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RESEARCH

Quantitative analysis of tourism competitiveness in Bahía de Kino, Sonora

Análisis Cuantitativo de la Competitividad Turística en Bahía de Kino, Sonora

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Abstract

The article aims to explore and build a quantitative analysis of tourism competitiveness for Bahía de Kino Sonora, based on the perceptions of local actors involved in tourism. In recent years, this police station became one of the tourist destinations in Sonora with the highest influx of visitors due to its proximity to Hermosillo, the capital of the State and the United States, the natural attractions and the real estate development built on second homes. To obtain the index, a quantitative instrument was designed that consisted of 60 items, most of them on a Likert scale, a convenience sample was applied to 120 people dedicated to the tourism industry: service providers, hotel employees, shops, restaurants, promoters, tourism students, public officials, among others. The variables used in the different analyzes include: tourism supply, tourism promotion, human resource training and tourism in general. The data was processed using the SPSS version 21, EQS 6.1 software in order to carry out reliability tests, and to carry out the exploratory and confirmatory quantitative analysis for the validation of the instrument. Finally, the corresponding correlations were made to average the tourism competitiveness index.

Keywords: Quantitative analysis, Tourism, Competitiveness

Resumen

El artículo tiene por objetivo, explorar y construir un análisis cuantitativo de la competitividad turística para Bahía de Kino Sonora, a partir de las percepciones de los actores locales que participan del turismo. Esta localidad se constituyó en años

recientes en uno de los destinos turísticos de Sonora con mayor afluencia de visitantes debido a su cercanía con Hermosillo la capital del Estado y los Estados Unidos, los atractivos naturales y el desarrollo inmobiliario fincado en las segundas residencias. Para la obtención del índice se diseñó un instrumento cuantitativo que constó de 60 preguntas, la mayor parte de ellos en escala de Likert, se aplicó un muestreo a conveniencia a 120 personas dedicadas al ramo turístico: prestadores de servicios, empleados de hotel, comercios, restaurantes, promotores, estudiantes de turismo, funcionarios públicos, entre otros. Las variables utilizadas en los diferentes análisis abarcan: oferta turística, promoción turística, formación de recursos humanos y el turismo de forma general. Los datos se procesaron utilizando el software SPSS versión 21, EQS 6.1 con la finalidad de realizar pruebas de confiabilidad, y hacer el análisis cuantitativo exploratorio y confirmatorio para la validación del instrumento. Por último, se hicieron las correlaciones correspondientes para promediar el índice de competitividad turística.

Palabras Clave: Análisis cuantitativo, Turismo, Competitividad

1. Introduction

Globally, tourism is one of the most increasingly relevant sectors of economic activity at the international, national, and regional levels. In this context, it is important to analyze the tourism competitiveness of local tourist centers. Based on this premise, it is necessary to determine how competitive local environments linked to tourism actually are. Conceptually, tourism competitiveness is understood as the ability of a tourist destination to generate the necessary attractions for tourists to enjoy a high-quality tourism offer. This, in turn, creates significant economic spillovers, which refers to the quantification of the total average monetary value, according to Secretaría de Fomento al Turismo (SEFOTUR, 2012–2018). These benefits manifest in terms of revenues for tourism-related economic units and expenditures by tourists, ultimately fostering a sense of belonging among visitors. The competitiveness of a tourist destination contributes to greater growth across different economic variables associated with tourism (Siles, 2016).

Moreover, it is necessary to analyze competitiveness at the local level due to its implications for the design of public policies from within the destinations themselves. This type of analysis can contribute to the reduction of negative social impacts generated by tourism and, conversely, promote the development of infrastructure and the improvement of tourism services. Additionally, competitiveness entails attracting and encouraging private and foreign investments that generate employment, foster a tourism-oriented identity, and offer diverse and appealing services for visitors—thereby strengthening tourism as a sector of economic activity.

