

Development of tourism and tourism services in the canton of Nobol

Desarrollo del turismo y de los servicios turísticos en el canton de Nobol

Ana Luisa López Brunett*
Genesis Asuncion*

ABSTRACT

The study seeks to investigate tourism development in Cantón Nobol, identify the most popular services among visitors, and examine areas for improvement in the local tourism sector. Qualitative and quantitative research is employed. The study sample includes tourists between the ages of 13 and 70 to ensure a diverse representation, while data collection is done through a digital survey using Google Forms. The results respond to the TES research project, "Tourism strategy of products and services for the strengthening of tourism micro-enterprises and SMEs in Nobol Canton". They help to have a complete vision of the perception of tourism and quality of life in Nobol Canton, pointing out both strengths and opportunities for improvement to consolidate its position as a desired tourist destination. Although Cantón Nobol already has a solid tourism base and well evaluated services, there are still areas with potential for growth and improvement within the regional tourism sector.

Keywords: Tourism, Development, Services, Nobol, Growth

RESUMEN

El estudio pretende investigar el desarrollo turístico en Cantón Nobol, identificar los servicios más

MSc. Instituto Superior Tecnológico Universitario Espíritu Santo, alopez@tes.edu.ec, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7040-3807>

MSc. Instituto Superior Tecnológico Universitario Espíritu Santo, gcasuncion@tes.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2448-716X>

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populares entre los visitantes y examinar las áreas de mejora en el sector turístico local. Se emplea investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa. La muestra del estudio incluye turistas de entre 13 y 70 años para garantizar una representación diversa, mientras que la recogida de datos se realiza mediante una encuesta digital utilizando Google Forms. Los resultados responden al proyecto de investigación TES, "Estrategia turística de productos y servicios para el fortalecimiento de las microempresas y PYMES turísticas del Cantón Nobol". Ayudan a tener una visión completa de la percepción del turismo y la calidad de vida en Cantón Nobol, señalando tanto fortalezas como oportunidades de mejora para consolidar su posición como destino turístico deseado. Si bien el Cantón Nobol ya cuenta con una sólida base turística y servicios bien evaluados, aún existen áreas con potencial de crecimiento y mejora dentro del sector turístico regional.

Palabras clave: Turismo, Desarrollo, Servicios, Nobol, Crecimiento

INTRODUCTION

Given the growing interest in the tourism potential of Canton Nobol, there is an urgent need to investigate and understand in depth the current state of tourism development and services offered in this region. This study is presented as a unique opportunity to explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that characterize tourism in Nobol. It also provides the possibility of identifying areas for improvement and potential, with the ultimate goal of promoting sustainable, inclusive and quality tourism that benefits both the local community and visitors.

The problem identified in this study lies in the lack of exposure of certain tourist attractions in the canton of Nobol, where the information available is limited mostly to the Sanctuary of Narcisa de Jesus, leaving other equally relevant attractions of the town in the background. This situation implies a loss of opportunities to promote and enjoy the tourist wealth of the canton in its entirety, which suggests the need for greater diversification in the dissemination of the different destinations and experiences that Nobol has to offer its visitors.

The problems identified in Nobol Canton reveal a worrisome situation regarding the lack of exposure and promotion of its various tourist attractions. In a scenario where only information about the Sanctuary of Narcisa de Jesus is emphasized, other attractions of equal importance are relegated to the background, thus depriving them of

the attention and recognition they deserve. This limitation in the dissemination of the tourism offer not only reduces the opportunities to enjoy the unique experiences that the canton has to offer, but also represents a loss of economic potential for the local community and an obstacle for the integral development of tourism in the region.

Lack of exposure of lesser-known tourist attractions can also contribute to saturation and congestion at popular sites, such as the Narcisa de Jesus Sanctuary. Excessive concentration of tourists in a single destination can generate negative impacts on the visitor experience, such as long lines, crowds and a sense of saturation that diminishes the enjoyment of the place. At the same time, this situation can cause an imbalance in the distribution of the economic benefits of tourism, concentrating them in a few places while others go unused, which affects the sustainability and equity of tourism development in the canton.

