback loops: (A) *Reinforcing* if an action produces a result which influences more of the same action thus resulting in growth or decline, and (B) *Balancing* if there is an attempt to change some current state (the way things are) to a desired state (goal/objective) though some action (to reach a desired goal). It is to note that reinforcing and balancing feedback loops can be either positive or negative (Kirkwood, 1998). Yet, a reinforcing loop is composed of all positive polarities in the same direction and/or an even number of negative polarities in the opposite direction (Kim, 1992). However, reinforcing loop systems lack nontrivial equilibrium, rendering them unstable. As seen in table 1, during the Covid-19 crisis Algarve's tourism system could be explained by four negative forces (A) and four balancing forces (B) identified by means of statistical data, public opinion, policy makers assessments and corporate actors.

Table 1. System thinking of the pandemic impact on tourism (Portugal)

Construct	A) Reinforcing (negative) Tourism Decline factors	B) Balancing (corrective) Tourism Improving factors
Statistical data	1 billion fewer international arrivals in 2020. Lack of income in tourism industry Covid-19 public health crisis and impact on the hospitality businesses Algarve overnight stays in 2020 (-74.2% compared to 2019) Pandemic spread over the world	Between 2020 and March-April 2021, new hopes for Portugal's tourism destinations when contamination, hospitalization and death rates declines in the UK (main tourists' supplier to Portugal)
Public opinion	No jobs; awareness of new strains of virus Lockdown; prolonged crisis Barriers to travel (vaccine passport and airport testing as added costs)	Cooperation with government advise on social distancing, hygiene measures, isolation, and vaccine adoption
Policy makers' views	EU financing system is slow EU member states, including Portugal, suffered with delayed testing and vaccination Lack of coordinated actions at global, national and European levels Country brand challenged by diplomatic issues during Covid-19 crisis (black-listed tourism destinations)	Policy frameworks required for sustainable tourism development EU to work on the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework with a pro-tourism attitude Mitigate threats to the sustainability of tourism businesses Invest in employees' training Improve communication Need of uniform epidemiological criteria; uniform policies in airports across Portugal on the arrival of tourists; stimulate internal tourism market by raising salaries of workers Propose a new paradigm for tourism (quality, green, independent from mass tourism)
Corporate actors	Lack of homogeneous systems across Europe Challenges to the Europe brand	Covid-19 disruption has accelerated digital transformation Tourism toward testing new culture, organizational structure, and business models

Source: Own Elaboration

Regarding the second objective – *develop a causal-loop diagram (CLD) that explains how tourism participants respond to the complex structure of tourism policy making* – next figure illustrates the causal links between main variables involved. A holistic CLD of nodes and links, emerged from the main factors identified (table 1), can represent the Portuguese tourism system pitfalls (figure 4).

Figure 4. Portuguese tourism system pitfalls

Source: Own Elaboration

The next figure graphically displays how crucial are the policy making activities (here understood as rebalancing measures) counteracting the causes and negative consequences of the problem (the sanitary crisis, the lockdown, and unemployment.) to establish a rebalancing plan. This chart is an output from a qualitative analysis applied to the data gathered, using the software *Nvivo v.12*.

Figure 5. Factors of tourism improvement in Portugal

Source: Own Elaboration

The Portuguese tourism sector took the corrective actions needed when adopting the Safe & Clean seal of quality. With the vaccination rollout in the UK (one of Portugal's best sources of tourists) the country needed to reinforce its positive branding campaign with an early vaccination as well. But as global cooperation on vaccines was not robust, the system was not rebalanced as early as it could be.

Considering the third objective – *identify policy outcomes required to enhance sustainable tourism in Portugal and mitigate threats to it in post Covid-19* – Portuguese Euro deputies identified other systemic problems related to the rebalancing of the employment crisis. A time restricted simplified lay-off policy was partially effective to address the lack of economic activity and the loss of income that workers endured in connection to the collapse of tourism sector.

The system archetype *shifting the burden*, referring to a short-term solution, characterized this strategy. A longer-term solution would better protect the tourism industry. A new conception of the sector in Portugal, with specific funding to provide education and training for affected workers in the long run, would rebalance the system. Training could equip employees with new skills, ready to seek new careers in the eventuality of a prolonged crisis (Tiwari, Séraphin & Chowdhary, 2020). As the simplified lay-off correction was seldom used, more fundamental long-term solutions would need to be used to tackle unemployment.

The archetype *growth and underinvestment* could also be mentioned as the Covid-19 crisis in Portugal exposed the fact that, although a large bulk of tourism and hospitality businesses are classified as micro, small or medium-sized, they need dedicated investment to diversify and adapt to a new paradigm for sustainable tourism.

The *escalation and tragedy of the commons* archetypes also translate well the fight for limited EU resources in the tourism industry during this pandemic crisis. With member states wanting to maximize their individual gain from the EU shared fund, representatives from Portugal observed that whereas some states invested a great deal of national funds in the recovery of their tourism sector from the pandemic shock, Portugal depended on EU funds. Consequently, the competition in the post-pandemic era could prove unfair. The importance given to EU solutions also denoted a further system archetype known as *addiction* whereby agents become addicted to external forces to maintain the system. Policy makers would need to keep in mind that the addictive behavior is the opposite of a self-sustaining system.

5. Conclusion

Experts have generally considered that the pandemic taught lessons for a more sustainable world. In their view, there is not enough global cooperation to cope with a recurrence, particularly with regard to the handling of vaccine production and distribution. This factor was identified as immensely valuable at the level of global change. As raised by this study through the ST approach, besides the weak global cooperation, a series of problems compounded the impact of Covid-19 on Portuguese tourism. That is why this and other related sectors were slower to bounce back, impacting on the recovery of a country that strongly relies on tourism. This reinforces the need for a systemic approach to guide tourism improvement.

Existing knowledge might be subject to a paradigm-shift due to the pandemic disruption (Zenker & Kock, 2020). The outbreak of Covid-19 has changed attitudes and behaviors, and tourism models need to be dynamic and adaptive to cope with these and other disruptors. New models require other approaches such as neural networks, i.e., learning models that perform 'variable engineering' in the system considered (Namasudra, Dhamodharavadhani & Rathipriya, 2021). Therefore, more studies are needed with basis on the inclusion of behavioral theory and computational power. This computational cognitive modelling is, either for analytical goals, or for smartness and contactless enhancement of products/services.

Regarding the more dynamic and complex challenges in the field of sustainable tourism, it is necessary to see further what factors influence the plan for implementing tourism intelligently and the strategies needed. Also, analyze the relationship of dynamic causes of those factors using methods which use the Causal Loop Diagram system (CLD). This can identify the root causes of complex problems and the effects of a sustainable tourism development system so that it can be used to develop and test alternative management policies in making smart planning decisions (Husain, Zarlis, Mawengkang & Efendi, 2020). An impact grid can then be constructed to follow their effects and interventions on tourism objects and subjects. As showed in the present study, a systemic approach could help to identify and study disruptors to forecast the appropriate policies. This can help in overcoming conflicts among stakeholders through system thinking approach with the CLD model.

Tourism policies need to be more preventive and move to more flexible systems, able to adapt faster to changes in policy focus. Today there is a view that sustainability may become more prominent in tourism choices, due to greater awareness of climate change and adverse impacts of tourism. Natural areas, regional and local destinations are expected to drive the recovery, and shorter travel distances may result in a lower environmental impact.

The present work explored a real case of system thinking application to tourism. It extended the use of ST modelling to promote a holistic understanding of the complex issues faced by the sector and assist in

the development of more effective policies. Future work may depend on how tourist behavior evolves in a post-Covid context. This requires studies with innovative mixed methods, combining systems theory with new methods for data collection and analysis. Some relevant questions for future research are: In which ways will consumer trends reshape? Which new market segments will emerge?

Studies with greater focus on contactless tourism experiences will also be interesting. Other topics for further research can relate to the following questions: What kind of businesses will survive this crisis? What policies can restore investments in the tourism sector? and Which uses of digitization will tourism experiment?

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An Analysis of the Tourism State Policy Formation in Rondônia, Brazil

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ABSTRACT

The promotion of tourism has been established as part of governmental actions of public policies in Brazil, particularly in Rondônia. Public policies propose the valorization of practices that express knowledge and skills of small farmers and local community in the regional economic sphere, with potential for tourism and capacity to promote economic and social development. This work presents an analysis of the public policy proposals implemented to promote tourism in the State of Rondônia. The study was carried out based on documentary research of the legislation that supports national, regional and state tourism. The results indicate that the promotion of tourism can collaborate to achieve the goals proposed by the public administration that also proposes to value the cultural and natural heritage of the State of Rondônia.

KEYWORDS

Tourism, Amazon, Rondônia, Public Policies Formation.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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1. Introduction

The Amazon is part of the Brazilian spatial system and is composed of its own productive structure and multiple natural environmental possibilities with different actors. According to Becker (2005), the occupation process favored exogenous influences from richer regions, with public and private investments, aimed at serving foreign industries and agribusiness installed in Brazil.

Since the period of occupation, the Amazon region has undergone several changes, influenced by state governments, civil society organization and international cooperation in preservation programs and projects (Becker, 2005). For the author, promoting the policy of consolidating the development of the region demonstrates that the Amazon is an important region, which has already been occupied, but needs to be economically developed and articulated with programs to maintain the standing forest. This is in accordance to the Sustainable Amazon Plan (SAP), elaborated by the government in order to overcome the antagonistic poles and promote balance between the environmental policy and the development policy, which is the plan's central objective.

In Rondônia, the tourism is among the economic sectors impacted simultaneously by the occupation process with exogenous influence, by civil society, by international entities and by the government. The exogenous influence can be observed in two distinct and more impacting situations for tourism development in the State: the first is directed towards territorial occupation and agribusiness, which areas present potential touristic attractions located in private rural properties, producing commodities, without any destination for tourism use. The second one is in protected areas instituted by the public power, with strong influence from the organized civil society, through Brazilian and foreign NGOs or community organizations, which also have tourism potentials, but bring the environmental appeal for preservation and are "hidden", without clear social functions. Thus, understanding this context becomes important, highlighting the specific public policies for the sector, in accordance with the environmental-territorial dynamics.

On 2021, August 24th, the Law No. 5.093 was published and it provided the state tourism policy in Rondônia, which regulates the means to stimulate the development of the sector, in consonance to the welfare of the local population. However, the norm does not mention the origins of its elaboration, the ones who are supposed to promote the actions aimed at the implementation of public policies, the actors or organizations involved, and it does not establish the relations of the policy with the historical dynamics of development or occupation, as well as there is no specific mention about protected areas, despite referring to a federation unit within the Amazon area. Therefore, the objective of this article is to analyze the process of formation of the Tourism State Policy of Rondônia, and, to achieve the proposal, a historical description of previous federal and state policies was carried out, which will be exposed further on.

To define the process of formation of a public policy, the stages that precede implementation and evaluation were used, which, according to Souza (2006), are: agenda setting, identification of alternatives, evaluation of options and selection of options, all of which will be explained further.

Following the orientation of the stages mentioned, it is important to compile and interpret the theoretical and legal debate that makes up the actions of implementation of public policies aimed at tourism in the State of Rondônia for decision-making of new actions aimed at regional development through tourism. Moreover, it is intended to contribute theoretically, presenting an analysis of peer-reviewed scientific articles published in national databases and websites of the State and Federal governments, as well as to apprehend, with some clues, about the peculiarities of the national debate that deals with social and economic development arising from regional tourism, proposing theoretical framework for further reflection on tourism in the most variable areas of Amazon.

2. Public policies: The cycle, the formation and general concepts

Public policies are necessary for the success of the tourism sector, because they establish rules and guidelines to be reached in long and medium term. According to Taveira (2017), public policy is the form of state intervention that contemplates the implementation of the necessary policies to serve the population, within a social reality, by generating positive impacts or not.

The policies prevent the problems identified and makes important the data survey that demonstrate the basic needs of the touristic locality, providing consistent bases for the generation and implementation of public policies that offer real conditions for the promotion of social and economic development, in accordance with the conservation of the environment, having as a major objective the promotion of regional and sustainable tourism (Dos Santos Silva et al., 2013).

Since the 1990s, Brazil has developed a range of social policies, policy and institutional reforms to modernize its economy and facilitate social and economic progress (Lohmann & Dredge, 2012, apud Sousa-Santos, 2020). The demands were emphasized to consider citizen participation in discussions about local public policy agenda formulation and management, which is possible to implement in the face of the welfare proposition and fulfilling local needs, as well as providing closer relations between society and government.

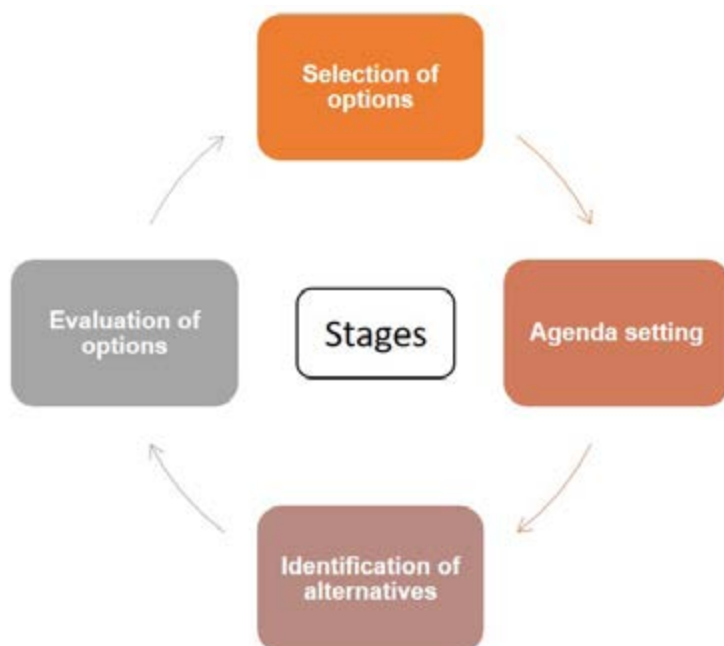
From the various models of public policy we can extract from Souza (2006) this clear definition of the main elements, that are: to distinguish what the government intends to do and what it actually does; to involve various actors and varied levels of decision; do not restrict the policies to formal participants, since the informal ones are expressly important in the implementation process; to extend and not limit itself to existing laws and rules, but promote new systemic concepts; to organize an intentional action, with goals to be achieved and, although there is immediate action and short-term impacts, to consider it as a long-term policy that needs continuity in management and, finally, involves varied and subsequent processes after its decision and proposition stages, which also implies important stages of implementation, execution and evaluation.

As a locus par excellence for the implementation of public policies, the State/society relationship is determined by the historical-structural conditions of development of a social formation (Lobato, 1997). With this premise, it is possible to evaluate the effectiveness of public policies adopted in Brazil, at all stages of the public agenda, because it allows to distinguish the government's intentions and evaluate whether the objectives were achieved in the short or long term at the national, regional or state level.

Although weaknesses are admitted in the context of a Public Policy Cycle, Raeder (2014) presents the stages as analytical tools that make the discussion about the issue clear and didactic, and the need to promote adjustments, if necessary, after each completed stage.

Before the implementation of public policies, an important sequence needs to be fulfilled for the best decision making that, as mentioned by Souza (2006), follows the stages visualized in the Figure 1 and described below:

Figure 1. Steps that precede the implementation of the Public Policy Cycle



Source: Adapted by the authors from Souza (2006)

1- Agenda setting - is about the analysis of the problem and the definition by the government of the needs that will be solved and will be the basis for actions of greater social importance.

2- Identification of alternatives - is about the formulation of alternatives related to the decision making process, defining objectives, programs and lines of action of the public policy that will be implemented.

3- Evaluation of options - at this stage it is necessary to evaluate the potential alternatives to be implemented that represents the best social results and can be based on diagnoses that express the impacts of the actions to be contemplated for implementation.

4- Selection of options - the last stage that precedes the cycle of public policies to be implemented, is the moment in which the adoption of criteria that express the effectiveness of the action provides determining data for the action to be chosen for the valorization of efforts and the social importance to be contemplated.

In Brazil, tourism development remained at the mercy of private actions and the State abstained from conducting policies and structuring plans until the 1990s. However, with the growth of tourism activity in the world, the public authorities, especially at the federal level, began to lead the development of tourism through public policies focused on the urbanization of spaces, considered as potential for tourism development, with the social and economic development of the region as predominant characteristics (Sansolo, 2013).

As a reflection on the subject, Beni (2006) considers that the tourism public policies in Brazil have offered real impacts on the tourism system and on states and municipalities and it is a visible explanation for the constant disconnection between the public spheres, the lack of orientation of the objectives, the goals to be achieved, the priorities to be dealt with, and also the alignment in the methodology of elaboration of programs and projects to be developed, and also the lack of integration with other government public policies.

Inconsistencies of information cannot be a common practice in official agencies while the actions are developed, because, as Beni (2006) points, the public agencies must follow their flow and not to be extinct, recreated or redirected to tourism activities, as a way to fix what was not right.

It is important to consider planning regarding empirical basis when planning public policies through tourism, since, for Farias (2014), there is an urgent need to know the reality of the touristic regions for better sizing and the knowledge of the touristic offers of the place, which enhance its regional development or not. Considering this information, it is possible to achieve a strategic vision of the real needs of the communities and then the State can reach the necessary information to boost local development.

The first public policies developed to guide tourism in the Amazon started in the 1970s, when the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT) was signed, involving Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela, with the joint objective of the countries to promote actions for the harmonious development of the Amazon Basin, which covers a large part of the Brazilian territory. An agreement that, since its signing, has been consistent and prevails until today in the public policy actions directed towards tourism in the Amazon.

In this process of touristification in the Amazon, Sansolo (2013) identifies that there are contradictions between the actions of the public power, in which the actions are led and centralized at the federal level and those that are specific to the community mobilizations and promoters of policy construction start bottom up.

