

THE THEORY OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE, APPLIED TO THE IMAGE OF THE AGUA BLANCA COMMUNITY AND ITS EFFECT ON TOURIST SATISFACTION

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Summary

In the present research, the elements that constitute the image of the Agua Blanca Community, as a tourist destination, were studied, taking into account the impact they generate in the people who visit it and how they influence the process of satisfaction of the service provider and subsequent recommendation of the destination. The study is based on the theory of cognitive dissonance of the author León Festinger, the image of destiny is analyzed from three stages that are: expectation (before), perception (during) and experience (after); The first stage analyzes the factors involved in the destination selection process, the second stage indicates the perception that

the tourist had at the time of choosing the destination and if what he is living agrees with what he expected and in the third stage it is determined if his experience was satisfactory. In turn, this study was framed in the methodology of descriptive research and data from official bibliographic sources. Due to the health crisis, virtual interviews were conducted with the actors responsible for tourism activity and virtual surveys were conducted with national and foreign tourists who were registered in the community's database. With the results obtained, it was possible to analyze the image of the community and its influence on the satisfaction of tourists. As a proposal, strategies supported by Information Technologies are proposed, which will help strengthen the tourist image of the Agua Blanca Community, considering the experience of visitors to contribute to the development of the local tourism market.

Keywords: customer satisfaction, tourist image, tourist experience, GIS, Information Technologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourist image is a topic that has been studied in recent decades, so it is essential to study the factors that influence the image of a destination to meet the needs of tourists. That said, the research is about the analysis of the image of the Agua Blanca Community and how this influences the satisfaction process of the tourists who visit it. Therefore, the theory of cognitive dissonance has been used to evaluate the image from three stages that allow analyzing how tourists know about the community before visiting it, when they went to the place they had perception and then evaluate whether or not their experience was satisfactory.

The aim of the above is to evaluate how the image of the community is positioned in the minds of people and influence this to be one of the most representative communities of Ecuador, recognized for its culture, tradition, sites, activities and service provided within it. In addition, identify the factors that need to be reinforced so that the image of the community is not affected and positively influences the tourists who visit it.

It is necessary to mention that the tourism industry has been affected by the health crisis, however, for the reactivation of the sec

The competent authorities are developing biosecurity measures that allow tourism service providers to provide a quality service and guarantee the safety of tourists who visit them. In the case of the community, the reactivation of its services will be close, as soon as they are ready to adapt to the new tourist modality and thus preserve the image they have and reinforce in some aspects, in order to positively influence the perception of tourists who visit it.

Finally, the Agua Blanca community can be valued as a destination with great tourist potential; for the culture and tradition they have preserved throughout history. This is how, reinforcing some factors, quality services will be provided to improve the experience of tourists who visit it and they can return or recommend. In addition, it is necessary to have the support of different entities interested in the tourism development of the community.

Theoretical and Practical Implications of the Study

The present study is based on the theory of cognitive dissonance of the author León Festinger, which is associated with tourism in 1957, in order to contrast the knowledge that a person has when choosing a destination based on their expectations and if the experience they live produces a state of tranquility or on the contrary of discomfort. The theory is related to the tourist image, because the destinations, attractions and tourist sites seek to satisfy the tourists who visit them. The author determines that the image has three stages that are: expectations (before), perception (during) and experience (after). At this point the level of satisfaction of the person can be evaluated, considering that, after having lived a series of events in the place, he decides to return or recommend the visited site. For the above, it can be said that the satisfaction process is influenced by the image presented by the destination in aspects such as: service, activities and security measures that are analyzed by theoretical currents such as: cognitive and cognitive affective, in order to study what are the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors.

The theory of cognitive dissonance is complex to understand, so each of its components is studied individually. To explain the state of a person when being in dissonance, it should be mentioned that it refers to the product of existing two cognitions different from each other, unlike the state of consonance that indicates coherent or consonant thoughts that sometimes move away from reality.

Cognitive dissonance. According to Festinger, the theory of cognitive dissonance demonstrates the perceptions that each person possesses in front of the environment that surrounds them and also allows them to self-evaluate in various personal aspects. Expectation and perception become two dissonant psychological concepts, where the consumer tends to minimize the discrepancy between the knowledge that others possess and those of himself. For this reason, its treatment is important for the preservation of a correct appreciation of the individual regarding the image presented by the tourist site and the thoughts that influence the experience of consumers.(1959)

The theory of cognitive dissonance is associated with the concept of tourism in the year of 1957. The author Festinger raises the principles of using psychology as an alternative to analyze the psyche of the consumer when choosing a tourist destination. It establishes that subjects can go through a discomfort, when their thoughts or ideas are not equal to their actions. In the case of tourist destinations, people have an expectation based on their knowledge of the place and when visiting it, the relationship between two cognitions begins to emerge, if contradicted, the subject experiences a state of cognitive dissonance, this can be reduced with the change of behavior or actions presented by the individual, which will allow you to enter a state of tranquility and meet your expectations.