Tourism competitiveness, as defined by Ritchie and Crouch (2000:137–152), refers to "the ability of a location to generate greater economic capacity and achieve sustained growth; in this way, the well-being of a place or region is achieved through the management of advantages and processes, attractions, aggressiveness, and proximity, integrating the relationships among these elements within an economic and social model." Tourism competitiveness is thus linked to the concept of a tourist destination. In this regard, González and Mendieta (2009:111–128) note that a tourist destination is "a geographical area with distinctive characteristics such as climate, culture, attractions, infrastructure, services, facilities, pricing, image, and management, all of which are positioned in the minds of consumers in market terms." The attributes of a tourist destination, in connection with competitiveness, are based on the natural and built resources it possesses, as well as the range of amenities and services intended to meet the needs of tourists or potential visitors. Ultimately, competitiveness is associated with the destination's attractiveness factors (Montaño, Pérez, & De la O, 2014).

Considering the above, the purpose of this study is to analyze the local competitiveness of a tourist destination undergoing development. It stems from the premise that empirical evidence on this topic exists mainly at the national or regional level, while studies at the local level remain limited.

Accordingly, this study poses two research questions: What factors could make Bahía de Kino, Sonora, a competitive destination at the regional level? And, what are the strongest and weakest factors that either hinder or facilitate the local tourism competitiveness? To answer these questions,

a research study was carried out, employing correlation coefficients as a basis for testing the hypothesis. The strength of the correlations was assessed as follows: very high 0.81–1.00, high 0.61–0.80, moderate 0.41–0.60, low 0.21–0.40, and very low 0.00–0.20. The hypothesis is accepted when the correlation value is at least 0.61, with a significance level of at least 95%. The study adopts a quantitative theoretical and methodological approach, which involved administering a survey to local stakeholders engaged in tourism promotion, tourism services, business owners and managers of hotels and restaurants, public officials, tourism students, among others. In the quantitative analysis phase aimed at measuring the competitiveness index, a correlation analysis was conducted on tourism-related variables such as infrastructure, tourism promotion, human capital development, and complementary services.

The objective of this article is to explore and develop a tourism competitiveness index for Bahía de Kino, Sonora, based on the perceptions of those involved in tourism activities. Bahía de Kino is considered one of the main tourist destinations in the state of Sonora. This study seeks to contribute to knowledge on tourism competitiveness by addressing existing gaps on the subject at the local level in Mexico.

2. Tourism in the global, national and local context

The Organizacion Mundial del Turismo (OMT) reported that Mexico rose from eighth to sixth place in international tourist arrivals, recording 39.3 million tourists in 2017. This positioned the country ahead of destinations such as the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Germany. According to the OMT Tourism Highlights 2018 Edition, these figures also reflect a 12% increase in the flow of international travelers (OMT, 2019).

These data highlight the growing significance of tourism as a global economic activity. Currently, tourism is estimated to contribute 10% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), generate 1 in every 11 jobs, account for 1.5 trillion dollars in exports, represent 7% of global exports, and contribute 30% of services exports (OMT, 2019). In Mexico, tourism represented 8.7% of national GDP in 2015 (Sectur, 2016).

Given such promising data, countries with a strong tourism orientation increasingly develop tourism development plans to attract more visitors each year. Mexico is an example of this, as it has implemented a series of plans, programs, regulations, and standards aimed at leveraging its tourism potential. These efforts have enabled the country to rank among the top 10 tourist destinations worldwide and to occupy the 22nd position in the Global Competitiveness Index for tourism, according to Foro Economico Mundial (FEM, 2017).

Understanding the social and economic context of Bahía de Kino is crucial due to its nature as a fishing village or *comisaría*, which, according to Article 197 of the Ley Orgánica de los Municipios (LOM), represents a decentralized administrative entity of municipal governments—in this case, the municipality of Hermosillo. One of the most evident issues is the scarcity of resources, which, when operating in a competitive and environmentally sustainable tourism framework, often neglects the aesthetic aspects of the locality.

Most economic activities in Bahía de Kino—whether through extraction, exploitation, or direct use—are dependent on coastal and marine natural resources. Fishing accounts for 46.35% of the total local economic output, followed by trade and services at 43.54%. Although the industrial and artisan sector only contributes 9.59%, it plays a crucial role as these activities are widely practiced throughout the town. The remaining 0.52% comes from other productive activities, including livestock and family orchards (INEGI, 2010).