Farias (2014) says that the basic policies for the development of tourism in the Amazon were directly related to the general guidelines of public policies, in order to promote the protection of the natural heritage; the valorization and dissemination of the Amazon cultural diversity, with its traditions and manifestations in events and the entire regional historical-artistic and popular heritage; the promotion and valorization of domestic tourism, not only for economic purposes, but for the social and cultural motivations that it provides; and the stimulation of tourism from abroad to the Amazon region.

Development programs were constituted as forms to promote tourism in the Amazon region, such as the Program of Ecotourism of the Legal Amazon - PROECOTUR - and the Program of Regionalization of Tourism (2007), which correspond to the main actions of the federal public power directed to the development of tourism in the Brazilian Amazon, and here the State of Rondônia is inserted, where it is possible to verify the existence of a coherent flow between the federal and state levels, observable in the

State's multiannual plan, Rondônia Sustainable State Development Plan - SSDP (2015-2030), which will be referred below.

5. Trajectory of tourism public policies in Rondônia

Although in Brazil the national tourism policies, theoretically, are destined to the main actions for the development of tourism activity in all geographical regions of the country, Taveira (2017) noticed that in the official documents the main public investments were concentrated in coastal states and municipalities, which strengthened and consolidated the model of sun and beach tourism. From this perception can be conceived the need to diversify tourism proposals throughout Brazil, since the country holds a vast territory covered with forests, wetlands, rivers, lakes, and waterfalls.

Dos Santos Silva et al. (2013) propose the existence of a contemporary society, in which public policies promote a process of redefinition of the State, which receives the status of articulator of programs and projects that meet the basic needs of a community and also several fields of social life of the population. Tourism, according to Dos Santos Silva et al. (2013), is a phenomenon that has gained much space in the public sphere and is contemplated in many governmental actions, aiming at the social and economic development of the region.

Tourism has been pointed out as an activity capable of contributing to sustainable development in the Amazon region and as a priority activity in development policies, plans and programs from the federal to the regional level in Brazil, observed in the Legal Amazon Ecotourism Program - PROECOTUR (1998), National Tourism Plan - NTP (2007/2010) and Sustainable Amazon Plan - SAP, (2008) (Da Silva Boulhosa, 2019).

Public policies with incentives for tourism arrived in Rondônia in September 2000, when the Minister of the Environment, José Sarney Filho, and the governor of Rondônia, José de Abreu Bianco, signed an agreement to implement the first phase of the Program for the Development of Ecotourism in the Legal Amazon (PROECOTUR/Green Tourism). This was the beginning of many programs that would later be part of this new phase of governmental articulation that the region was inserted.

In 2007, the National Program of Municipalization of Tourism (NPMT), conceived to boost the opportunities for work, employment and income at the municipal level, was the result of this context. Since the conception of the NPMT, the importance of community participation was highlighted and, even more, it was emphasized that tourism would only exist in municipalities where the communities' presented solutions and ways to make it happen (Brasil, 2007).

The National Tourism Policy, established by Law No. 11.771/2008, has the regionalization of tourism among its principles. This works under the perspective that even a municipality that does not have a clear vocation for tourism - that does not receive tourists in its territory - can benefit from it, if this municipality plays the role of provider or supplier of labor or products to meet the tourist. Regionalized work allows gains not only for the municipality that receives the visitor, but for the entire region.

Rondônia has the State Sustainable Development Plan - SSDP as a public management plan for the period 2015 to 2030, under the guidance of the Ministry of National Integration, that deals with tourism in the region with potential for low-impact ecotourism and specific niches in the tourism market, with a large number of Conservation Units: National and State Parks, National and State Forests, Extractive Reserves, and others, which allow touristic visitation. However, it portrays the lack of infrastructure necessary to receive visitors, in the most diverse segments of activities in the state.

As a governmental management way, the Rondônia State Council of Tourism was reactivated through Complementary Law No. 1031, of August 22, 2019, with an advisory and propositional character, being an advisory and integration body linked to SETUR and its objective is to propose actions and offer subsidies for the formulation of the State's tourism development policy. This is one of the effective actions to develop tourism in a systemic and participative way in which public and private entities and representative associations effectively contribute to the consolidation of tourism activity in the state.

In 2019, the Tourism Regionalization Map in Rondônia was instituted by Ordinance No. 57/2019/SETUR-CTUR and it was divided by poles. Within the political concept and the orientation of the Ministry of Tourism, the Instances of Regional Governance - IRG were created in Rondônia, established in the Tour-

ism Regionalization Program, with the participation of representations from public authorities, organized civil society and business entities linked to tourism in a given territory.

Legally supported for the promotion and implementation of tourism in the seven (07) touristic poles of the region, 25 municipalities were included, according to the Regionalization Map instituted by Ordinance No. 57/2019/SETUR-CTUR, and that have peculiar characteristics of the natural environment, as shown in the Figure 2, which demonstrates the location of the poles created and named following the regional characteristic.

Figure 2. Regionalization of the Touristic Poles in Rondônia Map



Source: Governo do Estado de Rondônia (2019)

From the regionalization of tourism in Rondônia, when dividing the state region into touristic poles, it is possible to contemplate the diversity of touristic potentials in the state, with distinct environmental characteristics and their regional specificities.

In August 2021, the State of Rondônia instituted Law No. 5093/2021, which deals with the State Tourism Policy, as provided for in art. 184 of the State Constitution, aiming to implement mechanisms for planning, developing, and fostering the tourism sector, in line with the guidelines set by the Federal Government, referring to tourism in general, as well as the State Constitution of Rondônia, listing the support and encouragement to tourism as an economic activity, recognizing it as a form of promotion and social and cultural development.

In November 2021, the Ministry of Tourism published Ordinance No. 041, which consolidates and updates the rules about the Tourism Regionalization Program, the Categorization of Municipalities of the Brazilian Tourism Map, and the Brazilian Tourism Map. The objective is to promote the convergence and articulation of the actions of the Ministry of Tourism and of the set of sectorial and local public policies, focusing on the management, structuring, and promotion of tourism in Brazil, in a regionalized and decentralized way, aligned to the principles of the National Tourism Policy, established by Law No. 11. 771, published on 09/17/2008.

6. Metodology

The methodology used to achieve the research objective was documentary research. The information was collected from federal and state government websites, including execution projects, management reports and statutes, as well as articles published in electronic magazines focused on tourism in Brazil related to the state of Rondônia.

Based on an exploratory approach and qualitative procedures, the guidelines pointed out by Alves et al. (2021) were used for the analyses, covering the selection and organization of documents, analysis, categorization of relevant contents and systematization of results.

As the first stage of the research, a search was made in the Ministry of Tourism - MT website, in the Rondônia Government website, and in the Rondônia Secretary of Tourism - SETUR website. This research provided theoretical data about the plans and programs developed to promote tourism in the state.

In the second stage, Tourism Plans and Programs were identified, as well as the legal basis for promoting tourism in the North region. As a result of the search, at the federal level, it was identified, within the National Tourism Policy, the National Program of Municipalization of Tourism - NPMT, institutionalized in 1994 and adapted in 2007; in 1998, the constitution of the Ecotourism Program of the Legal Amazon - PROECOTUR; from 2003 to 2007, the National Tourism Plan; in 2004, the Program of Regionalization of Tourism - Brazil Routes was launched at the national level; in 2007/2010, 2013/2016 and 2018/2022, the National Tourism Plan - NTP; in 2008, the Sustainable Amazon Plan - SAP and the promulgation of the National Tourism Policy, through Law No. 11771/2008; and in 2021, the Tourism Regionalization Program and the Categorization of Municipalities of the Brazilian Tourism Map and the Brazilian Tourism Map, published in Ordinance No. 041/2021.

At the regional level, it was possible to verify that in 2000 the Program for the Development of Ecotourism in the Legal Amazon (PROECOTUR/Green Tourism) was implemented.

At the State level, through the research, we identified that for the period 2015 to 2030, the Rondônia State Sustainable Development Plan - SSDP was constituted; in 2019, the Tourism Regionalization Map in Rondônia, instituted by Ordinance No. 57/2019/SETUR-CTUR, and the recreation of the Rondônia State Tourism Council, through Complementary Law No. 1.031/2019; in 2021, the State Tourism Policy was constituted, by Law No. 5093/2021.

In the context of the promotion of Amazonian tourism, the State of Rondônia is inserted in the development dynamics, which is the focus of action in the Rondônia State Sustainable Development Plan - SSDP. Using the Socio-Economic-Ecological Zoning of the State of Rondônia - SEEZ/RO as an instrument for territorial management planning, it was possible to verify that there is an urgent need for articulating institutional arrangements in the three public spheres associated with civil society, in order to compose strategic agendas for sustainable development of the State, considering the peculiar characteristics of each region (SSDP/RO, 2015-2030).

During the third stage of the research, the identified material was read item by item, and then the issues common to all plans and programs were categorized, with the purpose of highlighting the legality of the actions promoted by the plans and programs that provide support to state policies.

In this research, it was possible to identify in the documents analyzed the data that make clear the steps that precede the implementation of the public policies: the definition of the agenda, the identification of alternatives, the evaluation of options and the selection of options, all necessary for the composition of this article.

7. Results and discussion

In this work federal laws were identified, such as Law No. 11.771/2008, which is about Brazilian National Tourism Policy and presents a path, in broad strides, for the implementation of public policies through tourism, motivating the economic development of the region. This law brings in its core principles of regionalization of tourism on a national level, identifying Brazilian points with tourism potential, with the most diverse attractions capable of stimulating national and foreign tourists in the search for these destinations.

The Law No. 11.771/2008 becomes an important milestone for the constitution of plans and programs that institutionalize the promotion of tourism in Brazil, as a public policy action of management. From this law it was possible to categorize the documents analyzed and classify the steps that precede the implementation of the public policies examined here: the definition of the agenda, the identification of alternatives, the evaluation of options and the selection of options, necessary for the composition of this article.

7.1 Agenda setting

In the agenda-setting variable, it was possible to verify that the problem analysis and definition by the government were of great importance in the search for solutions to be adopted as a basis for actions that provide great social importance. The actions published on government websites, of free access, and that express the effectiveness of the steps of public policies that foster tourism in the state were identified, such as, for example, the reactivation of the Tourism Council, which occurred in 2019, and, in the same year, the identification of the touristic poles of the state, making them expressive for their own characteristics.

It was also observed the effective accomplishment of the steps proposed by the State Tourism Law No. 5093 that, in its 9th article, refers to the training as an item of an important track for the fulfillment of the actions of support and promotion of tourism and that needs to be executed. It was found that item II - Training is in progress, with item VIII - Marketing (the promotion) of tourism in Rondônia, as a way of spreading the tourism actions of the proposed public policy, which has been happening informally in the social media, as well as officially, in the governmental websites.

Art. 9 The axes of action that guide the management support, structuring and qualification actions for the development of tourism in the State are

- I - governance;
- II - qualification;
- III - entrepreneurship;
- IV - touristic infrastructure;
- V - creation of touristic flow;
- VI - education;
- VII - events;
- VIII - promotion;
- IX - strengthening of tourism products; and
- X - registration, statistics and monitoring.

Rondônia contemplates diversified perspectives for agenda setting priorities that address the territorial context of the state and that are susceptible to absorption of tourism implementation programs and projects for the promotion of economic and social development in the seven tourism poles that were identified in 2019, through Ordinance No. 57/2019/SETUR-CTUR.

Corroborating with these public policies fostered through tourism in Rondônia, the Rondônia Sustainable State Development Plan - SSDP, from 2015 to 2030, under the guidance of the Ministry of National Integration, treats tourism in the region with potential for ecotourism, since it contemplates in its territory National and State Parks, National and State Forests, Extractive Reserves, and others, which allow touristic visitation, as well as land and water areas, which favor the development of fishing tourism and adventure tourism.

7.2 Identification of alternatives

By identifying and formulating the alternatives for the promotion of tourism as a public policy of the State, it was observed in the various laws and ordinances contained in the database of MT and SETUR that the data identified are limited to the projection of the public action to be implemented. The norms, regulations, normative instructions and minutes that are part of the internal documentation of regulatory procedures of the action were not identified in open sites of public access.

It is clear that it is the role of the State to promote the sustainable, participative and integrated development of tourism by means of instruments of decentralization, regionalization and strengthening of the actions of the Municipalities, according to their own characteristics for the touristic variety to be developed in the region or touristic pole.

The actions implemented in the year 2021 are highlighted by programs to promote regional tourism, such as: 1 – “Viva Rondônia”, which stimulates regional tourism in the State and presents a feature to foster the receptivity of the municipalities to local tourists; 2 - the creation of the “Viaja Mais Servidor” program, with the purpose of fostering post-pandemic tourism, encouraging state public servants to get to know the beauties of the State; and 3 - the creation of FAMTOUR, adapting the project of the Ministry of Tourism (MT) for the region and developing the program composed by a young audience, which influences and boosts the events and places visited through connections in media.

The Ministry of Tourism, through actions of tourism regionalization in Brazil, promoted the creation of Regional Governance Instances - RGIs, with the participation of representations from public authorities, organized civil society and business entities linked to tourism in a given territory. Such action favored the reactivation of the State Tourism Council, by Complementary Law No. 1.031, of August 22, 2019, with objectives of, among other clear functions described in its art. 6, to appreciate and opine on SETUR's plans, programs and projects regarding the discretionary actions and linked to SETUR's object, without entering the organizational sphere; and to opine, when requested, on the execution of the tourism development policy and to contribute to the formation of the Municipal Tourism Councils in the State's municipalities, helping in their formation, guiding and stimulating them and, thus, seeking the municipalization of tourism and the empowerment of local segments. The Municipal Councils, made up of entities that represent the community and the public sector, are responsible for advising on the definition and implementation of municipal tourism policies.

In August 2021, Rondônia legally implemented the State Tourism Policy, through the promulgation of Law No. 5.093/2021, as a way to promote the State's economic development through tourism in the distinct touristic poles. In November 2021, the Ministry of Tourism published an ordinance that consolidates the norms for the promotion, convergence and articulation of actions focused on local public policies.

7.3 Evaluation of options

In the context of the options evaluation, the poles constituted contemplate diversified options for the promotion of tourism in Rondônia, where municipal councils that represent the social interests of the local communities were created and have become co-responsible for promoting guidance and stimulus to the municipalization of tourism, as well as the training of local segments.

This decentralization of responsibilities is legally supported from the creation of Regional Governance Instances - RGIs, composed of people who represent the government, organized civil society and business entities linked to tourism in the region. They are the stakeholders, or strategic public, of the process that make up the systemic diversity in the implementation of tourism in the regional pole.

Farias (2014) proposes the development of a strategic action that can mediate conflicts from various origins, whether social or environmental. Considering the regional specificity, the local community should have priority over the evolution and growth of tourism, and not the opposite, seeking mediating and appropriate solutions for each conflict generated and that guarantee the local population the maintenance of their preserved space and that the benefits generated are balanced between the residents of the region and private companies.

7.4 Selection of options

In the variable selection of options, the councils of the seven poles represent regions that offer distinct environmental aspects that can promote tourism in Rondônia. The poles are composed by beauties and alternatives for internal or external tourism, and become the responsible for the articulation of actions and the survey of local and regional needs, supporting the management, structuring and promotion of tourism in a region, with criteria that express the effectiveness of the chosen action and provide determinant data, composed of valorization of efforts and social importance.

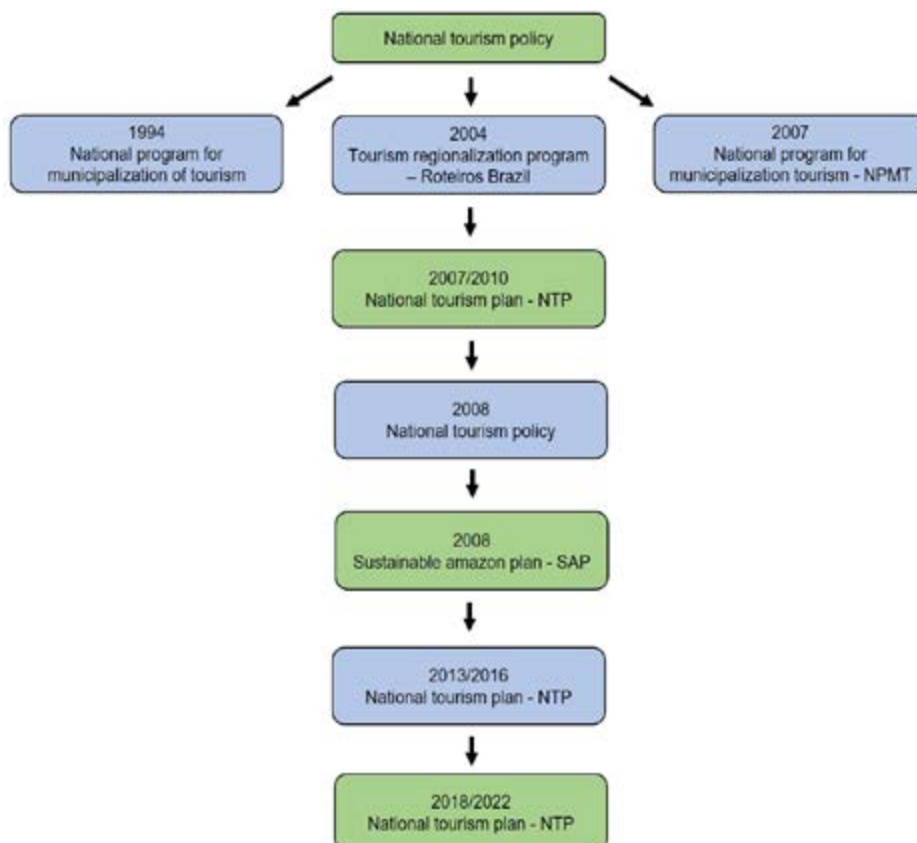
Among the guidelines in which the policies for the promotion of tourism in Brazil are addressed, regionalization was one of the stages of public policies, through which the state governments can propose innovations for the economic development of their states and, by doing so, promote the social, cultural and environmental context of the region.