According to , each person is in control of the knowledge that is required in a specific subject and that a dissonance occurs when he engages in an uncomfortable state of this knowledge and tries to balance it (cognitive consonance). Therefore, the term cognitive is related to the thoughts, beliefs,

attitudes or behaviors that a person presents at the time he decides to make some type of decision. (Rosero & Montalvo, 2015, pp. 180-182)

So it can be said that, cognitive dissonance occurs when a person enters a state of psychological discomfort, induced by not relating to two cognitions; that is, what is thought with what is found in reality.

On the other hand, Caldera, compares the attitude of a person when it produces a cognitive dissonance and enters a state of negative attitude, with that of a person who has cognitive consonance and manifests a positive attitude. This is because, the image of a tourist destination requires the production of a cognitive consonance in each area related to tourism, which facilitates the perception of the person who comes to the place so that it remains in balance. This is possible thanks to the application of data collection instruments, which allow us to see the cognitive dissonance that occurs in the mind of the consumer when facing beliefs with reality. The image thus posed allows the formulation of strategies to achieve tourist satisfaction (figure 1).(2013)

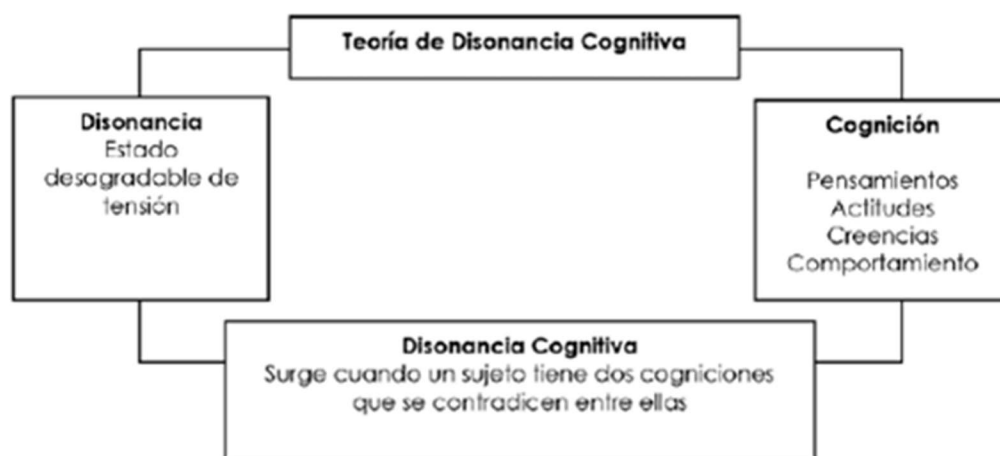


Figure 1: Elements Involved in Cognitive Dissonance Theory
Fountain: (Caldera, 2013)

The reduction of cognitive dissonance is generated by disappointment, which is a state of mind resulting from a person's dissatisfaction with a situation that contradicts their way of thinking. The satisfactory assessment of tourists from the image before visiting the tourist destination is of great importance for their knowledge and the experience they will have in the place. Examines the on-site visit, the assessment of reality (during); and finally, it evaluates the tourist's experience after visiting the tourist destination.

The information received by the tourist before the visit is essential for the assessment of the fulfillment of their expectations, if the result is positive, the experience of tourists will improve steadily; otherwise, it is reduced. For this reason, this theory is considered within the research

because it facilitates the obtaining of information to understand the behavior of the pre-decision customer, stating that the dissonance is not limited to the behavior of the post-purchase customer. Thus, the state of dissonance accompanies the consumer throughout the decision-making process, because the affirmation of a state of dissonance will allow the individual to remain calm. (Rivera, Arellano, & Molero, 2013, p. 18)

When talking about the dissonance of the individual in his decision-making process, he starts from a perceived image of the destination generated through different axes, mainly the attribute-holistic axis that is based on the processing of information about individual attributes of the destination such as: climate, hospitality, among others. The difficulty of the individual to obtain an objective measure of the attributes is due to the intangibility of these and can hinder the evaluation of the tourist destination. On the other hand, the functional-psychological axis focuses on the characteristics observable directly by the tourist as functional attributes and other more abstract ones such as psychological, among the attributes that are considered in this axis are: landscapes, cultural attractions and shopping facilities; As examples of the functional category and hospitality of the residents, relaxation and security as qualifiers of the psychological category.