In addition, the failure to diversify and promote tourism can limit the knowledge and appreciation of the cultural, natural and historical richness of Cantón Nobol. By focusing exclusively on a single attraction, the opportunity to highlight the variety of experiences available, such as a visit to Hacienda San José, river trips on the Daule River, or the celebration of local festivities, is lost. This lack of visibility not only affects the external perception of the canton as a tourist destination, but also reduces the opportunity to generate pride and a sense of belonging among the residents themselves, who may not be aware of all the options available in their own surroundings.

The objective is to inquire about tourism development in Cantón Nobol and identify the services that are most popular with visitors. It is also proposed to explore the areas that require improvement within the tourism sector of the town. This approach seeks to provide a holistic view of the tourism dynamics in Nobol, thus allowing the formulation of effective strategies aimed at strengthening the tourist experience and promoting sustainable development in the region.

It is imperative to inquire about tourism development in Cantón Nobol for several fundamental reasons. First, tourism plays a crucial role in the economic growth and sustainable development of local communities (Villacis, L. 2023). By understanding the current state of tourism in Nobol, opportunities can be identified to strengthen and diversify tourism offerings, which in turn can generate employment, foster entrepreneurship, and increase income in the region. In addition, well-managed tourism can contribute to the conservation of cultural and natural heritage, thus promoting the preservation of local resources and identity.

In order to carry out this research, it is essential to understand how visitors perceive the tourism services available in Nobol Canton. Identifying the services that are most popular with tourists provides valuable information about the strengths of the destination, allowing these areas to be enhanced to improve the visitor experience. In addition, this analysis can help highlight the unique and differentiating aspects of Nobol, which can be key to attracting new visitors and fostering the loyalty of repeat tourists.

Exploring areas for improvement within Nobol's tourism sector is essential to ensure balanced and sustainable tourism development in the locality. By identifying and addressing existing deficiencies, such as the lack of promotion of certain tourist spots or insufficient infrastructure and services, corrective measures can be implemented to improve the quality and competitiveness of the destination. In addition, this research provides a solid basis for long-term strategic planning, helping to guide investments and public policies aimed at strengthening tourism as an engine of development in Cantón Nobol.

Understanding the different conceptions or points of view of specialists in the field is fundamental to understand the relevance of the analysis of tourism growth and its capacity to revitalize a specific sector or community, generating both economic and tourism opportunities regardless of the geographic location to which this impulse is directed.

According to Suty, H., et al. (2023), tourism has emerged as a socioeconomic activity of great global significance, causing significant repercussions in several areas, ranging from the environment, culture and society to, of course, the economy. At the environmental level, tourism can have both positive and negative effects, ranging from the conservation of natural areas to environmental degradation due to overexploitation. In addition, the cultural exchange and interaction between people from different backgrounds that occurs in tourism contributes to cultural diversity and mutual understanding between different communities.

Chafra, Z. (2022) approaches the definition of tourism from an integral perspective that highlights the diversity of tourism experiences and products available in the region. It emphasizes the importance of understanding tourism not only as the simple act of visiting a place, but as an enriching experience that involves interaction with local culture, nature and communities.

The author highlights the need to develop a varied and authentic tourism offer that reflects the identity and values of the Canton, thus promoting sustainable and responsible tourism that contributes to the economic and social development of the region, thus also opening the way for this type of proposal to be developed in different destinations.

When thinking about tourism, it is most common to imagine people who travel to explore places of interest, visit friends or family, vacation and enjoy moments of fun. These tourists may spend their free time participating in a variety of activities such as sports, sunbathing, socializing, singing, hiking, walking, reading or simply enjoying the environment, as defined by Morocho, D. (2014) in his study on the Evaluation of the Tourism Potential of the Nuevo Rocafuerte Parish, Province of Orellana for the Design of a Sustainable Tourism Product.