3. Tourism competitiveness

Hassan (2000:239) defines tourism destination competitiveness as "the ability of a destination to create value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to its competitors". Similarly, D'Hauteserre (2000:23) describes destination competitiveness as "a destination's ability to maintain its market position and share or enhance it over time".

Within this framework, growing interest in identifying the key factors that determine the competitiveness of tourism destinations—particularly the incorporation of sustainability as a strategic condition—has led to the development of various conceptual models (Mazaro & Varzin,

2008:790).

Scientific contributions indicate that interest in tourism competitiveness has evolved over time, as evidenced by the work of (Bravo, 2004; Crouch and Ritchie, 1999; Daskalopoulou and Petrou, 2009; De Keyser and Vanhove, 1994; D'Hauteserre 2000, Dwyer and Kim, 2003; Dwyer et al. 2000, 2004; Enright and Newton, 2004; Faulkner et al., 1999; Flores and Barroso, 2009; Garau, 2006; Go and Govers, 2000; Gooroochurn and Sugiyarto, 2005; Hassan, 2000; Hong, 2009; Kim and Dwyer, 2003; Kozak and Rimmington, 1999; Mihalič, 2000; Monfort, 1999; Navickas and Malakauskaite, 2009; Pearce, 1997; Poon, 1993; Ritchie and Crouch, 2000, 2003; and Sánchez 2006).

Building upon these theoretical foundations, the key contributions of major tourism competitiveness models have been analyzed, outlining their strengths and limitations. As Ritchie and Crouch (2000:5) assert, competitiveness is "illusory without sustainability".

In this regard, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) argue that a competitive destination is one that promotes the highest possible level of well-being for its residents in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, they emphasize that a destination must be economically, ecologically, socially, culturally, and politically sustainable to be genuinely competitive (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:49).

4. Methodology

The proposed model (see Figure 1) draws from the theoretical contributions of the most influential literature and authors associated with the concept of tourism competitiveness. It is presented as a perception-based model that assesses highly specific aspects, incorporating various constructs and variables with a degree of validity across different types of results. In this context, authors such as Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Dwyer and Kim (2003) have developed leading global models of tourism competitiveness. Their frameworks include variables similar to those utilized in this study, which is why they are referenced as primary sources for their significant theoretical contributions to the global understanding of tourism competitiveness, particularly in Europe and the United States.

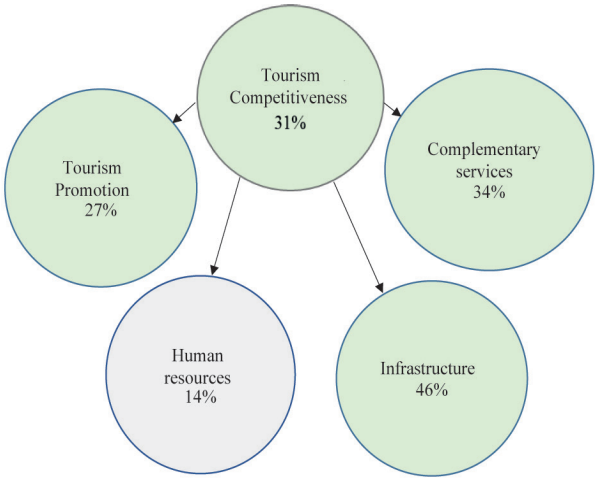
Fundamentally, the models proposed by these authors are based on four key variables: infrastructure, tourism promotion, human resource development, and complementary services. These variables were included as indicators in the instrument applied to residents involved in tourism-related activities in Bahía de Kino.

According to Miguel et al. (2014), the conceptualization of tourism competitiveness in their model has a more regional focus, as their research and model for Mexico used regional indicators by state.

Based on the theoretical framework established by these authors, the core of the problem statement and general objective is to correlate tourism competitiveness with the defined variables. This raises the question of why, in terms of tourism competitiveness, the locality of Bahía de Kino, Sonora, has undergone new forms of economic organization over time, driven by economic crises in Mexico. These crises have caused severe economic and social disruptions worldwide, and tourist destinations like Bahía de Kino have not been exempt. The impact of these economic crises persists today, and their effects remain evident in the locality.