Within this action of regionalization of tourism, the training is primordial so that the municipal staff also promote adequate training, which contributes positively to the governmental actions to promote tourism, with the help of tourism experts and technicians from the Superintendence. It is worth mentioning that in 2021 there were trainings and capacity building in the regional poles.

Through decentralization and regionalization of tourism in Brazil and, in particular, the identification of touristic poles in Rondônia, it is evident that the strategies to be adopted for the promotion of tourism will be differentiated, considering the peculiarities of the place. The perception of creating or strengthening groups that socially represent the players involved in the process is a way to guarantee that social responsibility and economic development are not exclusive to the State, but also, and mainly, to the participants who constitute the junction of knowledge, wisdom and cultural values of the region that need to be preserved.

The figure 3 shows the chronological sequence of the plans, programs and laws that make up the governmental actions directed towards the promotion of tourism at the federal and regional levels, analyzed for the production of this article.

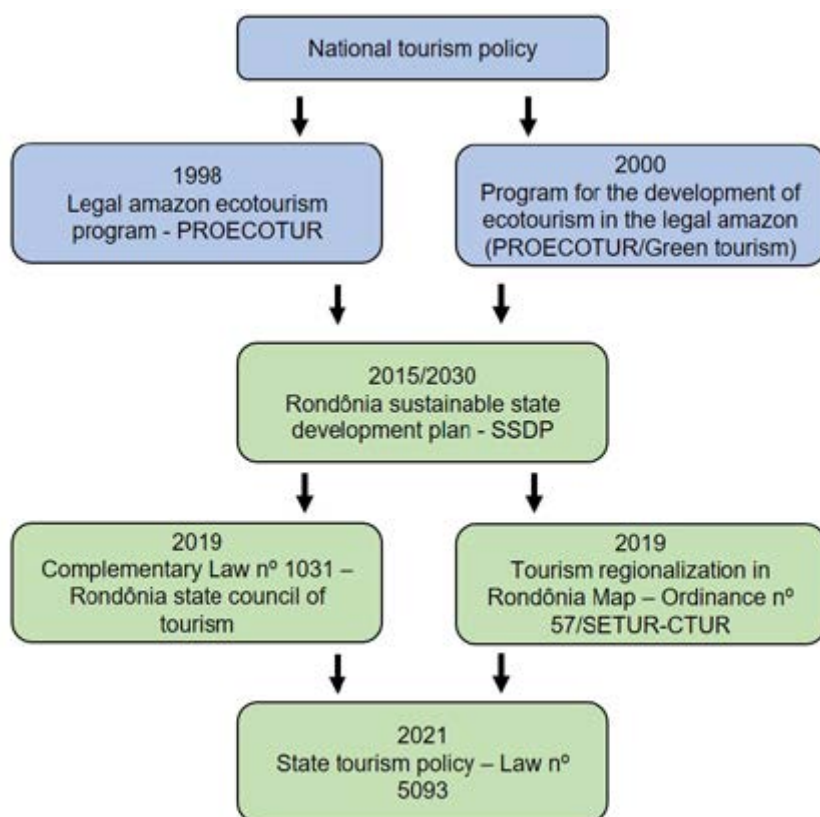
Figure 3. Plans, Programs and Laws that foment tourism in Brazil



Source: Own Elaboration

Figure 4 shows the evolution of the National Tourism Policy that, since 1994, promotes tourism in Brazil in a legal way through the national programs and plans that support regional actions.

Figure 4. Plans, Programs and Laws that foment tourism in Rondônia



Source: Own Elaboration

This chart shows that, based on the legality of the National Tourism Policy (1994), the promotion of tourism in the Amazon occurs since 1998, by regional programs and plans, but that only in 2019 and 2021 were enacted in the State of Rondônia own laws to support local tourism.

8. Conclusion

By analyzing the laws, decrees and programs issued by the Federal and State governments, it is possible to perceive that the main purpose of the public policy is the sustainable development of the region, as a government strategy to reduce the social problems and the need for spatial preservation of the Amazon.

National policies have allocated important actions that favor multivariate tourist activities in all regions of the country, adapting to local characteristics and regional specificities. Thus, tourism can be identified as an activity capable of contributing to sustainable development in the Amazon region.

From the state of the art concerned about tourism in Rondônia, it was possible to conduct more extended research in order to identify previously developed tracks that resulted in the governmental decisions that occurred in 2021, which aimed to value and foster tourism as an effective public policy action of the management.

The proposed actions identified in the research as stages of the agenda of public policies constituted to promote the promotion of tourism, were intensively developed in 2021, with important activities for the promotion and dissemination of regional tourism. The regionalization of the Municipal Tourism Council and the creation of the “Viva Rondônia” and Viaja Mais Servidor” as public programs are clear examples of these public policy actions for the State of Rondônia.

As an effective contribution for future research, other sources of qualitative and quantitative data could be related to the state policy analysis. The limits of access to data are imminent and compromise

the analysis that was carried out on documents published on open access government websites. Thus, it is possible to recognize that important documents could contribute to enhance the research and deepen the documental analysis of the article.

Finally, it is worth noting that the public policies presented from top to bottom have real perspectives of promoting tourism and the integration of government actions that provide this regional development. Legality is established and the spheres have clarity for a joint action that promotes social and sustainable development in the region of Rondônia and its tourist centers. What is taken as a suggestion is that access to regulations that guide the actions be open access, considering the need for future research focused on public policies undertaken to promote regional tourism and which will greatly contribute to the advancement of incentive processes for regional tourism. tourist activities in all their diversity of action.

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Engaging in Educational Tourism: An Academic Response

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ABSTRACT

Tourism-related education can determine the value and solutions for developing winning tactics to extend the quality of educational programmes and involve the community of national and international learners by creating an exchange network of top tourism initiatives. In this article, the authors open a discussion on the interconnections of adult learning and educational tourism, providing the framework for a procedural and methodological analysis of several off-line and on-line experiences that can be adapted by specialists of any educational institution. The article provides an academic response to the potential of educational tourism emphasizing its significance for the economy, well-being, and environmental sustainability.

KEYWORDS

Education, Tourism, Adult Learning, Educational Tourism, Educational Tours, Intercultural Competence, Soft Skills, Virtual Educational Tourism, Virtual Field Trip.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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1. Introduction

Despite the polyphony and various shades in the palette of its interpretations at the scientific level (Towner & Wall, 1991; Novelli, 2005; Pitman et al., 2010), the term *educational tourism* has its explicit component – a structured study/research/learning of specific subjects based on a tour (Towner, J. & Wall, G. (1991). Looking back over the centuries, we can find multifaceted footprints of this type of tourism and its manifestation. Some examples include the autonomous works of early travel memoirists throughout the 1760s – 1790s: *A Sentimental Journey and Other Writings*, by Sterne (2008) to the conception of globalized ERASMUS educational mobility programmes (European Commission, 2013) or an opened academic market of language courses in host countries. Furthermore, in academic literature, we can find a variety of definitions of educational tourism. Tomasi, Paviotti, and Cavicchi (2020) give some examples, drawing together a variety of terminological descriptors:

“(...) educational tourism as a learning experience organised and managed by educational institutions...Of course, learning takes place during any kind of travel, for leisure or to visit a destination, for example, but in our definition, education is the learner’s primary purpose and tourism the secondary one” (Tomasi et al, 2020, p. 6).

Indeed, the abovementioned practices served different purposes that focused on a wide variety of priority targets. However, the contemporary world has changed. The years 2020, 2021 and the beginning of 2022 have taken away millions of lives and left behind worrying scenarios such as environmental crisis, severe global economic recession, geopolitical tensions, evidence of increasing inequalities at different levels, and the urgency of finding a solution for peace and well-being. The fact is, this world cannot be re-created; thus, at the macro level, any scientist will admit that it is a real duty and responsibility to conduct research to provide an academic response – both to recover the planet and to find appropriate ways for sustainable development. In this respect, interdisciplinary approaches are functionally relevant to various educational tourism projects.

Thus, educational tourism can significantly enrich the pedagogic processes and their outcomes of all levels of the education system which have a primary purpose of emphasizing the message of sustainability and peace to humanity.

This article examines the spectrum of theoretical and practical procedures designed to engage adult learners in educational tourism experiences and includes an outlook for possible models to apply (Coste & Cavalli, 2015; McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017). Subsequently, we present a summary of some individual projects carried out through direct participation of Portuguese adult learners. We also present the analysis of other similar content based on on-line international sources. This article provides an academic response as general feedback explaining the possible interconnection of adult learning and educational tourism. It identifies methodological procedures and perspectives of educational tourism and considers digital content today, providing several examples of virtual alternatives to real-world experiences of educational tourism. Furthermore, based on the concept (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 5) that educational tourism can be considered as a *product* (such as a University degree for international university students), *process and function* (such as a trip to a marine biology station to learn about marine biology or travelling to an ancient monument after studying the monument)., this article emphasizes the diversifications and heterogeneity identified with a travel, trip, voyage or simple outing for educational purposes as a complex field of study. Thus, educational tourism is a useful tool to leverage within a classroom, taking not only foreign, but also native learners out from their regular scenario. For instance, within the framework of reflections on educational travel in the Finnish education system (Mantua-Kommone et al., 2018) the authors emphasize the importance of designing physical, virtual, social, and mental learning environments as well as using nature as a learning environment.

Looking through such innovative projects, in this article we propose some examples of the engagement of native Portuguese adult students carried out in their own country as an educational tourism experience. For example, we promote study visits, linking pedagogical, psychological, social, linguo-cultural, and tourism-related dimensions involved in adverse working conditions and the creation of multidisciplinary bonds, and producing models of contemporary art such as musical compositions, photo design, paint-

ings, etc. At first glance, these students may not look like tourists or daily visitors; however, these projects actively involve outdoor environments and “increase emphasis on acquiring a new skill set...which include critical thinking, problem solving skills, communication and social skills, and information reading skills” (Mantua-Kommone et al., 2018, p. 24). Furthermore, these projects equip native learners with citizenship skills and working life skills to promote unique national strengths at the global level.

2. Adult learning and educational tourism: Levels of interconnection

Educational tourism is a broad area covering numerous potential areas and promoting interdisciplinary approaches (McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017; Maga & Nicolau, 2018). Several advantages could be deployed efficiently by academic units. Firstly, students can benefit from the opportunities to interact with local environments that include many interconnections such as agriculture and natural resources, historic sites, and events and experiences related to national culture. Secondly,

“(...) international students are tourists, taking advantage of the opportunities to visit local attractions or travel to other regions of the host countries, alone or with friends and relatives. Experiential learning is part of studying abroad, and tourism is part of the whole experience. It is a transformative combination of learning and personal growth, thus creating a complete social experience” (Tomasi et al., 2020, p. 1).

In both cases, expenditures for provisions, transport equipment, medical insurance, and entertainment significantly impact the economy. Moreover, unlike other types of tourism, such experiences provide opportunities for supervision and didactic support, specific materials, and graduation certificates, which may open up new development opportunities.

Educational tourism is a promising field with a long-term perspective due to its capacity to engage in multiple cooperative exchanges with different actors. On the one hand, students benefit from the content and formal aspects of well-organized educational tourism-oriented programmes. On the other hand, mainstream leaders such as educational managers, designers, coaches, academics, technical teams, and the organizations involved in the tourism sector have a broad spectrum of opportunities to develop various materials, proposals, and services for educational tourism related to off-line and on-line projects. On a macro level, the government or other public bodies can create a database of the most urgent issues of the specific regions and communities, for instance:

- Noise pollution in some urban areas affected by vehicles concentrated in those areas.
- Lack of adult involvement in environmental protection.
- Reduce of critical natural areas, historical monuments, cultural heritage.
- Occupation of public spaces with destroyed and uninhabited houses or other objects.
- Deficit of equipped meeting points for competent specialists in specific fields in some regions that transmit unique cultural heritages.

To address these abovementioned issues at the micro-level, other project participants can design necessary materials and action plans to propose potential solutions. Educational institutions can adopt a more suitable framework within their curriculum aimed towards understanding a concrete issue and potential strategies for its improvement. For example, an educational tourism-related project on noise pollution caused by vehicles in some urban areas might involve some pre-planned activities integrated into a mixed context linking disciplines such as arts and science. In this case, students might interact with local people to understand their daily reality. The students could analyse types of architectural design in the areas affected by the problem of noise, and directly explore routes and the location of essential points that serve to exchange goods and services. A critical component of this project would be research that is conducted through a variety of tours managed by a responsible professor/teacher/coordinator and with the help of other key community members who provide the necessary connections to carry out the project. Reflective student practices during the process would be enriched with these valuable learning experiences that incorporate individual and collective psychological, social, and cultural aspects (Roussou, 2004).

Moreover, engagement in educational tourism-related projects, such as that proposed above, contributes to the design of new quality pedagogical models. Such models bring together theoretical and practical knowledge, providing a broad platform for empirical evidence based on authentic and reliable information without designing training workshops or a simulated environment. The outcomes of such projects allow meaningful monitoring of problematic issues and facilitate a search for their solutions, serve as an example of sustainable practices, attract learners, join potential and weak students in the same workgroup, and embrace a variety of subjects and thematic networks.

3. The methodological perspectives of educational tourism – dynamic experiences

Educational tourism empowers pedagogical adaptations and the application of heterogeneous strategies and approaches. The studies related to this field identify educational tourism within broad categories and diverse perspectives. As the term tourism itself brings the perception of the complexity of the realities associated with leisure and rest, consecutively, educational tourism favours the development of creativity to provide comfortable, educational support to a target audience. Indeed, the complexity of this subject matter should continue to be explored by academics and commercial units to extend the usefulness of this experience.

There is no generally accepted definition of educational tourism in academic literature. In conceptualising and researching educational tourism, Ritchie et al (2003) pay attention to a variety of major discussions on the concept from different sources. One of the proposed models reveals that

“... educational tourism may consist of:

- General travel for education (or ‘edu-tourism’) and adult or seniors’ educational tourism, where some form of education or learning is an important (and often motivating) part of the tourist experience...they will be referred to as ‘tourism first’ educational tourism experiences or products...
- University/ college students’ and schools’ tourism (language schools, school excursions and exchange programmes), whereby tourist experiences may be secondary to the educational aspect or intentions and may be considered ‘education first’ educational tourism experiences or products” (Ritchie et al., 2003, p. 12).

Futhermore, considering the history of educational tourism and the existing theories in the field of study, McGladdery reconceptualizes educational tourism “as a process with clearly defined and measurable outcomes, rather than by the content or subject matter of a tourism product” (McGladdery, 2016, p. 16).

Adopting a flexible approach by exploring new potential ways of developing some suitable models for educational communities at different levels, the present article provides the following analysis of projects as a starting point for the improvement of educational tourism models within the framework of adult learning.

The following projects were conducted within educational tourism for the curriculum of social sciences and humanities at the high school level in Continental Portugal and the archipelago of Madeira. These projects underscored the critical role of educational institutions in developing tourism experiences and ensuring well-being across some meaningful and fulfilling practices linked to the tourism sector and education.

“(...) In the contemporary world, language teaching has a responsibility to prepare learners for interaction with people of other cultural backgrounds, teaching them skills and attitudes as well as knowledge” (Byram & Wagner, 2018, p. 1).

Taking this statement into account and considering the 21st-century shifts in the educational field where everyone is entitled to education and equal access, education has gained a new role: ensuring so-

cial inclusion and cohesion. Moreover, other concepts evolved from this assumption or gained new meanings: the notion of culture, intercultural communication, mobility, and otherness. Educators are asked to intervene in this process by teaching core subjects and hard skills, as well as training skills and attitudes to improve students' ability to communicate and interact with a globalized world (Byram, 1997).

Despite the lack of consensus regarding what the phenomenon comprises, educational tourism has the most significant potential to address young learners to adult learners through learning experiences within cultural settings different from one's own culture. It conveys the development of skills and knowledge and envisions social and environmental awareness that leads to behavioural changes.

Setting communication and language teaching as the main processes through which people can understand cultural diversity and interact implies new standards for language learning. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment: CEFR (Council of Europe, 2017) is focused on how languages are used in communication: their functions, notions, and tasks. This document became a reference, and resonated internationally. Underlying these concepts, the Council of Europe prioritized, the establishment of the right to education for all, equality in access to education, and social inclusion and cohesion.

The notion of intercultural dialogue emerges from concepts such as citizenship, identity, and social cohesion since it is a precondition for the necessary societal changes (Byram, 2008, p. 124). This intercultural dialogue imbeds intercultural competencies that are developed through language and foreign language teaching (Guilherme, 2013). Language learning is about linguistic competence, an attitude towards language, and the ability to communicate/interact effectively with people from different languages and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the role of the teacher is "to develop skills, attitudes, and awareness of values just as to develop a knowledge of a particular culture or country, or different cultures within one's own country" (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002, p. 13). Moreover, in higher education, institutions that promote tourism-related courses enable teachers to develop projects targeting both adult learning and educational tourism (Pitman, Broomhall, McEwan & Majocha, 2010). Such is the case of the University of Madeira.

Madeira Island is a well-known tourist destination; tourism is the main driver and the most significant source of revenue for its economy (Garcês, Pocinho & Jesus, 2020). Students choose tourism as their field of study in higher education or at a secondary level due to high employability prospects and the opportunities to know other countries and cultures. Therefore, it requires language proficiency and intercultural communication competence to interact with foreign tourists and business partners. Sawyer and Matos state that "tourism students learn, in an integrated way, both how to communicate in a foreign language and to be culturally mindful" (Sawyer & Matos, 2015, p. 133).

The following project aimed (Di Pardo Léon-Henry, 2019, p. 150):

- to design a study-visit that provides a learning experience;
- to develop English language proficiency and the students' interaction with locals and awareness of local environments (regional culture, historic sites, and events);
- to interact with tourists permitting the development of personal attributes such as socialisation, communication competence, and thoughtfulness.

Project analysis 1: Designing an educational tourism experience: Field study.