Authors such as Ruiz, D. (2017), even mention to us that, the activities carried out by individuals during their trips and stays in places other than their usual environment, for a period of time that does not exceed one year, for purposes that may include leisure,

business and other reasons, is also considered as tourist activities or ways of calling tourism.

For Anchundia, G. (2023), demand behavior is the set of actions, choices and preferences that visitors make when planning, organizing and carrying out their trips to this city. This includes aspects such as the selection of destinations, the choice of tourist activities and experiences, the factors that influence decision-making, as well as spending habits and frequency of visit. The study aims to understand the interaction of these elements and their impact on tourism demand in Manta, providing essential data to develop strategies for tourism promotion and development.

The quoted by Cajilema, F. (2022), tells us that alternative tourism is derived from adventure tourism, where the traveler has the opportunity to find and satisfy his quest to improve his physical condition, reduce stress and, therefore, improve his overall well-being. In addition, he can experience a sense of accomplishment by overcoming a challenge posed by nature, where the experience is limited solely to the interaction between the tourist and the natural environment. Therefore, sports competitions or activities considered "extreme", where the challenge is focused on time or overcoming the human being itself, are excluded.

For Cobeña, M. (2018), implementing an effective tourism management model contributes to increasing the influx of international tourists, optimizing the preservation of natural resources, and diversifying the activities available to visitors, such as exploring waterfalls and rivers, participating in local events, contemplating landscapes, and appreciating nature, all without causing negative impacts on the environment.

Not only can this increase international tourist arrivals, but it also allows local natural resources to be protected more efficiently. In addition, diversifying the activities available to visitors, from exploring waterfalls and rivers to participating in local events, enriches the tourism experience and promotes a deeper appreciation of nature, all without compromising the integrity of the environment.

As found by Serrano, A., & Pucha, E. (2017), tourism demand involves the movement of people to different destinations and their stay in them, which includes aspects such as the type of accommodation and the activities carried out during the visit. In addition, it encompasses all goods and services necessary for the trip from the place of residence to the destination, as well as during the stay at the destination.

According to the authors, tourism demand also includes all the goods and services required both for travel from the place of residence to the destination and to satisfy needs during the stay at the destination. In other words, it encompasses all facets of the trip, from planning to the experience at the destination.

The perspective of Guerra, M. (2021), gives initiative to other types of tourism such as inclusive tourism, which is defined as a form of tourism that guarantees equal opportunities for all people, allowing them to participate fully in all tourism activities in a safe, comfortable, autonomous and normalized manner. In addition, it seeks to

generate economic profitability for both people with disabilities and companies in the tourism sector.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To address the research process on Tourism Development and Tourism Services in Nobol Canton, an approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods has been designed. This strategic choice is based on the need to obtain a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the tourism situation in the locality, as well as the perceptions and experiences of visitors. According to Faneite, S. (2023), qualitative research will allow in-depth exploration of tourists' motivations, opinions and behaviors, while quantitative research will provide numerical data to support and complement these findings.

As for the study sample, it has been defined that the participants will be tourists between the ages of 13 and 70. This selection is based on the premise of capturing a wide range of perspectives and experiences, ranging from adolescents to older adults, who may have different interests, preferences and needs in terms of tourism. This diversity in the sample ensures a more complete and accurate representation of the tourism population of Cantón Nobol.

For data collection, specific techniques will be used, including observation sheets and records, as well as a results tabulation system to organize and analyze the information collected (González, J. 2020). In addition, a digital survey instrument created through Google Forms will be used. This tool offers a number of advantages, such as ease of access and participation for respondents, the ability to collect data efficiently, and the ability to generate detailed reports and statistical analysis from the results obtained.

The research process on Tourism Development and Tourism Services in Nobol Canton is based on an integrated approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods. The study sample includes tourists of various ages to ensure a broad and varied representation, while the data collection techniques, along with the use of a digital survey through Google Forms, will facilitate the collection and analysis of relevant information to understand and improve tourism in the locality.