Although there is extensive literature on tourism competitiveness, most approaches are grounded in diverse and heterogeneous contexts. In contrast, the model proposed in this article has been scarcely researched and theorized—especially considering its focus on a specific tourism locality in the state of Sonora.

Figure 1. Methodological model of tourism competitiveness in Bahía de Kino



Source: Own elaboration based on the tourism competitiveness and local sustainability survey of Bahía de Kino, analyzed using SPSS and EQS 6.1 software.

The model proposed for obtaining the tourism competitiveness index was designed based on variables and indicators. To measure competitiveness, four variables were considered: tourism promotion, human resources, tourism infrastructure, and tourism and complementary services. These were broken down as follows:

Tourism promotion: Includes indicators related to promotional efforts by different levels of government, the private sector, service companies, travel agencies, among others.

Human resources and training: Includes indicators related to educational institutions that train personnel for the tourism sector, employee training in tourism services, job creation linked to tourism, among others.

Infrastructure: Includes indicators related to roads, airports, marinas—elements that generally facilitate the mobility of tourists and local residents. This also includes foreign direct investment, national private investment, among others.

Tourism and complementary services: Includes indicators on the sufficiency of hotels, motels, bars, restaurants, among others.

A survey-based instrument was designed consisting of 60 items. Each variable evaluated contained various indicators, which are detailed in (table 4) where most items were quantified using a Likert scale. The survey was conducted in the tourist locality during 2018 with a sample of 120 individuals. The instrument was administered to individuals involved in tourism and commerce, those responsible for tourism promotion in the public sector, and tourism students. Overall, the sample was selected to ensure participants had direct involvement with the tourism sector. A convenience sampling approach was used, aiming to reflect the professionalization of human resources involved in tourism, as well as participation in the dimensions of infrastructure, mobility, and complementary tourism services.

The main assumption is that tourism competitiveness must exhibit a positive level of concordance among the variables that comprise it. Tourism competitiveness includes: the number of tourism-related businesses, human resources and their professionalization, the complementary services associated with tourism, tourism promotion, and the level of infrastructure. A comparison was conducted among the correlation results of the aforementioned variables to determine their interrelations and the degree of correlation among them, which was used to derive the tourism competitiveness index for Bahía de Kino. From the proposed methodological model for measuring tourism competitiveness, exploratory and confirmatory analyses were derived based on the data obtained through the quantitative instrument. The variables with the greatest impact on tourism competitiveness were identified, and coefficients obtained through SPSS version 21 were used to conduct reliability tests, exploratory analysis, and confirmatory analysis to validate the quantitative instrument. Finally, the relevant correlations were carried out to obtain Pearson correlation coefficients. These correlations are assumed to represent the tourism competitiveness index. This study has a correlational scope, as it was structured as a structural equation model. The instrument used was Encuesta Competitividad Turística en las Localidades Turísticas en el Norte de México, applied to 120 participants linked to the tourism sector. The survey was developed out of the need to measure the tourism competitiveness index at the local level based on the perceptions of stakeholders involved in tourism activities.

This case also incorporates the concept of benchmarking applied to the tourism destination. As proposed by Kozak (2004), this approach involves sensitivity to the identification of political, social, environmental, and technological opportunities. In the case of Bahía de Kino, the measurement of customer satisfaction falls outside the scope of this article. However, the social or sociodemographic variables of the respondents are presented in table 1. Other variables—such as the political dimension, explained through tourism promotion from the perspective of local and state governments (see table 4), and the technological and environmental dimensions—are excluded from the research scope.

The sociodemographic characteristics of the Bahía de Kino residents who participated in the survey conducted in November 2018 are as follows:

Table 1. Survey participant structure in Bahía de Kino.

Sex		Marital status	
Male	54%	Single	67%
Female	46%	Married	43%
Age		**Occupation**	
18-23	20%	Commerce	24%
24-29	36%	Fishing	9%
30-35	32%	Employee	55%
36-40	12%	Students	12%
Place of birth		**Income (Mexican pesos)**	
Bahía de Kino locality	59%	2294-4598	48%
Other locality in Sonora	31%	4998-6882	34%
Other Mexican state	6%	6882 or more	18%
Another country	4%	more	0%

Source: Own elaboration using the survey on tourism competitiveness and local sustainability in Bahía de Kino, analyzed with SPSS software.