This activity was developed by students of Higher Professional and Technical Courses in Tourism Information and Commercialization. Firstly, students were asked to organize a recreational tour to promote a learning experience for Madeira Island tourists. The class was divided into three groups, and each group developed an activity. This resulted in the "Study visit in Funchal" comprising a "Tourist Itinerary." Here, tourists are asked to visit some local cultural spots; a "Cultural Guide," Peddy-paper genre activity, with clues to discover sites and regional personalities, and a "Madeira's History Quiz", which consisted of a questionnaire including images to identify historical information (see the Appendix). Secondly, they were invited to do the study visit themselves and test the activities to perceive the effectiveness of the pedagogic process and if such methodology leads to a learning experience for tourists. This project implied reflective work among students and promoted their interaction with locals and tourists. The feedback was very encouraging.

Project analysis 2: Educational tourism experiences based on English as a foreign language session: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzhriULIKLs>>.

Except for the online interview section, the whole video was filmed at a historic place in Lisbon – Palácio Estoril Hotel – where the British writer, journalist, and naval intelligence officer, Ian Fleming, stayed during the Second World War. The movie *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969) was partly produced in Portugal. The global public around the world can observe the famous scenes produced at the Praia do Guincho, Parque Nacional da Arrábida, Costa do Estoril, Ponte 25 de Abril, etc. Presenting this project, the language teacher directly contributes to the tourism industry by highlighting that Lisbon city is a “golden” opportunity for the education community to develop exciting and memorable experiences linking pedagogical, psychological, social, linguacultural, tourism-related dimensions (Vieira, 2021). For this project, the teacher applied some ideas related to the performance of James Bond in Portugal to promote an interdisciplinary approach and train essential foreign language contents and skills. The primary benefit of this project is that it improves physical and mental health and its positive contribution to the learning process that nowadays is appropriate to promote and strengthen intellectual, spiritual, affective, and emotional bonds. Within the demonstrated English session, the students toured short distances on foot.

The abovementioned educational tourism-related projects outline the pedagogical functions that include knowledge transmission, managing, planning, and organization of information and operations with the help of tourism-related procedures.

4. Looking for virtual alternatives in educational tourism

Considering educational tourism as the tourism that pursues learning as a pretext for a tour, there are several virtual alternatives in educational tourism, namely virtual field trips.

Field trips are learning experiences that permit students to explore their interests and discover new things while exploring natural environments, putting classroom subjects into new perspectives. Klemm and Tuthill (2003) define virtual field trips as providing an alternative strategy for engaging students in the study of the real world.

As field trips are unusual or non-existent for many students, virtual apps, games, and websites bring places and experiences through so called “field trips to the classroom”. Virtual field trips may also include immersive and interactive solutions (Cheng & Tsai, 2019).

The scientific evidence for assessing the educational effects of immersive virtual reality is limited, but it constitutes an alternative in education, significant in educational tourism. Besides several remarkable studies that have already been carried out (Freina & Ott, 2015; Makransky & Lilleholt, 2018), accumulation of academic experience and scientific evidence is needed to assess its virtues and pitfalls.

Virtual educational tourism can become an alternative for those who have restrictions on travel, including students that live in countries with severe restrictions, students who suffer from social stigma, students with financial limitations, and disabled students. Virtual reality makes provides excellent potential for interaction, which educational technologists consider necessary for better learning. Roussou (2004) emphasizes that virtual reality makes education more popular and enables students to experience what would not be possible another way (for instance, virtual challenges, virtual experiments, virtual games).

Portugal is one of the attractive destinations where devices for educational tourism are a case of success. For example, since 2008, the Lisbon National Pantheon has developed the possibility of augmented reality visits that enable tourists to access a variety of multimedia explanations superimposed over the locations being viewed (Miradouro Virtual, 2008).

Research on educational tourism through virtual reality confirms no less educational benefits when compared with traditional ways of educational tourism. Subsequent research on this matter was carried out by Ren and Chen (2021) while developing and testing a scale for school students' educational tourism experiences using a sequential mixed method: a qualitative method to develop the scale (collecting data through interviews) and a quantitative method to test the reliability and validity of the scale.

Furthermore, educational tourism will undoubtedly become more dependent on augmented and virtual realities, emerging as an accepted alternative to traditional educational tourism. This is mainly due

to the advantages of new technologies that permit a more significant number of students in the learning process. This situation captures the attention of young students. It also presents an opportunity that allows for creating less costly models, which rely on an initial investment in devices instead of a whole trip and accommodation costs associated with traditional channels used by educational tourism.

5. Conclusion

The benefits of educational tourism explore the complex interaction of social, economic, environmental, and other dimensions. Among these benefits, educational tourism-related projects:

- Engage all participants in active learning/research;
- Include structured planning, scheduling, budgeting;
- Allow enhanced cooperation among different social groups for solving urgent issues concerning local communities and contributing to global strategies;
- Involve marketing strategies;
- Provide the quality of educational outcomes;
- Contribute to the personal/professional growth of each participant through the search for self-definition and well-being.

The models demonstrated in this article provide empirical evidence to support future research on educational tourism perspectives. It has also demonstrated the potential for practical implementation and integration of educational tourism attributes into the academic context. Further research is needed to investigate the perceptions of the learners on the proposed projects for further progress in this area of study.

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APPENDIX

TOURIST ITINERARY IN FUNCHAL

Study visit

Be a tourist in Madeira Island for one day!

Follow the itinerary, do the activities and enjoy yourself!

I – Give an example of how Madeira, a touristic destination, is promoted throughout the city (events; activities; thematic attractions; news):

- Make proof of what you have found (photo; brochures...);
- Explain the message/purpose.

II - Tourist itinerary

Follow the itinerary and visit the following spots/attractions:

1. Café Teatro.
2. Municipal Garden.
3. Santa Catarina Park.
4. Cristiano Ronaldo statue.

In each passage, make live proof that you were there:

- group photo on the spot,
- point out a curiosity (something interesting and relevant about the place).

III – Cultural Guide

Follow your instincts and track the clues! Take a selfie with your group in each place that you find.

1st CLUE

“Sic Parvis Magna – Grandes feitos através de pequenos começos”

“Ser escuteiro é fugir de má companhia e partilhar alegria”

Who was the world scouting chief? _____

2nd CLUE

“This gate gave direct access to the beach landing docks existing at that time where today stands the seafront promenade.” _____

3rd CLUE

At the centre of our city there is a statue of one of the founders of our island.

Who is this important figure? _____

4th CLUE

In the Municipal Garden we can find the statue of the liberator of slavery in six nations.

What is his name? _____

5th CLUE

“No abraço do sol
No Novelo do vento
Na sede da levada
No êxtase da Terra
Voltarás viajante
Aqui te espero”

Who was the powerful woman that wrote this poem? _____

6th CLUE

Who was the doctor that served in the 1st world war? _____

IV - Madeira's history quiz

You will need:

- 12 images in total – 2 images for each group member.
- questions for each image and the answers.
- someone willing to play the game.

Number of players: maximum 6.

Instructions:

1. The game is divided into 6 categories and each category is represented by 2 images.
2. Each member of the group will have to present 2 images with questions and the answers/explanation to the chosen participants/players.
3. Each participant/player will have to answer the questions that will be asked. In case they do not know the answer to the question you will have to give them the explanation/answer. The explanation/answer needs to be short and concise.

MADEIRA'S HISTORY QUIZ

Gastronomy:

Filete de Espada-Preta com Banana

Questions

1. Do you know this dish?
2. Have you ever tried it? **(if the answer is yes)** what did you think of it?
3. In your opinion what are the main ingredients of the dish?

Answers

1. The name of this dish is Filete de Espada com Banana and is one of the most well-known dishes. The filetes de peixe-espada are seasoned with garlic, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. After that, the peeled bananas and the fish fillets are then dipped in egg and flour and then fried in olive oil and sprinkled with sprigs of fresh parsley and served with boiled potatoes.
Finally, the fish eggs can also be eaten boiled or fried, served with a vinaigrette sauce.
2. **If the answer is no**, ask them **why** and then give them **restaurant recommendations** like for example the restaurant "Preia-Mar" in Madalena do Mar (Ponta do Sol) or the "Maré Alta" in Machico, are some excellent suggestions.
3. Peixe-espada preta and banana.

Espetada madeirense

Questions

1. Do you know this dish?
2. Have you ever tried it? **(if the answer is yes)** what did you think of it?
3. In your opinion what are the main ingredients of the dish?

Answers

1. The name of this dish is Espetada madeirense and like the Filete de Espada com Banana is also a very traditional dish. How do we make it: 1. Cut the meat into small cubes; 2. Crush the garlic heads and the laurel leaves; 3. Place the meat on the laurel skewers (if not, you can choose to use iron skewers); 4. Season with salt, garlic, and bay leaf; 5. Bake well on both sides; 6. When removing from the brazier, shake the skewers together in order to eliminate excess salt; 7. Remove the meat from the skewer as you serve, and 8. Serve with milho frito, bolo do caco, and manteiga de alho.
2. If the answer is no, ask them why and then give them restaurant recommendations like for example the restaurant "O Lagar" in Estreito de Câmara de Lobos or the "Santo António" restaurant also located in Estreito de Câmara de Lobos, are the most popular to try this specialty.
3. It can be cow meat or pork meat, and laurel leaves as well as laurel skewers.

Sports:**Largo da Achada (Camacha)****Questions**

1. Do you know this place?
2. Do you know the importance of this place and why?

Answers

1. Yes or No.
2. It was here that football was played for the first time in Europe, and this event was remarkable for the football history.

Campo Almirante Reis**Questions**

1. Do you know this place?
2. Do you know the importance of this place and why?

Answers

1. Yes or No.
2. It was the original home of C.S. Marítimo before the team relocated to their current home, the Estádio dos Barreiros in 1935, though to this day it still very much remains a spiritual home to the club. Though being deserted by Marítimo, the clubs' original headquarters building adjacent to the site, remained in use until 2005. The ground was the venue of Marítimo's famous 10-0 victory in the local derby against Nacional, which took place on December 12, 1925.

Monuments:**Igreja da Sé /Church of Sé****Questions**

1. Do you know this monument?
2. Do you know anything about the history of the monument?

Answers

1. Yes or No.
2. It is one of the most emblematic places in the city of Funchal.
It was thanks to D. Manuel I, that this Cathedral was built. From the time of colonization to the present day, it is a temple that has remained unscathed, resisting well over the years.

Varadouros door**Questions**

1. Do you know this monument?
2. Do you know anything about the history of the monument?

Answers

1. Yes or No.
2. This architectural work is known as the gateway to the city.
Previously this portal was part of the old Wall that served as the defence of the city. It was one of the best accesses to the beach (current avenue to the sea) to reach the boats that docked there.

Places/Porto Santo:**Praia do Porto Santo****Question 1**

Can you identify where this beach is and tell us a curiosity about it?

Piscinas naturais Porto Moniz**Question 2**

Can you identify where this place is and tell us a curiosity or something about it?

Monte Palace Tropical Garden**Question 3**

Identify where this place is and tell us a curiosity.

Regional Festivities:**Noite do Mercado****Questions**

1. Do you recognize this festival? **(If she/he says no, tell her/him the event's name).**
2. Do you know when this event occurs?
3. Do you know what we celebrate?

Answers

1. Noite do mercado.
2. It takes place on December 23rd at Mercado dos Lavradores.
3. It is a traditional popular festival in Madeira and several food and drink stalls are set up and there are Christmas carols.

Festa do Vinho (Madeira Wine Festival)**Questions**

1. And this one, do you recognize? **(If she/he says no, tell her/him the event's name).**
2. Do you know when this event occurs?
3. Do you know what we celebrate?

Answers

1. Wine Festival.
2. This event is scheduled from 8 to 24 October.
3. This event seeks to recreate old habits of the Madeiran population. The celebrations of this event begin in Funchal, where they include the European Folklore Week, decorations, exhibitions, and live paintings alluding to wine, and various shows of light and traditional music.
At the end of this "party", the Festa das Vindimas takes place in the Estreito de Câmara de Lobos.

The Traditional Costume:**Question**

1. Which one is Madeira traditional costume? **(Compare the two images)**

Answer

1. The Minho costume was responsible for inspiring the Madeira traditional costume.

Iron Architectural Decorative Elements in the Urban Landscape of the Historic Centre of Lagos, Portugal. A Contribution for Sustainable Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Cultural sustainability matters tangible and intangible heritage, cultural diversity, and the cultural identity of territories. Historic centres have considerable heritage resources that honour the legacy and knowledge generated by humanity in the past, and it is fundamental to preserve and transmit them to future generations. With the industrial revolution, innovative materials and techniques were developed. These are visible in 19th century buildings, as there was an intensive use of decorative elements on their façades, in which the use of cast and wrought iron artwork stood out, such as the window grilles and balconies, fanlights and side panels, doorknobs, knockers and hinges, among others. These metallic elements participate in the composition of the buildings, enhancing the urban landscape. The perception of the importance of these decorative elements in the architectural language of the buildings located in the historical centre of Lagos, Portugal, led to an inventory of the iron elements on the façade of buildings, finding that they have specific characteristics in terms of shape or design, material, and symbolic representation. These architectural elements are adapted to artistic movements and to distinct periods. This study presents the spatial distribution of cast and wrought iron elements indicative of the Romantic period of the end of the 19th century and to the Art Nouveau period of the beginning of the 20th century. The results indicate that the decorative iron elements have great expression, giving aesthetic value to the urban landscape and cultural identity being an opportunity to enhance the attractiveness of the historic centre through outdoor cultural routes.

KEYWORDS

Urban Landscape, Architectural Heritage, Cast Iron Decorative Elements, Wrought Iron, Sustainable Tourism.

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1. Introduction

Historic centres play a decisive role in preserving the tangible and intangible heritage for future generations. These cultural spaces have considerable resources that honour the legacy associated with information and knowledge developed by humanity in the past, and it is essential to identify them in a scientific approach. The preservation and exhibition of historic centres and their exhibition leads to the formation of tangible links between the past, the present and the future, contributing to sustainable development.

Sustainable development perspective finds harmony between social and economic development and the conservation of natural resources (WCED, 1987). The term “sustainability” translates to the quality of maintenance of something, which can continue for an indefinite period of time, like, for example, biological species. Considering a holistic approach, Costanza, Daly and Bartholomew (1991, p. 8) propose that “Sustainability is a relationship between dynamic human economic systems and larger dynamic, but normally slower-changing ecological systems, in which 1) human life can continue indefinitely, 2) human individuals can flourish, and 3) human cultures can develop; but in which the effects of human activities remain within bounds, so as not to destroy the diversity, complexity, and function of the ecological life support system. Consequently, it incorporates a multiplicity of dimensions, all of them inter-related: ecological, environmental, social, and cultural, economic, spatial/territorial, institutional, political, governmental and individual (Rosa, 2013). These dimensions imply deep changes in urban paradigms, that must be considered in tourism planning and management.

The conservation of the basis of natural resources requires the renovation of the built environment, avoiding the urban expansion associated with tourism facilities, and therefore an important opportunity to preserve architectural and vernacular heritage. Environmental sustainability also demands sustainable mobility measures focalized on soft means of transportation. This is consensual with the present context of mitigation and adaptation to climate change and the need for the protection of the atmosphere on a regional and world scale and the mitigation of carbon in the local environment. In touristic cities, pedestrian-oriented routes have increasingly emerged as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis which promoted outdoor activities. For local communities, the challenge is to define thematic routes that reproduce the cultural identity inherent to the spaces where they are created, aligning them with cultural sustainability.

One of the oldest references to the association of cultural diversity with sustainable development was presented by Jacobs, Gardner and Munro (1987). Meanwhile, cultural sustainability has been assumed as one dimension of sustainable development (Hawkes, 2001; Sachs, 2002; Rosa, 2013; Soini & Birkeland, 2014; Dessein, Soini, Fairclough & Horlings, 2015) and it is associated with the consideration and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage, artistic production, as well as the knowledge and skills of social groups, communities and nations (Stylianou-Lambert, Boukas & Christodoulou-Yerali, 2014). Indeed, given the importance of conserving, maintaining and preserving cultural capital in different forms such as art, heritage, knowledge and cultural diversity for future generations, culture has come to be recognized as an independent pillar of social sustainability (Soini & Dessein, 2016).

Cultural dimension of sustainable development is currently considered in national political agendas and figures in the United Nations 2030 Agenda (United Nations 2015). Natural and cultural diversity is promoted and the recognition that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development. Goal 4 ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all, specifying the culture's contribution to sustainable development. Goal 8 stimulates sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and devises and implements policies to promote sustainable tourism which promotes local culture and products. Goal 11 is about making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Socio-cultural issues are related to a sense of belonging, of identity, of personal and community development. This scope tries to gather all social and cultural positive impacts observed on vernacular heritage. It concerns the protection of cultural landscapes, the transmission of construction cultures, the capacity to stimulate creativity, the recognition of cultural values (tangible and intangible) and the reinforcement of social cohesion. In fact, there are multidimensional benefits (economic, social, environmental, etc.) of

cultural heritage conservation and regeneration, but tools are needed to evaluate the contribution of cultural heritage in the achievement of sustainable development (Nocca, 2017). Comprehensive evaluation methods of the cultural built heritage are needed and various steps are to be undertaken: an inventory (i.e. on site survey), an evaluation of cultural quality, and a formulation of conservation plans (Nijkamp, 1989).

The Venice Charter of 1964 has been the benchmark for principles governing the architectural conservation and restoration of monuments for decades. The identification and preservation of additional heritage associated with vernacular architecture has been developed with the contribution of architects, historians, engineers, and artisans. This effort has sensitized society to the concern of the presumed extinction of historical architectural elements that mark the identity of an era, which constitute values that reflect the cultural and artistic evolution of society, for which they must be preserved. In the same way that a museum, as a monument, welcomes historical information as a way of teaching societal evolution, a city reveals the traces of urban and architectural development over time, constituting an open and living museum in constant transformation, a didactic experience on an urban scale. In fact, the built heritage is not only reflected in great public or private works, in monuments, it is manifested in domestic or productive architecture, in the urban planning of towns and villages, and in the whole of landscape that human beings inhabit and transform. In all this lies the transcendence of the values of traditional architecture as cultural heritage (Carrión Gútiez, 2015). So, traditional architecture is part of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage and adds value to communities. It contributes significantly to the role of cultural heritage to strengthen the link between the past and the future, and so, the transference of this heritage to future generations is one of the most important responsibilities of the present generation in the context of the continuity of social and cultural identity (Akyıldız & Olğün, 2020). Cultural sustainability has become more intimately aligned with architectural outcomes involving associations of behaviors, artefacts, structures and meanings (Memmott & Keys, 2015).