The common-single axis refers to the common characteristics that different places present, whether functional – climate, nightlife or price level, among others psychological, hospitality, security or calm, among others; and those that are considered unique to the destination. This common-unique is taken as a competitive advantage of the tourist destination. Finally, under these axes you can generate a perception of the tourist destination in terms of the image it presents, the attributes it possesses and the possible experience of the tourist and his satisfaction.

We can say that after the creation of expectations and subsequent experience on the site, satisfaction is a state in which the consumer according to his beliefs, attitudes and behavior bases a coherent response in relation to the product with a comparison model. Indeed, there are two currents focused on consumer satisfaction, which are: cognitive and cognitive-affective, then, it is necessary to emphasize that the approach used to study satisfaction is mainly cognitive-affective, because it refers to beliefs, attitudes and behaviors about what you want to evaluate within the tourist desino and is closely related to the experience of consumption. (Ovejero, 1993)

On the other hand, the behavior of the tourist is closely related to the push and pull factor that motivate him to travel and these motivations allow the individual to make an initial construction on the tourist destination. Subsequently, when the individual begins to look for information, his perception of the place changes, thus forming the induced image that contributes to the formation of expectations. Once the decision to travel is confirmed, the individual begins to store experiences that allow him to generate a judgment of satisfaction. As a result of this process, the individual generates more realistic expectations regarding a new experience in the destination. (Chon, 1990)

It is necessary to mention that the satisfaction of the individual strengthens his perceived image of the destination after the tourist experience, this is due to the close relationship between the image and expectations, this means that the individual generates more realistic expectations of a future encounter with the tourist destination.

The above, it is possible to measure it in the previous experience that refers to the information about the place, the moments lived in the place and a later moment where the individual generates positive or negative comments of the site, this becomes a consolidated information about the destination. This is related to the image of the tourist destination, since they are extremely important factors for localities and attractions that are in the world, this indicates the real satisfaction of the tourist who visits them, starting from three components: cognitive image as the tangible part, affective as the intangible part and the global as the consolidated image of the site. (Ries & Trout, 1990)

These factors are responsible for creating the perception of the tourist in comparison of the experience he has had in the place, which will determine if he is familiar or recommends the place visited. You can find various sources of information propagation such as word-of-mouth marketing, advertising on social networks such as: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. In addition to websites directly related to tourism.

The case study in Cantabria, deals with "The image of tourist destination and the global process of satisfaction: adoption of an integrative approach". It has been taken as a reference for the study of the image of tourist destination in the global process of satisfaction, its basis is to examine the effect of the image perceived by the individual of the tourist destination with various theoretical and empirical applications that allow to relate this image of destination with the satisfaction of tourists. (San Martin H. , 2005)

The referential study is based on the theory of cognitive dissonance in the formation of the image of tourist destination. Based on this, several strategies are proposed to make the destination Cantabria one of the most competitive internationally, this is how research efforts are focused on achieving the positioning of the destination in a target market. It is proposed that tourist destinations must offer an experience based on the quality of services and an emotional value that meets the requirements of tourists.

The study incorporates dimensions that integrate the image of the destination, is composed of cognitive and affective components that allow the formation of the connotative component of the image.

On the other hand, the cognitive and affective components have been transcendental in the formation of the image of destiny, so studying them is important. On the one hand, the cognitive

component refers to the beliefs, knowledge of the individual about the attributes of the tourist destination, while the affective component refers to feelings towards the place. (Baloglu, 1999) The study of the image of tourist destination in Cantabria aims to analyze the behavior of tourists, the way in which promoters disseminate the destination and how to reach their target audience effectively. An important aspect of this research is overall consumer satisfaction. Both image and satisfaction are the pillars that are handled in the study that initially analyzes the perceived image of the destination in the selection of the visiting traveler. Under a cognitive-affective approach, the overall satisfaction of the tourist towards the destination is evaluated.