4.1 Exploratory factor analysis: Bahía de Kino Case

In exploratory factor analysis, the primary goal is often to test the reliability of a statistical model through constructs and dimensions. In this case, the model of tourism competitiveness and local sustainability presents four constructs that, to some extent, demonstrate reliability; additional relevant values are also shown.

Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis of tourism competitiveness and local sustainability in Bahía de Kino

Factors or constructors	Eigen value	% of cumulative variance explained	Cron bach's Alpha	Number of items	Kmo	Bartlett's sphericity
Tourism	2.273	53.44	0.604	4	0.752	276.774
Supply	2.615	50.919	0.722	4	0.798	289.733
Tourism promotion	1.613	60.323	0.710	4	0.629	239.409
Human resources	1.929	37.189	0.676	3	0.644	54.64

Source: Own elaboration using the survey on tourism competitiveness and local sustainability in Bahía de Kino, analyzed with SPSS software.

In general, the tourism construct presents a Cronbach's Alpha of 60.4%, indicating that the construct or dimension is reliable. To reinforce this reliability, eigenvalues greater than one are considered; in this case, there are three such values, explaining 53.44% of the variance. Additionally, the KMO value is 0.75; the closer to one, the stronger the reliability, and Bartlett's Sphericity is 276, which is acceptable.

The supply and infrastructure construct shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 72%, indicating reliability. Eigenvalues greater than one are considered, in this case two, explaining 50.93% of the variance. The KMO value is 0.79, and Bartlett's Sphericity is 289, also acceptable.

The tourism promotion construct presents a Cronbach's Alpha of 71%, confirming its reliability. One eigenvalue greater than one is considered, explaining 65.32% of the variance. The KMO is 0.629, and Bartlett's Sphericity is 239, considered acceptable.

The human resources training construct has a Cronbach's Alpha of 67%, also indicating reliability. Two eigenvalues greater than one are considered, explaining 54.18% of the variance. The KMO value is 0.64, and Bartlett's Sphericity is 44, considered acceptable (see table 2).

4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis: Bahía de Kino Case

In the confirmatory factor analysis of tourism competitiveness and local sustainability, it is confirmed that the measurement instrument indeed measures what it is intended to measure through six dimensions. In this case, the general model of tourism competitiveness provides the following results: the Mardia coefficient is 9.62%, which is greater than the cutoff point of 7; therefore, the robust method is used. The Satorra-Bentler chi-square is 70.666 with 44 degrees of freedom and a probability of 0.018%, yielding acceptable goodness-of-fit indices: NNFI at 90% (the closer to one, the better), CFI at 93%, RMSEA at 6% (the closer to zero, the better), and Cronbach's Alpha at 96%.

For the tourism variable in the general model, the following results were obtained: the Mardia coefficient is 3.04%, below the cutoff point of 7, so the maximum likelihood method is used. The

normalized chi-square is 1.884 with 3 degrees of freedom and a probability of 5.3%, with acceptable goodness-of-fit indices: NNFI at 99%, CFI at 100%, RMSEA at 0%, and Cronbach's Alpha at 82%.

The supply and infrastructure variable in the general model presents the following: the Mardia coefficient is 4.44%, below the cutoff of 7, and thus the maximum likelihood method is used. The normalized chi-square is 0.401 with a probability of 7.6%, with acceptable goodness-of-fit indices: NNFI at 100%, CFI at 100%, RMSEA at 0%, and Cronbach's Alpha at 81%.

Tourism promotion, as presented in a general model, shows the following results: the Mardia coefficient is 3.88%, which is below the cut-off point of 7; therefore, the maximum likelihood method is applied. In this way, the regular chi-square value is 0.0050 with 1 degree of freedom and a probability of 7.5%. The model exhibits acceptable goodness-of-fit indices, including an NNFI of 100% (the closer to one, the better), a CFI of 100% (the closer to one, the better), and an RMSEA of 0% (the closer to zero, the better). Cronbach's alpha is 89%.