RESULTS

The results obtained have revealed that the canton of Nobol offers a detailed perspective on various aspects of life and tourism in this region. Among the questions posed, one of the most salient inquired about satisfaction with the quality of local agricultural products such as the great variety of fruits: oranges, watermelons, mangoes, plums, etc. The data showed that a significant 65.7% of the respondents were satisfied, while a remarkable 31.4% were very satisfied, thus showing a majority level of approval.

Similarly, the accessibility of tourist attractions, such as the banks of the Daule River, was explored, and it was found that a considerable 48.6% consider them to be accessible, while an encouraging 34.3% perceive them as very accessible, suggesting a tourist

infrastructure that is well valued by the population. In addition, the quality of the Nachita river tours was evaluated, obtaining a majority positive response, with 62.9% rating them as good and an encouraging 34.3% considering them excellent, which highlights the general satisfaction with this tourist offer.

Regarding visits to emblematic tourist sites in Cantón Nobol, such as Garza Roja, Pechiche and Tierra Viva, it was observed that a significant 45.7% of respondents reported an excellent experience, while an encouraging 40% expressed their desire to visit them in the future, indicating a potential for growth in local tourism. In relation to the importance of the sanctification of Narcisa de Jesus for religious tourism in the region, a mostly positive opinion was observed, with a remarkable 65.7% considering it very important, which underlines its relevance in the local tourism dynamics.

In the religious sphere, participation in the festivities in honor of Narcisa de Jesus was inquired about, where it was noted that a significant 25.7% described the experience as memorable, while a significant 45.7% expressed interest in attending in the future, thus indicating a deep-rooted connection to local traditions. The visit to Hacienda San José was also the subject of analysis, with a significant 57.1% expressing interest in visiting in the future, suggesting a potential tourist attraction that deserves to be explored.

These results help us justify what Pérez, A., & Sarabia, M. (2022) stated in their study entitled "Alternative tourism: religious tourism activities as a development strategy for Nobol canton", where they considered it imperative to examine the level of importance that tourists attach to the Nobol Sanctuary. It was found that visitors consider this sanctuary to be the canton's main tourist attraction, which suggests the need to develop promotional strategies focused on this resource. In addition, it is crucial to ensure proper conservation and maintenance so that the sanctuary can withstand the impact of tourism.

On the other hand, the residents pointed out that the Fiesta de Santa Narcisa de Jesús is the festival that receives the largest number of visitors. This situation merits a promotion and diffusion at national level, as long as the necessary infrastructure and conditions are in place to offer quality tourist services in accordance with the influx of people that could arrive.

As for the Museum and Chapel "Narcisa de Jesus", it was found that the majority of respondents, 51.4% described it as interesting and well maintained, although a small percentage of 17.1% suggested that it could benefit from improvements. When asked if they would recommend Cantón Nobol as a tourist destination, an encouraging 54.3% responded affirmatively, while a significant 28.6% would do so with some reservations, suggesting a generally positive perception of the place.

In the SWOT analysis conducted by Lomas, V., & Ibarra, K. (2022). In their study on local tourism management for the territorial development of Nobol Canton, they manage to specify one of the shortcomings of the canton, which is related to the lack of comprehensive strategies for tourism promotion and dissemination. Although there is a website, it focuses only on the main attraction, the Santa Narcisa de Jesús National

Sanctuary. However, the destination lacks a centralized space where you can consult the activities available when visiting Nobol, as well as the events scheduled for the patron saint or canton festivities.

These findings are useful for contrasting tourists' impressions of their experience in Nobol with other suggestions aimed at boosting tourism. For example, improving the area's publicity, which should focus not only on the Santa Narcisa de Jesús National Sanctuary, but on all the attractions available in the region.

The results obtained through the survey provide a comprehensive view of the dynamics of both daily life and tourism in the canton of Nobol. One of the highlights of the research focused on the perception of the quality of local agricultural products, which include a wide range of fruits such as oranges, watermelons, mangoes, plums, among others. These findings reveal a significant trend towards satisfaction among respondents, with a notable proportion expressing levels of both satisfaction and high satisfaction, suggesting a generalized endorsement of the quality of agricultural products available in the region.