In Europe, the first Industrial Revolution introduced mechanization which launched the transition from artisanal to industrial socio economy, through the use of steam engines, coal and iron. Cast and wrought iron were the key materials in large-scale construction and changed design and construction methods (Rosado-García, Kubus, Argüelles-Bustillo & García-García, 2021). The use of structural and decorative iron symbolizes a significant advance in engineering materials and architectural history. For example, Magaziner & Golding (2000) cover architectural ironworks in Philadelphia, from roughly 1840 to 1930 (the time period called the Golden Age), cast iron prevailed during the nineteenth century and hand wrought iron triumphed from about 1900 to 1930. There are studies of the urban iron architectural heritage in Pelotas, Brazil (Dametto, 2009), Lisbon (Braga, 1995; Barradas, 2015), Oporto (Vieira, 2020). In general, these studies of historic architectural heritage sites are associated with the goals of protection, registration, and identification. The definition of new touristic products, such as cultural routes, can contribute to bring forward the importance of architectural heritage in European and world history.

In Portugal, mainly in the second half of the 19th century, there was an intense use of innovative materials and techniques at a decorative level in buildings, expressing itself in the use of artistic metalwork, in cast and wrought iron, developing external railings and gates, among many other visible hardware on the facades. The continuous loss of these architectural elements in urban renovation processes, has direct negative impacts on the urban landscape and on the cultural identity of the cities. The perception of the importance of decorative elements in the architecture of the late 19th and early 20th century leads the team to consider decorative elements in cast and wrought iron in architecture as the object of this investigation.

It is in this context that at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, the historic centre of the city of Lagos was the target of urban construction and rehabilitation, as the buildings of greatest historical expression were located in this area. This tourist city, with its historical and cultural features, is a pilot city of the Interreg Med Sustowns Project – Sustainable Tourism in small and fascinating villages in the Mediterranean area – which aims to promote sustainability, increase tourism in the area, and generate economic benefits. for the local community, with respect for historical, cultural, social and environmental identities. Local cultural heritage can play an important role in a Mediterranean sustainable development process (Cassalia, Tramontana & Ventura, 2016).

To create new cultural touristic products, it is considered relevant to study the application of metalwork on the facades of buildings in the mid-1800s and early 1900s. In this context, it is intended to identify the grilles or railings of the balconies, existing on the exterior facades of the buildings, directing the research to urban heritage.

The architectural heritage goes beyond the building itself, it covers all parts of the whole, from the doorways to the balcony railings. The elements, due to their uniqueness, are considered part of this heritage, reflecting the design and architectural understanding of the period in which they were produced. It is important to record these components to formulate preservation strategies that contribute to the dissemination of iron arts applied to architecture in Portugal and divulge this important heritage through the creation of touristic routes. Literature related to the aesthetic and cultural value of decorative architectural iron's elements and their importance for urban landscape and tourism are brief, and further research is necessary.

Thus, a phased investigation is developed that involves a bibliographic review, direct observation of the iron elements through fieldwork and an interpretative investigation. A structure with two components is defined, a theoretical and a practical approach. In the theory, the collection of information and its systematization, organization and analysis of data on the object of study is developed. The practical component includes visits to the study sites, an inventory of different types of decorative elements in cast and wrought iron, as well as the production of thematic maps on the distribution of iron artifacts.

The objective of this investigation is to present the spatial distribution of decorative elements in cast and wrought iron existing in the architecture of the late 19th and early 20th century buildings in the intra-mural area of the Historic Centre of Lagos. Additionally, these decorative iron elements are interpreted with the artistic movements in force at the time proving the interest in the formulation of potential touristic routes.

This paper is organized into six parts. The introduction presents the context of considering architectural heritage in cultural sustainability and the contribution of ancestral decorative iron elements in the cultural identity of cities. A literature review is then developed. In parts 3 and 4, the historical centre of Lagos and the developed methodology are described. There then follows the presentation of results and discussion on these in part 5 and finally the conclusions of the research.

2. Literature review

The technological evolutions of industrialization in the 19th century, allowed the development of new techniques for obtaining products and uses in construction. The ease of obtaining and manufacturing cast iron products, using mechanical processes, improved tools, innovations in ovens and industrial processes, gave rise to iron combinations and derivations, which enabled a new vision of the structural and artistic uses of the pieces produced.

With these dynamics, many urban buildings began to display iron ornamentation on the facades. These artifacts emerged associated with the wealthy bourgeoisie, who converted the facades of their houses into a symbol of wealth and power, following the artistic movements. The generalization of art occurred through architectural construction, translating an affirmation of the importance of some families.

The application of iron in architecture became widespread and was influenced not only by the availability of this material, but also, among other factors, by the thoughts and ideas that gave rise to artistic movements. It is understood that since the end of the 18th century, iron made possible the monumentality of large Neoclassical domes, in a combination of engineering and architectural works.

The publication of industrial art catalogues was one of the most innovative phenomena of the second half of the 19th century advocated by the main European foundries. The great universal exhibitions that marked the second half of the 19th century, allowed these catalogues to also contribute to a certain aesthetic unity in the iron pieces that were produced, having as a reference, worldwide, the famous foundries of Val d'Osne (then owned by Barbezat & Cie.) and Antoine Durenne, influencing the design of products in Portugal. The various reissues of the catalogues, largely illustrated, contained hundreds of prints, and constituted a form of mass advertising that marked the time (Queiroz, 2005).

The 19th century arts were characterized by aesthetic revivalist, romantic or naturalist neoclassical

models, often eclectic, inspired by the artistic knowledge of previous centuries, adapted to the sociocultural contexts of the time and to the industrialization that influenced current construction, with emerging products such as iron and glass.

Chronologically placing the use of iron within the artistic movements, in general, it is considered that the second half of the 19th century is marked by two cultural and artistic movements, which were expressed in different areas, Romanticism and Art Nouveau (Gympel, 1996).

Romanticism or Historicism is the movement of revivalisms, a mixture of styles adapted to the country where it is expressed, and which corresponds to the period where cast iron begins to be used more on a structural level, "Iron Architecture". Paradoxically, the Enlightenment rationalism of Neoclassicism helped to create Romanticism, giving rise to a wave of sentimentality that relied on love, religion and patriotism, among others, in opposition to reason. Both defended the "return to nature" as the great influence of their expressions. However, the romantic used to act in a "natural way", in an action of exacerbated, unlimited, uncontrolled, irrational freedom of expression as a noble or vile response to the various emotions felt in his individualistic thinking, thus being contradictory in relation to the Neoclassical rationalist. Although the artistic movement was expressed in different areas, it was in architecture that the greatest adoption of past styles was revealed (Janson, 1988).

Historicism had its beginnings associated with the Gothic revival in England, with examples from the late 18th century, in large country mansions and in 1840 with the construction of the new parliament building "House of Parliament", whose interior design was the responsibility of the architect Augustus Welby Pugin (1812-1852), influencing the former Palace of Westminster in London with the English Gothic style. Thus, the first metallic applications began to be implemented in the ornate railings of the building (Gympel, 1996).

Pugin, despite his medieval principles inspired by botany, reinterpreted the forms of nature, arranging leaves and natural flowers in geometric shapes, creating a wide range of combinations and contemporary decorative patterns. It had a profound influence on several architects, especially William Morris (1834-1896), one of the great names of the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th century who rescued the manual arts, the appreciation of the artist (craftsman) and the "return of man to craft and art." (Castro & Imbronito, 2020, p. 413). This movement was considered an original response, from an artistic point of view, to the material production resulting from the intense use of the machine.

Historicist architecture was massive, heavy and static, as opposed to the fluidity movement of grace and near-immateriality found in the new artistic movements at the end of the 19th century. New ideals and principles were adopted by European architects and artists, with different adaptations and designations to the new style, in France and Belgium "Art Nouveau", in England "Modern Style", in Germany "Jugendstil", in Austria "Sezessionsstil" and in Italy "Stile Liberty" (Gympel, 1996).

One of the general features of the Art Nouveau movement is its international character (Pirkovič, 1998). The stylistic and ideological movement of Art Nouveau is recognized as a cohesive factor of European continental culture (Ciganović, 2019). The Art Nouveau period is considered one of the most interesting of modern times concerning the variety of materials used for architectural surfaces. The artistic treatment of façades around 1900 was shaped by the many new materials and technologies of the period such as ceramic tiles and metal cast ornaments, among others (Huber, 2019). There are several types of Art Nouveau ornamentation on the façades: geometrical, floral and figural (Mišič & Nahtigal, 2019). The balcony of the windows and door frames were richly decorated with both geometrical and floral ornamentation.

The fluidity of graceful movements inspired by nature, became easy to obtain with the potential of malleable iron, and were used for the first time in the modeling of interior and exterior spaces by architects, instead of the already known "utilitarian constructions", such as, bridges, exhibition halls, markets, train stations, among others, designed by engineers.

In these new projects, iron appears on the facades of buildings as a decorative form. Art Nouveau presents itself with flourishes, organic and natural forms, inspired by foliage and flowers, buildings with curved, delicate, irregular and asymmetrical lines, using mixtures of materials, such as tiles and iron, in an articulation of environments. Interiors and exteriors that were united by form and function, with a fluid and graceful movement.

As the designs were more linear, the cast iron elements were replaced by others in wrought iron,

lighter and more resistant. In the first decades of the 20th century, foundries redirected their production towards mechanical parts, progressively suppressing artistic casting.

In Portugal, Art Nouveau arrived at the beginning of the 20th century, which was marked by the dilution of 19th century naturalism. The first manifestations of the national modern current appear with futuristic expressions, especially in the plastic arts. Modernism in Portugal was consolidated over the first two decades of the 20th century (Mena, 2010). Initially, it was expressed timidly in the buildings, adding some specific elements, by architects with an academic culture and experience in the restoration of monuments. Many railings and wrought iron gates of the time demonstrate the influence of Art Nouveau that rejected symmetrical balance and sought harmony through wavy and sinuous shapes.

3. The historical centre of Lagos

The city of Lagos, located in the Algarve, south of Portugal, is associated with Infante D. Henrique (1394-1460), who was an important figure at the beginning of the Age of Discovery in the 15th century. Many expeditions departed from the port of Lagos, trips that are in the imagination of residents and tourists associated with the bay and the mouth of the Ribeira de Bensafrim. After the conquest of Ceuta in 1415, Lagos became an important centre of war in support of North Africa and the fight against piracy, becoming a major commercial port in the extreme southwest of the peninsula.

In 1573 it was elevated to a city by King D. Sebastião, and became the capital of the then Kingdom of the Algarve, a position it maintained until the earthquake of 1755. As in Lisbon, the city of Lagos was also heavily shaken and practically raised, with the destruction of most of the buildings, forcing the military chiefs and parish priests to leave the city and the population to lodge in improvised wooden and thatched shacks next to the Ermida de Santo Amaro. According to the architect Rui Paula, the governor of the Kingdom of the Algarve, in a letter sent to King D. José, in December 1755, noted about Lagos that that place was the key to the kingdom, as it was located on the coast, with a bay that could accommodate more than two hundred warships and had next to it a beach of more than one league where in a matter of few hours, full disembarkation could take place (Paula, 1992).

The reconstruction of the city was difficult and delayed, due to socio-economic problems that intensified in the early 19th century, with the French Invasions, and later with the Portuguese Civil War that led to the implantation of liberalism.

The recovery of the economic importance of Lagos appears, above all, in the second part of the 19th century, with the implementation of the fish canning industry. The first buildings linked to the conservation of fish by salt appear, inside the walls, and at the end of the century, the first canned factories in olive oil and modern sauces. The demographic and economic dynamics associated with the implementation and expansion of the canning industry in the last decades of the 19th and early 20th century, led to the construction and rehabilitation of intramural buildings and extramural urban expansion, especially in the Rossio area of S. João (Amaro, 2020), as well as improved road accessibility. A series of improvements took place in the port structures and with the arrival of the railway line in 1922, Lagos became one of the cities of national reference for the canning industry.

The city of Lagos has some architectural heritage with classified properties and monuments, namely national monuments, public interest properties, municipal interest properties and properties in the process of being classified, approved as properties of public and municipal interest. Currently, the National Monuments classified in the municipality are the historic walls (Muralhas and Torreões) of Lagos, the Church of Santo António and the Church of São Sebastião.

The economic dynamics that occurred in Lagos at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, were accompanied by the construction and rehabilitation of the intramural buildings. In this time period, in Portugal, the foundry industry evolved in a social, economic and political context favorable to the Portuguese industrial start. The union of art and industry took place, which gave rise to a profusion of artefacts in cast and wrought iron in urban environments, largely through the emerging bourgeoisie. Thus, it is considered that the intramural area of the historic centre of the city of Lagos constitutes an appropriate study area (Fig. 1) to develop an investigation on decorative pieces in cast iron and wrought iron, as architectural elements of the existing buildings.

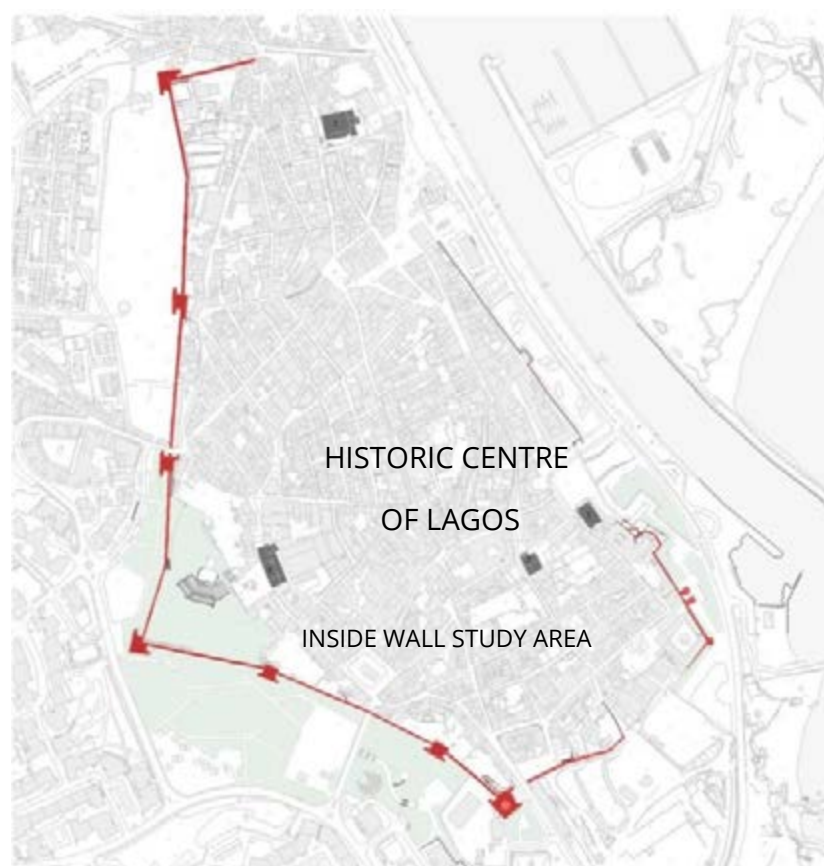
4. Methodology

A previous investigation of sensorial tourism experiences associated with door knockers known as the “Hands of Fatima” (Bender, Rosa, Lopes & Flores, 2021) was developed within the Program Summer with Science 2020 (Verão com Ciência 2020). The Accessible and Inclusive Project was supported by the Portuguese National Funding Agency for Science, Research, and Technology (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia) and developed within the ambit of the Sustowns Project, in articulation. In this project, the importance of other elements of cast and wrought iron in the architecture of the façades was perceived, adding value to the urban landscape.

In the present research, considering the methodological process, three phases were considered to achieve the proposed objectives. The first stage, developed in the Summer of 2020, included the task of selecting the site of study, taking over the area corresponding to the historical centre of the city of Lagos, the city within the walls. Then data collection was executed by direct observation, in the Spring 2021, through trips made to the study site. An inventory of the building was carried out, which has decorative elements in cast and wrought iron. This work was accompanied by a photographic survey. Paper maps were used to locate and reference the different types of decorative cast and wrought iron elements. This information was transferred to digital cartography, and the graphic production of thematic maps continued using the open source software Krita 5.0. This is one of the tools used for the creation of roughness maps (Pai, 2019).

Specific decorative elements belonging to the facades of the buildings were identified, on windows and balconies, on doors (cushions, flags and knockers), as well as railings and gates in cast and wrought iron used to delimit spaces, the type of materials, form and/or design, which would be related to the characteristics of the artistic movements and catalogues mentioned above. Thus, the work focused on buildings built in the late 19th and early 20th century, and on buildings that were previously the subject of architectural rehabilitation perceived by specific elements such as tiles or balconies.

Figure 1. Study Area: Historic Centre of Lagos Inside Wall



Source: Adapted from cartography map provided by the municipality of Lagos

5. Results and discussion

The facades of the main oldest buildings have a lime and sand-based mortar coating, whitewashed, and occasionally coloured. 750 cast and/or wrought iron elements were identified, allocated on the facades of the buildings and, in some particular situations, on walled walls: 299 grilles, 201 cushions on doors, 132 knockers, 21 gates, 36 flags, 37 handles, 17 ironworks and 7 railings on walls. Figure 2 shows the distribution by typologies, showing the importance of grilles, cushions on doors and knockers.