In the case of the variable "human resources training," as presented in a general model, the results are as follows: the Mardia coefficient is 1.62%, also below the cut-off point of 7; thus, the maximum likelihood method is applied. The chi-square value is 1.64 with 2 degrees of freedom and a probability of 2.1%. The model also presents acceptable goodness-of-fit indices: NNFI at 100% (the closer to one, the better), CFI at 100% (the closer to one, the better), and RMSEA at 0% (the closer to zero, the better). Cronbach's alpha is 71%.

The model of local sustainability presents the following results: the Mardia coefficient is -3.5%, which remains below the cut-off point of 7. Consequently, the maximum likelihood method is applied. The chi-square value is 6.75 with 5 degrees of freedom and a probability of 2.2%. The model demonstrates acceptable fit indices: NNFI at 98% (the closer to one, the better), CFI at 97% (the closer to one, the better), and RMSEA at 3.8% (the closer to zero, the better). Cronbach's alpha is 48%. This variable was not included in table 4, as its confirmatory analysis showed a negative incidence (see table 3).

5. Analysis and discussion of results in Bahía de Kino

Based on the exploratory and confirmatory analysis of the dimensions established in the measurement instrument, bivariate correlations were carried out to obtain Pearson's determination coefficient. According to theory, Pearson's coefficient is useful for determining the tourism competitiveness index at the local level. This index is crucial for this study as it allows for the hypothesis to be tested.

Table 3. Confirmatory factor analysis of tourism competitiveness and local sustainability in Bahía de Kino.

Factors or constructors	Mardia	Chi-square (or Chi square of Satorra-Bentler)	Degrees of freedom	p	NNFI	CFI	RMSEA	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Competitiveness	9.6283	66.466	44	0.0172	0.901	0.937	0.068	0.965	12
Tourism	3.0417	1.814	3	0.5531	0.911	1	0	0.821	5
Supply	4.4938	0.401	2	0.7601	1	1	0	0.811	4
Tourism promotion	3.8653	0.005	1	0.7563	1	1	0	0.892	4
Human resources	1.0328	1.646	2	0.2177	1	1	0	0.715	4

Source: Own elaboration using the survey on tourism competitiveness and local sustainability in Bahía de Kino, analyzed with SPSS and EQS 6.1 software.

The coefficient presents results for the various dimensions analyzed, and the index is derived from an average of the obtained correlations.

In summary, the variables that make up the index include:1) tourism promotion, which involves federal, state, and municipal governments, as well as travel agencies and tour operators; 2) human resources training, encompassing all institutions providing education related to tourism; 3) infrastructure, referring broadly to all facilities and equipment available to tourists from arrival to departure; and, 4) complementary services; which are central to lodging, gastronomy, and retail services.

The study of tourism competitiveness is a tool for evaluating the main variables that comprise it. It also provides information useful for decision-making, especially for improving public policies aimed at tourism, and for identifying strengths and weaknesses to act accordingly.

In this case, the evaluation of tourism competitiveness in Bahía de Kino displays the various correlations achieved by the variables when the model was run. This analysis serves as a basis to understand the development level of the destination and its current and potential economic capabilities.

The research conducted is based on the analysis and weighting of four competitiveness factors defined by regional tourism competitiveness models, as outlined by authors such as Miguel et al. (2014). The hypothesis testing is performed through the correlation coefficients, evaluated as follows: Very high 0.81–1.00, high 0.61–0.80, moderate 0.41–0.60, low 0.21–0.40, and very low 0.00–0.20. The hypothesis is accepted if the correlation is 0.61 or higher, with at least 95% significance.

In table 4, a breakdown of variables, indicators, and associated values that constitute the tourism competitiveness index of Bahía de Kino is presented. It highlights the highest values where the destination is strongest and the lowest values where weaknesses remain. The weakest components of the index are the complementary services, including lodging, gastronomy, and entertainment, which reflect a questionable quality of the tourism offer. In the human resources variable, issues are evident regarding the lack of training and the low wages of staff working in tourism services.

Table 4. Correlation of variable in the tourism competitiveness index of Bahía de Kino.