When explaining consumer satisfaction judgments, it is necessary to mention cognition as a fundamental part of the consumer experience to achieve a greater role in the overall satisfaction process. Affective reactions, on the other hand, should be included along with cognitive-expectations judgments, resulting in disconfirmation of expectations and causal attribution in consumer satisfaction.

To achieve the objectives proposed in the referential study, a review of the image of tourist destination, satisfaction and consumer expectations is proposed. The analysis is carried out through theoretical and empirical foundations, together with an adequate methodological study to guarantee the reliability of the results obtained.

In the measurement of the image, specific methodologies were used in order to provide validity and reliability to the destination image, it is essential to mention that the tourist image is based especially on attributes and benefits of each place, in addition to the subjective interpretation issued by the researcher, for the reasons stated is that the research is constituted with a structured and unstructured measurement technique. The structured technique is used in the measurement of the target image as an approximation of multiple attributes, these are defined by the researcher and subsequently valued on a Likert scale or semantic differential. (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993)(Echtner & Ritchie, 1991)

On the other hand, the use of the unstructured technique incurs in the examination of the complex nature that makes up the target image, this is collected through open questions, which allows the individual to describe their impressions of the site freely. This represents a very useful technique when measuring holistic and unique components of the perceived image of the destination, allowing to establish the dimensions that the individual really considers essential for the construction of the perceived image of the destination and not those already presented by the researcher, however, it represents limitations for statistical measurement in terms of reliability and validity of the data presented.

The study raises hypotheses derived from the theoretical review and other aspects that need further research, they are formulated globally. Empirical research methodology is used to defend

objectives. The quantitative and qualitative phase of the research is reviewed and on the other hand the measurement of the variables, together with the design of the research and also the field work.

Theoretical model. The theoretical model is formed in relation to the image of the destination measured by three stages that are: before, during and after, based on a cognitive-affective approach in the satisfaction process, in this way the conceptual framework integrates the overall process of satisfaction of the tourist along with the expectations, the judgment of disconfirmation and the emotions generated from the experience of the tourist and the intentions of this in recommending the place (Figure 2).

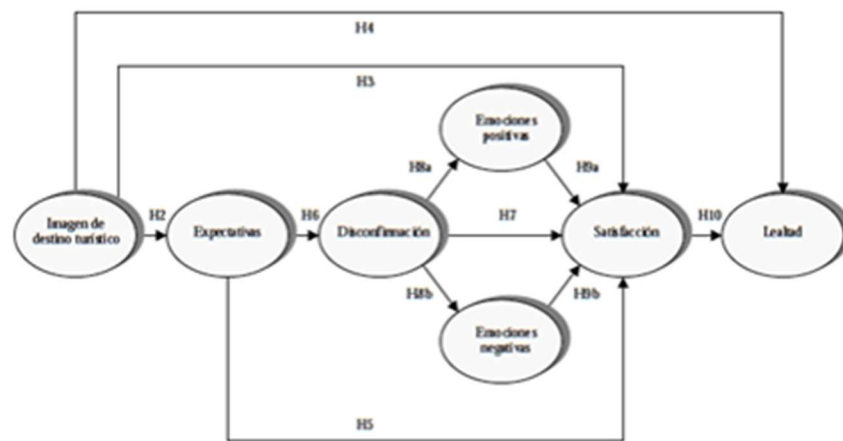


Figure 2: Theoretical Model
Fountain: (San Martín H., 2005)

From the theoretical model, hypotheses closely associated with the different elements of the global process of tourist satisfaction are derived, these hypotheses have been supported by conceptual and empirical contributions of the research. It facilitates the understanding of the study hypotheses in three categories: hypotheses related to the prominence of the preconceived image of the destination in the different stages of the satisfaction process, hypotheses referring to the effect of the other antecedents on the satisfaction of the tourist, as well as to the relationships between them and the hypothesis corresponding to the consequence of the judgment of satisfaction of the tourist.

According to the hypotheses implemented in the research are: (San Martín H., 2005, pp. 188-189)

- The multidimensionality of the target image including cognitive and affective assessments,
- Causal relationships with the theoretical model that includes perceived image, tourist experience, satisfaction and loyalty,
- Research-related hypotheses that implement individual expectations and their effect on tourist emotions, experience and satisfaction,
- The hypotheses related to the moderating variables such as familiarity and involvement of individuals with the destination,

- Hypotheses concerning the formation of the destination image and its influence on the preconceived image of destination in relation to familiarity, motivations, cultural values and sociodemographic characteristics; and
- The hypotheses related to the generation of tourist expectations in relation to image, communication and past experience.