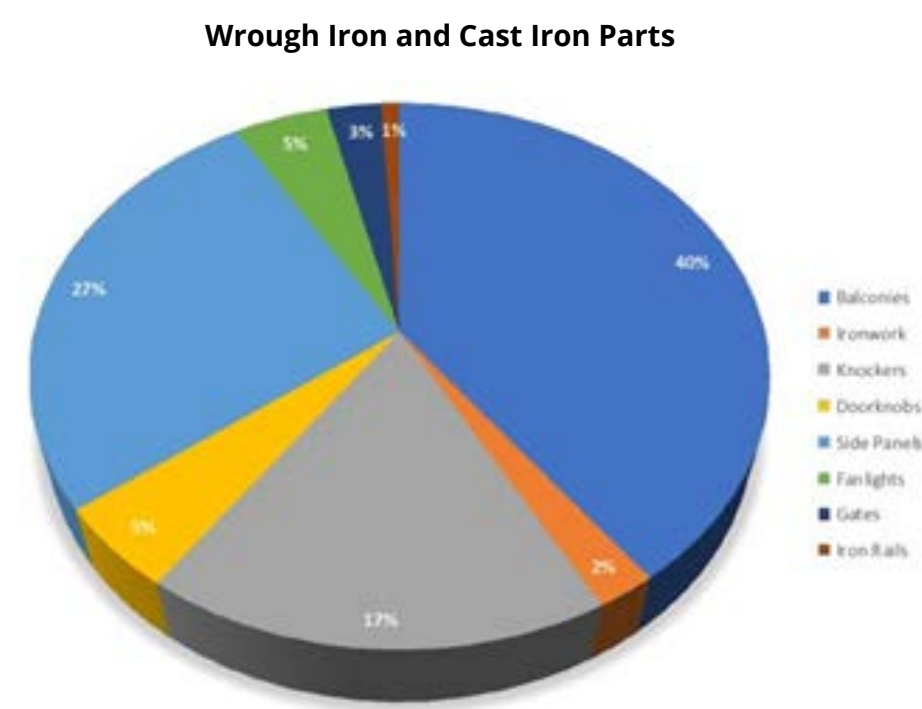
In the case of railings, those on balconies dominate over those on balconies and windows. The grilles come in a wide variety of patterns, both in the use of wrought and cast iron. The ornaments sometimes reveal a date of production or a pattern that identifies the possible time of production that may relate to the style of an artistic movement, for example those of the Romantic and Art Nouveau period.

Effectively, in the urban landscape, the railings on balconies and balconies themselves, with the continuity they present, stand out on the facades in a different way, guaranteeing a great aesthetic and urban sense. It is understood that the iron railings ennobled the facades and ensured a rhythmic sense to the architecture of that period. Flat volume prevails, where the straight line dominates, sometimes with neo-Gothic arches, and designs of wreaths. In addition to being artistic ornaments, they were functional elements, used in urban daily life, as they ensured security in separating the private from the public space. Most of the balcony railings have a flat volume, but some are bulged/convex, or angled, forming two planes.

The cast and wrought iron balcony rails (Fig. 3 and 4) are true pieces of great artistic value, contributing to the enhancement of the urban landscape representing romantic and Art Nouveau motifs.

The analysis of the material and design of the side panels and fanlight on the doors allow us to define the production period and make an association with the movements (Fig. 5 and 6). Regarding the material, it appears that both cast and wrought iron are used, the first associated with Romanticism and the second intensely used during the Art Nouveau artistic movement, a style that is very noticeable in the wicket bars. They are usually surrounded by wooden frames with an appreciable relief.

Figure 2. Typology of decorative architectural elements in cast and/or wrought iron



Source: Own Elaboration

Figure 3. Balcony railings in cast and wrought iron with romantic motifs

Source: Authors

Figure 4. Balcony railings in wrought iron with Art Nouveau motifs

Source: Authors

There is a greater concentration of side panels in relation to fanlights, perhaps because of their functional use, allowing ventilation and lighting inside the buildings, in addition to allowing a discreet view to the outside.

In many situations the doors are surmounted by a top panel or fanlight protected by iron bars. Sometimes the construction date is drawn or monogrammed by the owner. There are some situations in which there is an upper panel, but in most cases they are made up of cast or wrought iron grids made up of bars placed in a radial pattern.

Figure 5. Door side panels in Lagos residential buildings

Source: Authors

Figure 6. Door fanlights in Lagos residential buildings

Source: Authors

In the case of door stops and doorknobs, they are mostly made of cast iron. The knockers are predominantly the so-called hands of Fatima. There are several versions about the genesis of the “Hand of Fátima”. The door knocker in the shape of a closed hand produced in cast iron can be associated with Islamic and Jewish cultures or just a French colonial element that emerged in the 19th century, associated with foundries and romanticism. Its generalization probably occurred due to its utilitarian function, but could also be because of its symbolic and even superstitious role, as it is considered by many as a protective talisman (Bender et al., 2021). There is also the occurrence of some knocker rings or knockers, also in wrought iron and other models with fish, seahorse and snake shapes. These components have different materials and design, ranging from gray cast iron with more accentuated, solid, robust volume and less detail in the relief, to the slender bronze piece of lesser volume, with a more delicate appearance, but with greater detail in shape, texture or protrusion (Fig. 7).

Figure 7. Knockers in Lagos residential buildings

Source: Authors

In fitting doors, locks, hinges and keyhole mirrors or escutcheons were considered, the latter dominating. Many fitting pieces were produced in cast iron, but there were problems with the durability of this material due to the function they performed. The great possibility of the frequency of sudden movements of strong impact on the doors or locks, resulting in broken parts, lead to adopting wrought iron for the better performance of these elements. Those traditional fittings are much smaller in number, most are in wrought iron (Fig. 8), but some in cast iron were still inventoried. Only the hinges visible from the public space were identified. They were produced from wrought iron or sheet iron. Cast iron lock mirrors still exist, despite their fragility, they are decorative and distinct exterior elements. The designs of the keyhole mirrors were made from sheet iron, and are variable in shape.

Figure 8. Wrought Iron door fittings

Source: Authors

Gates and railings, mainly used on the outer limits of dwellings or public buildings, are also rarely used. Most of the houses in this historic centre have the main facades directly facing the public road, without any patio to establish this communication. Of the few railings found, it is observed they are mostly wrought iron and sometimes with cast iron spearheads or arrowheads.

For the spatialization of the cast and wrought iron architectural elements (Fig. 9 and 10) inventoried in this investigation, municipal cartography was used. It integrates the buildings of heritage value, of notable classification and monitoring, existing in the historic centre of Lagos that appear in the plan of the historical and heritage value developed within the scope of the Global Study of the Urban Rehabilitation Operation of the City of Lagos (CML, 2014).

The analysis of the location of iron artifacts in plan allows us to conclude that the area under study, belonging to the historic centre of Lagos, has a high density of decorative elements in cast and wrought iron. The distribution analysis shows that there is greater density in the structuring of access street axes in the historic centre of Lagos, where there are more impressive houses, destined for the middle class bourgeoisie, who lived in the city in the final decades of the 19th century, precisely at a time of economic expansion in which housing became larger, corresponding to a rise in the standard of living of some merchants and industrialists.

Some iron elements analyzed are in buildings that were not identified as having notable classification, in the plan of historical and patrimonial value referred to. It is argued that the architectural heritage goes beyond the scale of the building, some of its elements, due to their uniqueness, as they reflect the design and architectural understanding of the period in which they were produced, and for their artistic and aesthetic value, should be integrated in a heritage preservation strategy.

The spatial distribution of the buildings that have window grilles and balconies made of cast and wrought iron, may allow the development of proposals for urban cultural routes alluding to the romantic period of the late 19th century and to Art Nouveau, from the beginning of the 20th century. With the analysis of this inventory of decorative elements in cast and wrought iron, it is understood that their patterns and shapes allow us to identify the construction and/or rehabilitation of buildings over time.

Cultural sustainability promotes the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage in different forms such as art, heritage, knowledge and cultural diversity (Hawkes, 2001; Sachs, 2002; Soini & Birkeland, 2014; Dessein et al., 2015) which translates local identity. Nowadays the existing architectural assets are increasingly connected with the cultural identity of places. Traditional architecture constitutes a substantial part of the Cultural Heritage (Carrión Gútierez, 2015).

Cast iron is one of the most important products of the industrial revolution. It transformed civil architecture and nowadays it is considered a defining feature of 19th century architecture. The use of new industrial materials, such as iron and glass allowed for the construction of larger lighting open spaces with a new technological appearance and a hitherto unimaginable freedom of expression (Palmero-Iglesias & Bernardo (2022). Currently, it is assumed that iron contributed to the change in the physiognomies of 19th century cities (Cervera Sardá, 2006). Usually, only major cast iron buildings, as structural elements, such

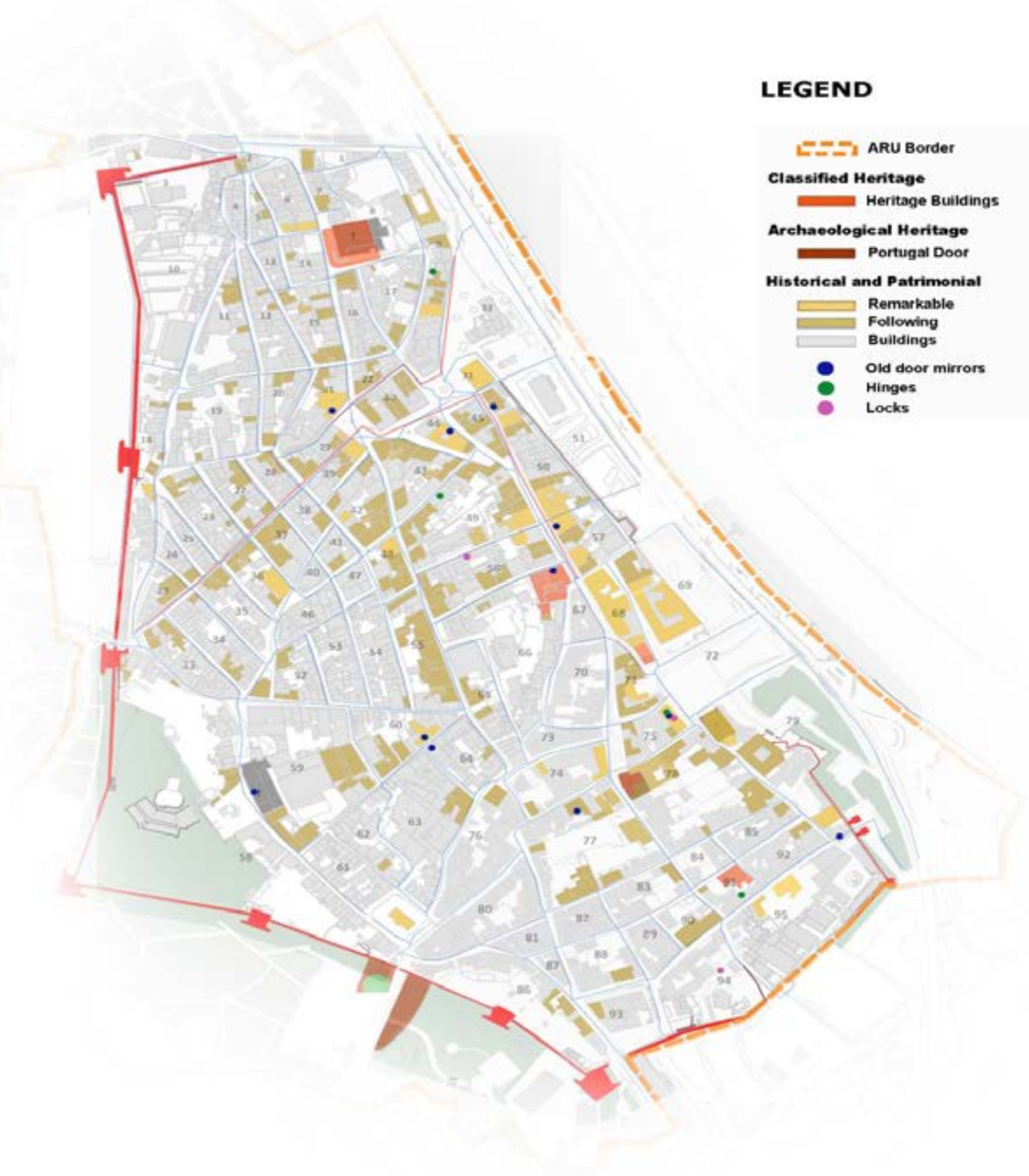
as markets, gardens, and train stations are seen as touristic products with historic and cultural value.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the mixture of cast and wrought iron's decorative elements in civil architecture brought cultural and aesthetical value to urban landscapes (Braga, 1995; Magaziner & Golding, 2000; Dametto, 2009; Barradas, 2015; Vieira, 2020) and retains its value in communities to the present day.

Figure 9. Cast iron and/or wrought iron decorative architectural elements' locations map



Source: Own Elaboration

Figure 10. Cast iron and/or wrought iron fittings locations map

Source: Own Elaboration

The present research identifies a high density and excellent examples of cast and wrought iron decorative elements of architecture in the city centre of Lagos. There are, mainly, traditional cast iron grilles and door knockers from the iron industry, and many wrought ironworks that were created by hand in local forges. A large diversity of these latter elements and compositions can be found in rivets, upset ends, collars, mortise and tenon joints and other traditional joinery techniques. The present research demonstrates that these architectural elements are adapted to different artistic movements and different periods. Although some of them demonstrate different characteristics in the composition of iron materials, they present design intentions close to the original models of a bygone era but with local specificities, as occur in vernacular architecture.

According to the Amsterdam Manifesto, the European Charter for Architectural Heritage, European architectural heritage also considers the sets that constitute ancient cities and traditional settlements in their natural or built environment (Council of Europe, 1975). Vernacular architecture translates an architectural language of the people who have local and regional ethnic dialects (Oliver, 2006) which translates cultural identity.

The legacy associated to cast and wrought iron decorative elements in civil architecture guarantees local authenticity and has brought about a broader understanding of what actually constitutes the value of architectural heritage. Cultural properties of buildings can be positioned as a subset of the cultural properties of places (Memmott & Keys, 2015). On the other hand, successful and profitable destinations will be those capable of being built with clear links to grassroots and thus developed without losing their own personality (Costa, 2001).

According to van Oers (2010) a cultural route ties a series of culturally and historically important elements and its structure can be a physical or perceived product. It can be either a path that existed in history or one that is created in recent times. In fact, local institutions, academia and enterprises have been creating a diversity of new thematic cultural routes.

The density of cast and wrought iron decorative elements of architecture in the centre of the city of Lagos, permits the local definition of new cultural routes, mainly associated to slow tourism and with artistic movements, contributing to bringing forward the importance of architectural heritage in European and world history, tourism being the tool to promote this. Those products can enhance tourist experiences that provide well-being and social inclusion. For example, cast iron knockers are small sculptures of great artistic and aesthetic value, and are considered a tourist resource that allows sensory and inclusive experiences (Bender et al., 2021).

Throughout the process of sustainable development, one also requires profound changes in the pattern of consumption of citizens, either residents or visitors. The individual dimension of sustainability (Rosa, 2018) describes the potential of actions which enable and lead to attitudes and practices according to the sustainable use of natural resources, such as energy and water. The sustainability agenda requires creating new means to convince tourists to take a more responsible approach to their entire holiday, which includes more walking and cycling, visiting nature and cultural attractions (Moon, 2018).

The decorative elements of cast and wrought iron in the architecture of the late 19th and early 20th century can be understood as both tangible and intangible heritage. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003) considers that the intangible cultural heritage includes practices, representations and expressions, knowledge and skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups or individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. The techniques and skills related to these traditional crafts have an intangible expression. Thus, it is essential to safeguard the intangible architectural heritage associated with the practices of production and maintenance of cast and wrought iron artifacts, ensuring their identification, preservation and enhancement. The knowledge of building traditions contained in manuals and historical treatise books are exceptional examples where teachings were fixed in time in a kind of anthropology of building culture (Aguar, 1999), and it is essential to preserve this intangible heritage and integrate this narrative in the dissemination of tourism products.

This research advocates that cast and wrought iron decorative architectural elements in the city of Lagos in the late 19th and early 20th century translates cultural identity and so must be preserved for future generations. This is not a mere municipal issue, as the holistic conservation of architectural heritage, which has cultural, economic and historical value, depends on the joint cooperation of people, experts, and governments (Taher Tolou Del, Saleh Sedghpour & Kamali Tabrizi, 2020).

6. Conclusion

All over the world, Historic Urban Landscape, as cultural heritage, integrates historic urban sites and architectural ensembles (UNESCO, 2019). These have been perceived by their cultural interest allowing the embellishment and the particularity of being places characterized by authentic architectural features, and so architectural heritage must be preserved. Historical places, landscape, vernacular and architectural

heritage can offer inhabitants and visitors a place where it is good to live and visit.

The New European Bauhaus movement based on sustainability, inclusion and aesthetics/art, emphasizes the urban experience. The architectural heritage, due to its aesthetic and artistic value, perceptible in the urban landscape, adds value to the memory of the city and can add a lot to the tourist experience. This new urban paradigm provides an opportunity for pedestrian routes that have cultural value as new tourist products. Walking by tourists is a healthy activity and contributes to sustainable tourism. A desire to spend time in open spaces has been associated with COVID-19. For local communities, the challenge is to define thematic routes that reproduce the cultural identity inherent to the spaces where they are created, aligning them with cultural sustainability.

The inventory of artefacts in cast and/or wrought iron carried out in the historic centre of Lagos, made it possible to identify the existence of a large amount and variety of decorative elements in the architecture of the buildings, recording different materials, shapes and design, which allow establishing the association with the artistic movements of Romanticism and Art Nouveau. This rich architecture gives the city a special personality and charm and can be seen through new tourist routes that can contribute to the emphasis on the identity, authenticity and diversity of these unique heritage elements.

This research work reinforces the idea that architectural heritage goes beyond the building itself. Its components, due to their uniqueness, are considered part of this heritage, reflecting the design and architectural understanding of the period in which they were produced. Cast and wrought iron elements were registered in the intramural area of the historic centre of Lagos and their historical significance and artistic value were acknowledged. The knowledge obtained reinforces the recognition of the heritage value of decorative cast and wrought iron components and their importance in the urban landscape.