The authors examined the accessibility of the canton's tourist attractions, including the banks of the Daule River. They observed that a considerable proportion of respondents considered these places to be accessible. These findings indicate a positive valuation of the tourism infrastructure by the local population. Likewise, the perception of the Nachita river tours was evaluated, and it was found that most of the participants rated them as good or excellent; this result highlights the generalized satisfaction with the tourism offer related to these tours.

The analysis of the results revealed that the visit to the emblematic tourist sites of Cantón Nobol generated an excellent experience for a significant portion of the respondents. In addition, an encouraging number expressed interest in visiting these sites in the future, suggesting a potential for growth in local tourism. Regarding the importance of the sanctification of Narcisa de Jesús for religious tourism in the region, a mostly positive trend was observed among the participants, highlighting its relevance in the local tourism dynamics.

With respect to participation in the festivities in honor of Narcisa de Jesús in the survey received a significant response, with a considerable percentage describing the experience as memorable and another important percentage showing interest in attending in the future, which supports the deep-rooted connection with local traditions. Likewise, the high proportion of respondents expressing interest in visiting Hacienda San José reinforces the idea of a potential tourist attraction in the region, coinciding with the need identified by Pérez, A., & Sarabia, M. (2022), to develop promotional strategies focused on the Nobol Sanctuary and ensure its adequate conservation to sustain the impact of tourism.

The results obtained regarding the "Narcisa de Jesús" Museum and Chapel show a mostly positive perception among respondents, with more than half describing it as interesting and well maintained. However, a significant percentage suggests that it could benefit

from improvements, which coincides with the shortcoming identified by Lomas, V., & Ibarra, K. (2022), in their study; the lack of a broad strategy for tourism promotion and dissemination, as noted by the authors, is reflected in the need for greater attention to other attractions in the canton beyond the Santuario Nacional Santa Narcisa de Jesús. This finding underscores the importance of diversifying tourism offerings and promoting them effectively to maximize the region's tourism potential.

Further studies on the development of tourism and tourism services in Cantón Nobol present an invaluable opportunity to delve deeper into various aspects of this key sector. Questions of interest could include the impact of tourism on the local economy, the perception of residents and tourists on the quality of tourism services offered, the effectiveness of promotion and marketing strategies, as well as the identification of possible areas for improvement in tourism infrastructure and management.

This research would not only contribute to a more complete understanding of the current situation of tourism in Nobol, but would also provide crucial insights for the design of policies and actions aimed at enhancing this sector in a sustainable and beneficial way for the local community.

CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained through the study on the Development of Tourism and Tourism Services in Nobol Canton provide a comprehensive and revealing vision of the current state of this important industry in the region. First, the positive assessment of the local tourism infrastructure stands out, especially in terms of accessibility to attractions, such as the banks of the Daule River, which suggests an environment conducive to enjoyment and exploration by visitors. In addition, the general satisfaction with the Nachita river tours highlights the quality of the tourism offer related to this activity, which contributes to enriching the tourist experience in the canton.

On the other hand, the research also reveals a highly satisfactory tourism experience for a significant portion of respondents during their visit to Nobol Canton's emblematic sites. This positive perception, along with the expressed interest in revisiting these places in the future, points to a potential for growth in local tourism and highlights the importance of continuing to promote and preserve these key destinations for attracting visitors.

However, areas for improvement are identified within Nobol's tourism sector. Despite the mostly positive perception of the "Narcisa de Jesús" Museum and Chapel, there is a clear need to implement improvements to optimize its offer and promotion. This lack of a comprehensive strategy for tourism promotion and dissemination, as pointed out by the authors, highlights the importance of diversifying the tourism offer and promoting it effectively to maximize the region's tourism potential.

In conclusion, while Cantón Nobol has a solid tourism base and well-valued services, there are opportunities to further strengthen and improve the tourism offerings in the region. This study provides valuable guidance for future actions aimed at promoting

sustainable, inclusive, and quality tourism in Nobol that benefits both visitors and the local community.

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