The results are based on empirical research, which approve or reject the hypotheses postulated to cover the objectives related to the model that integrates the tourist image in the process of global satisfaction. It is important to mention that the work is contemplated from the cognitive-affective approach of satisfaction with the cognitive approach, everything mentioned above has the purpose of identifying the similarities and differences in the overall process of satisfaction.

The image of the destination has been considered one of the aspects that generates greater interest in tourism, the study considers the concept and nature, training and behavior of the tourist, in addition to mentioning the approaches to the concept of tourist destination in attribute-holistic, functional-psychological and unique common, the individual must reach the perception of the image regarding the characteristics of the locality to visit.

In this context, it is defined that the doctoral thesis is composed of a model that relates the global process of satisfaction with the preconceived image of the destination, then satisfaction is considered as a cognitive-affective judgment that comes from the experience of an individual with a service or product. From the above, it is concluded that satisfaction can be compared between expectations and experiences related to the cognitive process. (San Martin H. , 2005)

Once the factors have been exposed, it is worth highlighting the formation of the expectations of the site from the word-of-mouth communication and the image that represents the attractiveness in terms of observable qualities for the individual, in this way the characteristics of experience contribute to the decision of the tourist's trip.

The empirical research has been useful, the meetings with experts in the tourism sector, travel agencies and users who have contributed to the quantitative research, in this, assessments of the experience and opinions and beliefs a priori have been made. In addition to expectations, emotions related to the experience or satisfaction after being at the destination, the perceptions and behaviors of the tourist are taken into account for this research.

The results of the structured technique show that the image of the destination is multidimensional integrated by cognitive and affective dimensions, then, the perceived image of the destination is integrated by cognitive and affective evaluations, these influence the decision making of the tourist to differentiate between destinations and make the choice.

On the other hand, the unstructured technique indicates the holistic impressions of the individual in relation to the destination image, thus observing tangible characteristics such as nature or landscape and abstract such as: quiet, hospitable or natural. The attractions that are unique to the individual as acceptable attributes under his perception. They generate greater competitiveness for the tourist destination of your choice.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Area of study

The research was carried out in the Agua Blanca Commune (Figure 3), located in the province of Manabí, Puerto López Canton, Machalilla Parish, Machalilla National Park, on the Ecuadorian coast, whose UTM coordinates are X = 525358.9185, Y = 9828128.8128 in zone 17 SOUTH, is part of the National System of Protected Areas of Ecuador.