In the Strategic Urban Rehabilitation Program Urban Rehabilitation Area of the City of Lagos, developed in the last decade, the creation of thematic pedestrian paths it is proposed, as they are understood to be an opportunity that can contribute to the diversification of the tourist product, and the requalification and promotion of the built heritage of the municipality (CML, 2012). It is an opportunity to value the architecture associated with Romanticism and Art Nouveau, where elements of cast and wrought iron are protagonists.

It is necessary to define a municipal strategy to safeguard architectural elements in cast and wrought iron with specific prevention and conservation measures, with training actions, technical support for owners and financial support from central and local governments. To make the replacement of iron elements feasible, it is essential to save historic pieces that are found in abandoned buildings or at the beginning of construction works, through municipal or private material banks.

In the current pandemic context, due to the growing emphasis on outdoor activities, pedestrian routes on architectural heritage can be differentiating, enhancing the attractiveness of the historic centre and contributing to sustainable and healthy tourism.

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Cognitive Destination Image and Tourist Satisfaction: The Case of the Fruit Festival in Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This research study aims to examine the association between cognitive destination image (CDI) attributes and tourist satisfaction. Data for the present research work was attained from a sample of tourists at Sisaket Fruit Festival/Thailand. Participants self-managed the questionnaires. A total number of 110 usable questionnaires were collected in the survey context. Bootstrapping technique by Partial Least Square-PLS in conjunction with SPSS 23 was used to analyze the data. The path analyses show that the CDI attributes were found positively related to tourist satisfaction at different levels. Additionally, based on the analyses of demographic comparisons, foreign tourists were found to be more satisfied with the festival through their participation in the study was much less than the Thai tourists. Public jobholders were more satisfied compared to the private jobholders and the student participants. This study contributes to tourism literature and has helpful implications for the industry in terms of developing fruit festivals and fairs.

KEYWORDS

Destination Marketing, Cognitive Destination Image, Rural Tourism, Festival, Tourist Satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

According to Ekinici (2003, p. 22), “destination image stands out as a critical element for destinations that want to differentiate as there is international competition”. Tourists’ travel choices are formed through the image of destination as one important factor (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Moreover, it plays an important role in the formation of desired behaviors (travel satisfaction, re-visit, and recommendation) in destination marketing (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Tsai, 2015; Al-Ansi & Han, 2019; Zhang, Byon, Williams & Huang, 2019).

The destination image has been explained with a multidimensional structure (cognitive, affective, and behavioral/conative) in the literature, especially in recent years (San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008; Agapito, Valle & Mendes, 2013; Hidalgo-Alcázar, Sicilia-Piero & Ruiz de Maya, 2014; Woosnam, Styliadis & Ivkov, 2020; Hadinejad, Gardiner, Kralj, Scott & Moyle, 2022; Vera & Chang, 2022), but the cognitive approach is the most frequently used (Lekovic, Tomic, Maric & Curcic, 2020). The cognitive image elicits tourists’ perceptions of various features of the destination like environment, service quality, attractions, and infrastructure and refers to visitors’ general knowledge level about the destination (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Agapito, et al., 2013; Lindblom, Lindblom, Lehtonen & Wechtler, 2017; Alcocer & Ruiz, 2020). Understanding the cognitive image can assist destination managers and marketers in developing long-term positioning strategies (Lekovic et al., 2020). Tourists’ approach towards a destination, such as satisfaction, intention to revisit the destination, and word of mouth intention, can be predicted using the cognitive destination image (CDI) evaluation. This study seeks to explain the CDI and its impact on tourist satisfaction.

Local events and festivals, on the other hand, can help the rural economy by enhancing the destination’s image or identity, attracting more people, investment, or commerce, and increasing the tourist economy (Kim & Cuskelly, 2017). There are, however, few researches on small-scale local festivals in rural regions (Kalkstein-Silkes et al., 2010; Kalkstein-Silkes et al., 2010; Hernández-Mogollón, Duarte & Folgado-Fernández, 2018; Guerreiro, Mendes, Fortuna & Pinto, 2020). In this context, the study aims to contribute to the literature by analyzing destination image and satisfaction in a small-scale rural festival, with an emphasis on the cognitive component.

For the study, a survey was conducted in the context of the Sisaket Fruit Festival in Thailand. Food festivals or events are an important marketing strategy in developing a destination image in rural tourism (Kalkstein-Silkes, Cai & Lehto, 2010). The Fruit Festival held every year in the Sisaket province, which is a rural tourism area, is a remarkable event that provides an opportunity to assess the image of the city. Along with focusing on CDI, the study offers important implications for destination marketing in rural tourism.

2. Literature review

2.1 Festivals in rural areas

Festivals are themed public celebrations (Getz & Page, 2020). According to a definition in the cultural context, the festival can be defined as “a themed and inclusive community event or series of events which have been created as the result of an inclusive community planning process to celebrate the particular way of life of people and groups in the local community with an emphasis on particular space and time” (Jepson & Clarke, 2015, p. 3).

Festivals have been classified into sacred and secular, rural and urban, and people and establishments (Ravichandran, Lee & Atanga, 2021). Rural events and festivals are key tourist attractions and social activities in the framework of rural tourism. Initially conceptualized as a tourism practice in rural areas, rural tourism is an agent of sustainability and serves sustainable rural development (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). Thus, rural tourism can be considered both an economic and a socio-cultural practice (Jenkins & Oliver, 2001). Accordingly, festivals held in rural areas can be conceptualized within the scope of rural tourism. The main purpose of these festivals is to provide cultural and recreational benefits for the local people and participants.

Festivals are an important part of many development plans aimed at improving economic and communal development (Wood & Thomas, 2008). Festivals encourage tourists to visit the region where they are held. At the local level, they provide a substantial economic impact (Yolal, Gursoy, Uysal, Kim, Lina & Karacaoglu, 2016; Dieck, Jung & Rauschnabel, 2018). Furthermore, numerous visitors from all cultures and structures visit the region during the festivities and engage with the local (host) people (Kalkstein-Silkes et al., 2010; Frost & Laing, 2015; Yolal et al., 2016). Festivals also improve the image and awareness of locations (Rivera, Semrad & Croes, 2008; Wood & Thomas, 2008; Lee, Lee & Choi, 2011). Richards and Wilson (2004) noted that cultural events and festivals provide the venue with the opportunity to improve the image of the community, add life to the community, and provide residents with renewed pride. Furthermore, festivals can contribute to the socialization of the local people (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014) and the cultural invention of festivals can deliver a uniquely practical social experience to local people (Ziakas, 2016).

2.2 Festivals as destination image makers

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) stated that “the destination image can be defined as the expression of all the information, impressions, prejudices, and emotional thoughts that a person or group has about a particular destination”. Destination image is not just the image of people traveling; it also includes the image of managers and investors of tourism organizations like tour operators, hotel companies, and airlines that affect tourism development (Henderson, 2007). Therefore, the subject of destination image attracts the attention of large masses both in academia and in the sector.

The image is the most important factor that determines the tourist attractions of the destination, the value of the destination in the tourism market, and is very open to change (Choi, Chan & Wu, 1999). For example, destinations can be easily affected by competition, changes, innovations, and many factors, such as the development level of the region, political arguments, infrastructure and superstructure services, attitudes of local people (Von Friedrichs Grängsjö, 2003). These factors can affect the destination image perceived by the tourists. Therefore, image management is relevant and critical for destination managers in terms of creating and surviving desired representations in the tourists’ minds. Also, understanding how the destination image is perceived by tourists, and then designing events to meet the demands and needs of the target market, will provide a competitive advantage to the destination. Destination managers spend a great deal of money, time, and effort to create a good image and attract potential visitors to visit their destinations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Creating a good destination image and responding to visitor’s requests and expectations will be effective in achieving the sustainability of the destination.

According to the literature, destination image can be explained by three components: cognitive, affective and behavioral/conative (San Martín & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008; Agapito et al., 2013; Hidalgo-Alcázar et al., 2014; Woosnam et al., 2020). While the affective image is explained by the emotions and feelings of the individual regarding the features such as attractions, atmosphere, and environmental elements in a particular destination, the cognitive image includes the knowledge and beliefs of the individual about the destination in general and informed by its attributes (Pike & Ryan, 2004). Researchers propose that tourist forms the cognitive image, based on which affective components are developed and then conative image is constructed (Matos, Mendes & Valle, 2012; Chen & Phou, 2013; Lai, Khoo-Lattimore & Wang, 2019; Woosnam et al., 2020; Sio, Fraser & Fredline, 2021). According to past studies, cognitive image is explained as the antecedent of affective and conative image (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Agapito et al., 2013; Lindblom et al., 2017; Alcocer & Ruiz, 2020). Moreover, the literature mostly focuses on the cognitive component to explain the destination image (Yazıcıoğlu & Akbulut, 2015; Lekovic et al., 2020). In this regard, the destination image will be explained with a cognitive approach in the study.

Events can shape an image of the host community or country, leading to its favorable perception as a potential travel destination (Getz & Page, 2020). Especially, festivals bring flexibility to fixed structures and provide a source of spectacle, which in turn, creates the value of the image of a landmark (Richards & Wilson, 2004). Thus, events can create a positive destination image and attract visitors who may not otherwise visit the area (Mair & Weber, 2019).

Local events and festivals, on the other hand, can benefit the rural economy by promoting the city’s brand or identity, attracting more people, investment, or trade, and expanding the visitor economy (Kim & Cuskelly, 2017, p. 85). However, there are few studies on small-scale local festivals in rural areas (Kalk-

stein-Silkes et al., 2010; Hernández-Mogollón, Duarte & Folgado-Fernández, 2018; Guerreiro, Mendes, Fortuna & Pinto, 2020). According to Kalkstein-Silkes et al. (2010), festivals held in rural locations can establish a destination image and use a destination branding approach to differentiate their place. Furthermore, the food and food-related aspects in destination marketing might elicit emotional association with the food picture, indicating a favorable response to the destination. As shown by Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2018), small-scale events related to local heritage, traditions, and products have the potential to improve the cognitive image of a location and, as a result, its ability to attract visitors. In this regard, this study aims to contribute to the literature by examining the destination image and satisfaction in local, small-scale, rural festivals, with a focus on the cognitive component

Studies focusing on cognitive image reveal that the factors that explain the image are diversified. For example, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) explain the image with “quality of experience”, “attractions” and “value/environment” factors. According to the research of Beerli and Martin (2004), another pioneering study in the field, the cognitive image includes perceptions of “natural and cultural resources”, “infrastructure”, “atmosphere”, “social environment”, and “sun and beach” factors. Akgun, Senturk, Keskin, and Onal (2019), who carried out their research in Istanbul, explained the image with the factors of “attractiveness”, “atmosphere”, “infrastructure” and “value”. Bezirgan, Köroğlu, and İlban (2017) explained the destination image with the factors of “infrastructure”, “security and personal safety”, “hygiene and cleanliness”, “hospitality” and “friendship” in their study in Antalya. As can be seen, the nature of the cognitive image is complex and multiple. Image formation can be considered as a creation of a mental representation of a destination depending on the information cues transferred by image information agents and personal factors (Atadil, Sirakaya & Altintas, 2017, p. 37). Similarly, it can be considered that the cognitive destination image can change to its connection with the reality of each destination. In this context, Hallman et al. (2015) research, which focuses on cognitive destination image specific to “events”, provides a good basis for this study.

Hallmann et al. (2015) tested the cognitive image in the context of winter sports in Germany and Australia and reached a factor structure that includes the components of “service quality”, “physiography”, “hospitality”, “visitor management”, “sport, and event facilities” and “costs”. In this study, the destination image was measured by adapting Hallman et al.’s (2015) factor structure as it is comprehensive and focusing event experience. Thus, in the context of an event, cognitive destination image factors can be explained as follows: The service quality factor is related to the perceived quality of the event experience by the participants. For example, it includes the scale item *“Sisaket stands for exciting experiences”*. Items about the natural attractions of the destination are included under the physiographic factor, such as, *“Sisaket offers a lot of natural attractions”*. The facilities of the event are included as a separate factor. For example, *“The availability of recreational facilities in Sisaket is adequate”*. Another factor for the event relates to the perceptions of visitor management, including items such as *“I consider a central information center important for Sisaket”*. In addition to items about accommodation facilities, items about hospitality facilities are included in the hospitality factor, for example, *“The atmosphere in Sisaket is inviting and appealing”*. As an example of the cost factor, which includes perception items about the cost of visiting, the following item was considered *“Prices for eating out in Sisaket are adequate”*.

2.3 Tourist satisfaction

As customer satisfaction is one of the most significant factors affecting consumer behaviors and establishing a better level of tourist satisfaction is a primary objective for all destination organizations (Mason & Paggiaro, 2012). Satisfaction, according to Srivastava and Kaul (2014), is a consumer’s assessment of a product or service’s ability to give a satisfying degree of consumption-related fulfillment. Consumers are content if the experience meets or surpasses their expectations, and they are unsatisfied if the experience falls short (Lekovic et al., 2020). In destination marketing, the tourists’ assessment of their destination experience is referred to as satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction is the major indicator in determining whether or not tourists will recommend and revisit a given place (Tsai, 2015). Therefore, tourist satisfaction is one of the most common outcome variables in tourism research models (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Tsai, 2015; Guzman-Parra, Vila-Oblitas & Maqueda-Lafuente, 2016; Lekovic et al., 2020; Ervinaa, Wulunga & Octivanya, 2020).

Tourist satisfaction can be measured by expectation-perception paradigm (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985), the performance-only model (Grönroos, 1984), and the expectancy-disconfirmation model (Oliver, 1980). According to the expectancy-disconfirmation model, before consuming a service, the tourist has created specific expectations of its performance, during which time the tourist makes concessions between the actual performance of the service and the tourist's anticipation after consumption, resulting in disconfirmation. A tourist will be satisfied if he or she receives a favorable disconfirmation (Saayman et al., 2018). In this study, the satisfaction scale developed by Aliman, Hashim, Wahid, and Harudin (2016) was used with this approach.

2.4 Cognitive destination image and tourist satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is important for effective destination marketing since it impacts variables including destination choice, product and service consumption, and the desire to return (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). According to Assaker and Hallak (2013), visitor contentment with a place improves the likelihood of returning in the long and short term. The satisfaction with destination visits may be explained by perceived destination image, according to studies conducted in various geographies (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Tsai, 2015; Guzman-Parra et al., 2016; Gün, Durmaz & Tutcu, 2019; Kim, Styliadis & Oh, 2019; Ervinaa et al., 2020). Accordingly, a positive destination image increases tourist satisfaction. In this context, the following hypotheses have been developed to be tested in the study:

- H1:** "Service quality" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"
- H2:** "Physiography" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"
- H3:** "Event facilities" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"
- H4:** "Visitor management" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"
- H5:** "Hospitality" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"
- H6:** "Costs" is positively related to "tourist satisfaction"

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and data collection

In Thailand, Fruit Festival is held every June in Sisaket Province and honors fruits such as rambutans, durians, and stink beans. Caravans and tours to nearby orchards are conducted as part of the festivals and the festival presents a lot of fun and educational experience (Brown, 2016). According to Wikipedia (2021), "Sisaket is a Northeastern Province along the Cambodian border. The province has some national parks and numerous ruins and archeological sites from the Khmer Empire". Sisaket Fruit Festival is the second-largest durian festival in Thailand, after the Chanthaburi Durian Festival (Gassik, 2014). Thus, the Sisaket Fruit Festival is an important event to explore the destination image and satisfaction levels perceived by the local people as well as the visitors. The study examines the destination image in rural tourism within the scope of the Sisaket Fruit Festival.

For the current survey, data was gathered from both Thai and foreign tourists visiting Sisaket's Durian Festival which is organized every June before Amphoe Kantaralak or Amphoe Khun Harn. Tourismthailand (2021) reports that "festival visitors can enjoy the big sales of fruits from Sisaket such as rambutan, durian, lanson, mangosteen, stink beam, and rubber, flower floats, documentary exhibition, and fruit tasting caravan". A face-to-face survey technique was implemented for the data collection in June 2019. The convenience sampling technique was used for the current study and the research team tried to collect data from foreign tourists as much as possible but this was not possible due to the limited number of foreign tourists at that time, so mostly the Thai tourists were included in the current work. Additionally, due to the time restrictions and difficulties to find voluntary respondents during the festival, a total of 110 usable questionnaires were possible to be collected.

3.2 Instrument development and measures

The scales selected for the present research were adopted from the existing literature background review. Firstly, the tourist satisfaction scale was adopted from Aliman, Hashim, Wahid, and Harudin (2016). A sample item from this measure is *"I really enjoyed the visit to Sisaket"*. There is empirical evidence from this study that this scale had high Cronbach's ($\alpha = 0.928$). CDI scale was measured using 21 items from Hallmann, Zehrer, and Müller (2015). As mentioned above, this scale consists of 6 attributes (4 items for service quality, 3 items for physiography, 3 items for event facilities, 4 items for visitor management, 3 items for hospitality, and 4 items for costs) and the sample item from this measure is *'Sisaket stands for high-quality tourism services'*. There is empirical evidence from this study that this scale had a high Cronbach's alpha over 0.70.

Each measurement applied a Likert-type scale that arrayed from "5"="strongly agree" to "1"="strongly disagree". Additionally, the research questionnaire includes demographic questions such as gender, job, education, age, nationality, and visit.