Variables or constructors	Indicators	Values (Pearson correlation)
Tourism Promotion	State government promotion	.23
	Municipal government promotion	.27
	Travel agency promotion	.32
	Tours	.27
Human Resources Training	Employment	.10
	Salaries	.12
	University-based training	.19
	Professional training	.16
Infrastructure	Roads	.49
	Airports	.38
	Foreign Direct Investment	.46
	Private Investment	.52
Complementary Services	Hotels	.48
	Motels	.28
	Bars	.18
	Restaurants	.45

Source: Own elaboration with preliminary results from the tourism competitiveness and local sustainability survey applied in Bahía de Kino.

Based on the specific results shown in table 4, the first variable, tourism promotion, consists of four indicators with the following Pearson correlations: .23 for state government promotion, .27 for municipal government, .32 for travel agencies, and .27 for tour operators.

Likewise, the variable human resources training presents correlations of .10 for employment, .12 for salaries, .16 for training, and only .19 for university-provided education.

The infrastructure variable shows the highest correlation, with .49 for roads. Regarding airports, Hermosillo's airport is used as a reference, with a correlation of .38. Private and foreign direct investment displays moderate correlations, one slightly below and one slightly above .50, indicating an acceptable but still insufficient investment level.

Finally, the complementary services variable presents the most substantial indicators: .48 for hotels, .45 for restaurants, .28 for motels, and .18 for bars—representing the lowest values in this category.

Based on general aspects of tourism—economic, social, environmental, and local experience—it is ultimately suggested that Bahía de Kino holds a privileged position due to its tourism potential. However, the variable and indicator values do not sufficiently explain the potential scope of Pearson's correlation, as they fall well below the average required for establishing moderate and satisfactory results. Nevertheless, obtaining this type of result is advantageous because it clearly identifies areas of opportunity for tourism development in Bahía de Kino. Likewise, these findings offer a new perspective for redirecting public policy strategies for this destination, which currently presents a tourism competitiveness index averaging 30% (see table 4), a preliminary result close to the numerical mean. Its greatest strengths lie in complementary services focused on tourist care and in tourism infrastructure.

Although there are studies related to tourism in Bahía de Kino, the lack of research specifically focused on tourism competitiveness in this location limits opportunities for scholarly dialogue with other authors. Therefore, this type of study may be considered pioneering within this area of inquiry.

6. Conclusions

As a result of the interaction of the different components of the quantitative model, it is shown that Bahía de Kino, Sonora is a tourist destination with a low competitive structure. This is due to multiple factors, including the scarcity of hotel and restaurant complexes, which are insufficient during high season or weekends, resulting in an economic spillover limited mainly to weekend tourism. On the other hand, the road infrastructure provides easy access for local, national, and international tourists, especially from the southwestern United States.

Moreover, tourism promotion is insufficient. However, being one of the most important and closest sun-and-beach tourist locations to the United States and other states bordering Sonora gives it an added value compared to other destinations in the same region. Another important variable, complementary services, is one of the most impactful factors based on the correlation coefficients. In the specific case of Bahía de Kino, Sonora, survey respondents highlighted the role of local universities in tourism training. These institutions provide quality education for students in the tourism field, which is reflected in the increasing qualification of workers in the tourism sector and the good customer service offered in restaurants, hotels, rental homes, and local businesses—encouraging local, regional, and international tourists to return.

However, the weakest component in the correlation coefficients indicates that the most visible sectors of tourism—such as hotels and restaurants—require more investment and involvement at different levels to improve the destination's image and the services provided to tourists.

According to the research questions posed and the objective aimed at measuring competitiveness, Bahía de Kino, Sonora is a developing tourist destination. The challenges and opportunities arising from its natural features (such as sun and beach) serve as key attractions for a growing number of visitors. The components of the correlations, based on the perceptions of the stakeholders who participated in the study, show that the locality is developing, demonstrating strong potential in several variables. The combination of these correlation components for Bahía de Kino, Sonora, allows us to envision the level of competitiveness the destination could achieve and to predict which factors need improvement through a reorientation of public policies applied to different tourist destinations.

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