3.3 Data analysis

The current study has used Bootstrapping technique by Partial Least Square-PLS in conjunction with SPSS Version 23 to analyze the hypothesized relationships. Then the psychometric properties of the measures were reported and the study scales were put to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assure support for the concerns of dimensionality, convergent, and discriminant validity (Chin 1998; Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). PLS works well in analyzing a series of cause-and-effect relationships (Ringle, Oliver, Martin, & Bradley, 2009). After the validation of measures, Bootstrapping was run to analyze the validity of the model and hypotheses. Finally, though not hypothesized, independent Samples *t*-test and ANOVA test were performed to make demographic comparisons between groups.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Firstly, the study employed a descriptive analysis to explain the demographic characteristics of the participants. The participants' demographic frequencies such as gender, job, education, age, nationality, and visit were presented in Table 1. Based on the frequency analysis; a slight majority of the participants were females (52.7%), and the majority of the participants (73.6%) were over the age of 29 years at the middle-age level. Furthermore, 98.1% of the participants had education at the university level, the slight majority of the participants (34.5%) were private job holders, the most of the respondents (80.9%) were Thai tourists, and lastly, the results show that the 51.8% of the participants visited the festival before.

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Demographic Variable	Sample Composition	Percentage
Age	20–29 years	26.4
	30–40 years	40.0
	Over 40	33.6
Gender	Female	52.7
	Male	47.3
Education	Secondary education and lower	1.8
	Vocational/Faculty	67.3
	Masters and over	30.9
Job	Public	24.5
	Private	34.5
	Student	13.6
	Retired	27.3
Nationality	Thai	80.9
	Foreign tourist	19.1
Visit	Visited before	51.8
	Not visited before	48.2

Source: Own Elaboration

4.2 Psychometric properties of the measures

To assess the adequacy of the measurement, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were examined. The measurement items can be seen in detail in Table 2. The Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR) measures were over the acceptable value of .60, which depicts that items are representative of the latent constructs and internal consistency was adequate (Cortina, 1993; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2010). Convergent validity was satisfied as factor loadings were higher than the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 1998), except VM 20 which was omitted for the further analysis. Additionally, all constructs' average variances extracted (AVE) scores were over the threshold value of .50, indicating convergent validity, and all t -values over 1.96 are confirmed as significant values, (Chin, 1998; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Hair Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014).

Table 2. The Results of the Measurement Model

Scale items	Factor Loadings	T-values	α	CR	AVE
Cognitive Destination Image (Hallmann et al., 2015)					
<i>Service Quality (SQ)</i>			0.88	0.92	0.73
SQ10: "Sisaket stands for exciting experiences".	0.85	25.11			
SQ11: "Sisaket stands for high-quality tourism services".	0.80	15.42			
SQ12: "The quality of accommodations in Sisaket is good".	0.88	39.46			
SQ13: "Cleanliness and hygiene are considered important in Sisaket".	0.88	37.81			
<i>Physiography (PHY)</i>			0.91	0.94	0.85
PHY14: "Sisaket offers a lot in terms of natural scenic beauty".	0.93	56.00			
PHY15: "Sisaket has varied and unique alpine plant and wildlife habitat".	0.92	38.56			
PHY16: "Sisaket offers a lot of natural attractions".	0.92	39.95			
<i>Event Facilities (EF)</i>			0.76	0.86	0.68
EF17: "The availability of recreational facilities in Sisaket is adequate".	0.79	10.86			
EF18: "The availability of health facilities/medical care for tourists is adequate".	0.87	17.56			
EF19: "Sisaket stands for a variety of outstanding special events".	0.80	12.06			
<i>Visitor Management (VM)</i>			0.61	0.79	0.57
VM21: "The homepage of Sisaket offers a lot of good information".	0.50	4.38			
VM22: "Booking the accommodation was easy to handle".	0.88	26.01			
VM23: "I consider a central information center important for Sisaket".	0.83	15.03			
<i>Hospitality (HOS)</i>			0.88	0.93	0.81
HOS24: "The atmosphere in Sisaket is inviting and appealing".	0.88	35.96			
HOS25: "The hospitality of the locals is very welcoming".	0.94	49.11			
HOS26: "The atmosphere in Sisaket is very welcoming toward families and children".	0.88	22.06			
<i>Costs (COS)</i>			0.79	0.87	0.63
COS27: "Altogether, Sisaket offers good value for the money spent".	0.85	21.44			
COS28: "Prices for accommodation in Sisaket are decent".	0.85	17.46			
COS29: "Prices for eating out in Sisaket are adequate".	0.91	52.53			
COS30: "Prices for transport in Sisaket are adequate".	0.52	4.35			
Tourist Satisfaction (TSAT) (Aliman et al., 2016)			0.92	0.93	0.61
TSAT1: "I really enjoyed the visit to Sisaket".	0.70	8.62			
TSAT2: "I am satisfied with my decision to visit Sisaket".	0.70	8.62			
TSAT3: "I prefer this destination".	0.75	11.12			
TSAT4: "I have positive feelings regarding Sisaket".	0.77	15.34			
TSAT5: "This experience is exactly what I need".	0.86	34.06			
TSAT6: "My choice to purchase this trip was a wise one".	0.85	33.64			
TSAT7: "This visit was better than expected".	0.79	20.60			
TSAT8: "This was a pleasant visit".	0.82	25.33			
TSAT9: "I rate Sisaket as a better destination as compared to similar tourist destinations".	0.81	24.32			

Notes: "All items are measured on five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree".

"All loadings are significant at the 0.05 level or better".

Source: Own Elaboration

Discriminant validity was analyzed using the Fornell and Larcker's criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These authors recommended that "the square root of average variance extracted should be greater than the correlations between the constructs" (Chin, 1998; Fornell & Larcker, 1981, p. 45-46). As Table 3 shows, all diagonal scores were over the inter-construct correlations, therefore confirming adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity using Fornell and Larcker's Criterion

Variables	COS	HOS	PHY	EF	SQ	VM	TSAT
COS	0.793						
HOS	0.719	0.900					
PHY	0.642	0.609	0.921				
EF	0.454	0.365	0.516	0.824			
SQ	0.602	0.687	0.686	0.470	0.854		
VM	0.408	0.604	0.471	0.415	0.664	0.754	
TSAT	0.640	0.702	0.633	0.395	0.731	0.571	0.781

Note: "Bold values indicate the square root of AVE of each construct".

Source: Own Elaboration

4.3 Hypotheses testing, independent samples *t*-test, and ANOVA

A bootstrapping technique was employed to determine the *t*-statistics and to find out the path coefficients' significance and as well as the blindfolding procedure for predictive accuracy and relevance (Hair et al., 2014). The R^2 values and predictive relevance (Q^2) were examined and can be seen in Table 4. In this respect, Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2017, p. 105) contend that "The goal of PLS is maximizing the explained variance (i.e., the R^2 value) of the endogenous latent variables in the PLS path model". Sarstedt, Ringle, and Hair (2017, p. 32) stated that "as a relative measure of predictive relevance, Q^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate that an exogenous construct has a small, medium, or large predictive relevance, respectively, for a certain endogenous construct".

Firstly, H1 proposed that service quality makes a positive impact on tourist satisfaction. Table 4 demonstrated that the path from service quality to tourist satisfaction was significantly positive ($\beta = 0.732$, $t = 18.92$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, H1 was supported. Service quality explained 54% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.32 which is medium predictive relevance (Chin, 1998; Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). Secondly, H2 recommended that physiography makes a positive impact on tourist satisfaction. The path from physiography to tourist satisfaction was considerably positive ($\beta = 0.632$, $t = 10.99$, $p < 0.05$). H2 was, therefore, validated. Physiography explained 40% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.24 which is medium predictive relevance. Thirdly, H3 proposed that event facilities make a positive influence on tourist satisfaction. The path from event facilities to tourist satisfaction was positive but less considerable ($\beta = 0.412$, $t = 5.12$, $p < 0.05$). So, H3 and event facilities explained 17% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.10 which is small predictive relevance. Fourth, H4 recommended that there is a positive relationship between visitor management and tourist satisfaction. The path from visitor management to tourist satisfaction was substantially positive ($\beta = 0.574$, $t = 10.71$, $p < 0.05$). So, H4 was supported. Visitor management explained 33% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.19 which is medium predictive relevance. Fifth, H5 proposed that there is a positive relationship between hospitality and tourist satisfaction. The path from hospitality to tourist satisfaction was significantly positive ($\beta = 0.706$, $t = 14.69$, $p < 0.05$). So, H4 was supported hospitality and explained 50% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.29 which is medium predictive. Lastly, H6 proposed that there is a positive relationship between costs and tourist satisfaction. The path from costs to tourist satisfaction was substantially positive ($\beta = 0.654$, $t = 12.79$, $p < 0.05$). So, H4 was supported and, costs explained 43% of the variance in tourist satisfaction. The Q^2 was found to be 0.24 which is medium predictive relevance.

Table 4. Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesized Relationships	β	<i>t</i> -values	Results
<i>Hypothesis 1</i> $H_1: SQ \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.54\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.32	0.732	18.92*	Supported
<i>Hypothesis 2</i> $H_2: PHY \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.40\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.24	0.632	10.99*	Supported
<i>Hypothesis 3</i> $H_3: EF \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.17\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.10	0.412	5.12*	Supported
<i>Hypothesis 4</i> $H_4: VM \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.33\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.19	0.574	10.71*	Supported
<i>Hypothesis 5</i> $H_5: HOS \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.50\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.29	0.706	14.69*	Supported
<i>Hypothesis 6</i> $H_6: COS \rightarrow TSAT$ Explained Variance $R^2 = 0.43\%$ Predictive relevance (Q^2) = 0.24	0.654	12.79*	Supported

Notes: “*The *t*-values demonstrate a statistically significant relationship at the 0.05 level or better”.

“The other *t*-value without any asterisk is not significant”.

Source: Own Elaboration

Further, as depicted in Tables 5 and 6, the present study employed Independent Samples *t*-test and ANOVA to verify if there is a perceptual difference among demographical groups. After the *t*-test to compare the satisfaction levels of Thai and foreign tourists, it was found that the satisfaction levels of Thai and foreign tourists were different ($t = 2.268$, $p < 0.05$). Accordingly, although the number of foreign tourists is much less than that of Thai tourists, their satisfaction levels are higher than the satisfaction levels of Thai tourists (see Table 5).

Table 5. Independent Samples *t*-test for the Nationality-based Comparison in the Perception of TSAT

Group	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
Thai tourist	89	0.555	4.437			
Foreign tourist	21	0.351	4.656	2.268	46.820	0.028

Source: Own Elaboration

Based on the results depicted in Table 6, only the differences were found between job groups in tourist satisfaction, such that the respondents who were public job holders reported more satisfaction when compared to private job holders ($p > .008$) and the students ($p > .043$).

Table 6. ANOVA Test for the Job-based Comparison in the Perception of TSAT

(I) job	(J) job	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public	private	0.399*	0.120	0.008	0.082	0.717
	student	0.495*	0.172	0.043	0.013	0.978
	retired	0.177	0.098	0.278	-0.082	0.436
Private	public	-0.399*	0.120	0.008	-0.717	-0.082
	student	0.096	0.187	0.955	-0.417	0.610
	retired	-0.222	0.123	0.276	-0.546	0.101
Student	public	-0.495*	0.172	0.043	-0.978	-0.013
	private	-0.096	0.187	0.955	-0.610	0.418
	retired	-0.319	0.173	0.287	-0.804	0.167
Retired	public	-0.177	0.098	0.278	-0.436	0.082
	private	0.222	0.123	0.276	-0.101	0.546
	student	0.319	0.173	0.287	-0.167	0.804

Note: “*The group difference is significant at the 0.05 level”.
Source: Own Elaboration

5. Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The rapid increase in the number of destinations has brought competition with it. In this competitive environment, destinations must be managed with a strategic perspective. Chi and Qu (2008) proposed that the success of destinations in a saturated market is possible with a comprehensive analysis of the interaction between destination image and visitor satisfaction. In this regard, it has been tried to determine the association between CDI and the satisfaction of the visitors coming to Sisaket destination for the Fruit Festival. When the past research was examined regarding the destination image attributes, destination belonging, and tourist satisfaction, it was realized that most of those studies are conducted in developed touristic places where sea-sand-sun tourism comes first. But, recently, the tourist needs and expectations are changing towards areas where they can be calmer and intertwined with nature and experience rural tourism forms. Conducting such studies in smaller and developing rural areas will provide contribute to future tourism planning. Hence, this study examined the Sisaket destination from Thailand, with its rural tourism activity.

The present work emphasized the CDI dimensions for a rural tourism place in Thailand because handling and comprehending these dimensions procures data that may be helpful for destination authorities and marketers to produce competitive and sustainable policies. Progress in touristic image contributes to future development in the hospitality sector at a particular destination. Along with this, the current research provides new support to the theoretical background in the area of perceived CDI for rural tourism regions.

The research findings clarify the important role of destination evaluation on TSAT. Thus, a fruit festival event and the tourists' image towards this can play an important attractive role in future marketing of the destination. Fundamentally, Table 4 shows that the model fits well, such that, the cognitive dimensions used in the study were approved to be drivers of TSAT. Therefore, destination managements need to acknowledge the tie among these variables.

The current study proposed a significant positive association between SQ and TSAT. The research results depict a significant positive association among these variables. This finding was concordant with pre-

vious literature, such as Guzman-Parra et al. (2016) examined the SQ dimension similarly under 'human ware attributes' and found it a determinant of tourist satisfaction. Gomezelj and Mihalic (2008) focused on CDI factors, including the SQ dimension, and they stressed the role of SQ for more competitiveness and customer satisfaction. According to Assaker and Hallak (2013), a better level of customer satisfaction is an outcome of higher service quality and, as a result, raises the revisit intention.

The current work proposed a significant positive association between PHY and TSAT. The research finding shows a significant positive association between these variables. This result was concordant with that of Guzman-Parra et al. (2016) who examined the PHY dimension similarly under 'hardware attributes' and found it as determinant of TSAT.

The present research proposed a significant positive relationship between EF and TSAT. This finding concerning the influence of EF on TSAT was consistent with the study hypothesis and past research findings. A very recent study conducted by Aliedan, Sobaih, and Elshaer (2021) examined the EF dimension similarly under the 'event (cities-based entertainment) quality dimension' and confirmed the positive relationship between these hypothesized variables.

The present research also anticipated a significant positive association between VM and TSAT. The research finding confirm this association between these variables. This finding concerning the influence of VM on TSAT was concordant with that of Ervinaa et al. (2020), who studied VM strategy in the North Bandung protected areas as an important determinant of TSAT.

This study proposed also a significant positive association between VM and TSAT. The research finding validate this relationship, which was concordant with that of Ervinaa et al. (2020), who studied VM strategy in the North Bandung protected areas as an important determinant of TSAT.

Moreover, the present research proposed a significant positive association between HOS and TSAT and also between COS and TSAT. The study findings depict a significant positive association among these variables. These findings were concordant with the results reported in previous literature, such as; empirical research conducted by Gün et al. (2019) on tourists in Mardin province/Türkiye reveals the role of HOS and COS for better TSAT. Similarly, in their empirical research conducted in Spain, Alcocer and Ruiz (2020) examined different cognitive dimensions, including HOS and COS and reported a positive impact of these dimensions on TSAT.

5.2 Implications

As in every study, this study puts forward some implications within the framework of its findings. First of all, when we look at the results, the relationship between the EF and VM dimensions and tourist satisfaction seems at a positive level, but the level of significance was found to be lower than the other dimensions, even if EF is close to the limit level. Therefore, it is recommended that destination authorities and private sector managers first consider and develop these dimensions. In this context, there is no doubt that some factors such as increasing recreational activities, improving health and medical infrastructure, increasing more prominent rural tourism activities, establishing tourist information offices in different areas, improving accommodation reservation systems in terms of tourists, and making them easily accessible to tourists are of priority for Sisaket. These will make the tourists more satisfied and accelerate Sisaket being among the outstanding rural tourism destinations.

Along with this, it is important to make developments for other dimensions. First of all, all stakeholders in the destination should come together and draw a destination planning and road map so that these dimensions can be discussed in all aspects. For rural tourism to develop in a region, good community leadership, support and participation of local government, technical assistance to provide information for adequate touristic development and promotion, good conference and visitor offices, and support of local people and farmers are required. The willingness of local people and farmers to take part in rural tourism activities and what they can do to participate is very important. For example, teaching the relationship between the environment and tourism to the local people through education is the starting point and should be made sustainable. Especially tropical fruits are important sources in the development of rural and gastronomic tourism because tropical fruit cultivation cannot be done in every region of the world and is unique to this region. Especially durian fruit is an extremely exotic fruit and is grown in Thailand,

Malaysia, and Vietnam. In this way, the development of tropical orchards in the region will provide economic development for the local people along with tourism.

Issues such as food and beverage, accommodation, environmental cleaning, and hygiene should be included in the planning at the forefront, and as a result service quality will be improved. Sisaket streets should be rearranged based on the future vision and homestay could be an alternative accommodation type. Since social media is a very effective tool in promotional activities today, the region should be promoted by using of local television channels and social media elements. Information trips should be organized for people who are specialized in rural tourism. In addition, the awareness of Sisaket's rural tourism potential should be increased by promoting it with fairs and festivals and promotional films.

Finally, the results show that foreign tourist satisfaction was higher when compared to Thai tourists. This finding might be an important indicator that they found the destination attractive together with its festival organization and various types of tourism sources and they are expected to revisit and recommend it to others. The destination authorities in Sisaket may attract more and more foreign visitors through marketing strategies. Along with this, the public job holders were found to be more satisfied with this trip when compared to other job groups. This means that public job holders find more satisfactory experiences in this destination. This is an interesting and important finding in terms of marketing segmentation strategies for this group of people whose expectations and needs may be studied more and in turn, this destination image will develop among this group of people.

5.3 Limitations

As with other studies, this study has a few limitations. In this study, only the cognitive dimension of the destination image was considered, which is accepted as the basis of the other two dimensions, but it is recommended to examine the affective and conative dimensions in future studies. Due to the short duration of the festival and the limited number of foreign tourists, the foreign tourist rate in the research could not be increased. In future studies, the model of the study can be tested in different geographies and cultures. On the other hand, in image studies, scales containing variables related to the characteristics of the relevant destination should be applied. Especially in small-scale studies to be carried out at the local scale, a deep understanding of the destination image can be reached by considering the attractions and variables specific to the local community.

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