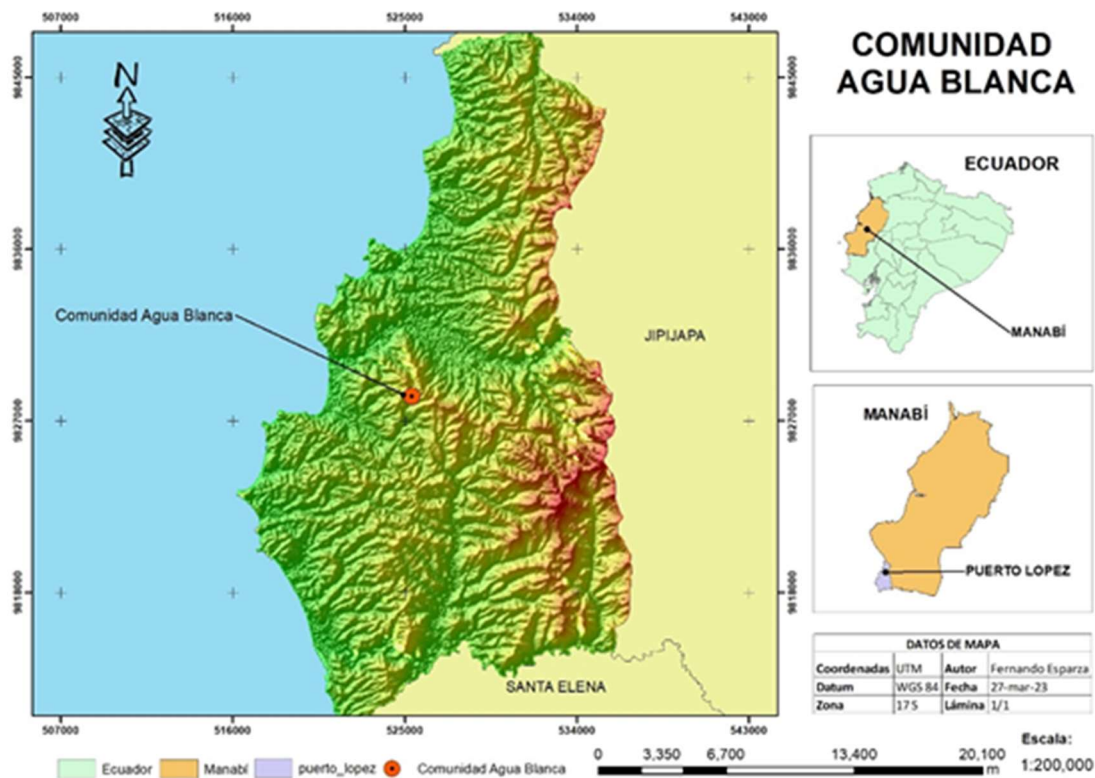


Figure 3. Map of the Agua Blanca Community

For the elaboration of the map, it was necessary to make use of the Arcmap 10.8 tool, taking as reference the georeferenced points, taken on site, the necessary shapes are drawn, and added to the Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the study area, downloaded from the USGS (United States Geological Survey) repository, the shadow maps are generated and the research area is identified.

2.2. Type of research

The focus of this research is mixed, quantitative since it allows the collection of information that can be measured based on the variables considered, identifying important aspects of the research. As the quantitative method is evident in the stage of data collection and measurement, this "is mainly oriented towards studies that expose data classifications and descriptions of social reality". In(Sarduy, 2007, p. 7)(Sarduy, 2006, p. 5) addition, the qualitative method will be applied, "as a mechanism for generating ideas, to complement the study and subsequently evaluate it", this is based on experiences, opinions and knowledge of those involved in the research that in this case are tourists.(Sarduy, 2006, p. 5)

The main variables involved are external communication, which refers to promotion by any means, the other variable is familiarity, this is linked to the experiences of the individual with a tourist destination, these positively or negatively influence the tourist experience, which can contribute to their perception and the real opportunities presented by the destination.(Chon, 1989)

The variables are linked to the individual with the tourist destination, motivations, beliefs, cultural values and sociodemographic characteristics are considered. In the first place, motivation considers that individuals try to maintain a state that produces stability, so the needs are associated with the motivations to select a place and that it meets their expectations to the point of feeling satisfied with the selection(Sherry, 1986). Secondly, cultural values are considered as the set of beliefs, values, customs and norms of behavior that human beings possess, it is for this reason that people from other countries, regions manifest different perceptions about the same tourist destination. Thirdly, sociodemographic characteristics are associated with emotions and sources of information contacted, gender traits, age, level of education, etc., contribute to the perception of destiny.

The main variables involved in the formation of the image are generated in the stage prior to the visit to the tourist destination, so you have the external communication, which contemplates the promotion through advertising, word-of-mouth communication, being these means of communication interpreted differently depending on the individual as to whether he rejects or modifies the information based on his beliefs or attitudes that he has in his mind.

Familiarity is a variable linked to the experiences of the individual with a tourist destination and the informative component constitute an important role in the formation of the expectations of the destination, to later reaffirm this information in the experience, which can generate in your mind something positive or negative that contributes to your perception and affirms that the most familiar tourists have greater knowledge of the real opportunities presented by the destination.(Chon, 1989)

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The perception of the tourist destination is formed with information from various sources in a considerable period of time, this can be built through the organic and induced image. The organic image is directly associated with the promotion of the destination, documentaries, television, among others. The induced image is generated from commercial sources such as brochures, travel agencies and advertising, these media are closely linked to marketing. In this way the destination image is considered a phase prior to the experience and another after your stay in it, then based on the experience of the destination the initial perception is modified, conceiving a complex and more realistic image.(Gunn, 1988)

It is necessary to mention that the way in which people perceive destiny in relation to the experience they live, are two cognitions that lead to a state of dissonance in relation to these, it is established that subjects can go through a discomfort in the event that their thoughts or ideas are not equal to their actions. In the case of tourist destinations, people have a perspective based on their knowledge and information they have received from the place, after their visit their expectations can be met and they feel satisfied or on the contrary the subject can be in a state that generates discomfort.

The loyalty variable manifests as the consumer's response to repurchasing or recommending a product or service, this consumer response is created with the passage of time based on their experience and thus building a commitment to the brand. It is necessary to mention that loyalty is composed of different phases, starting with the cognitive one that underlies the beliefs about the brand and is based on the information about the different attributes that it possesses, followed by the affective phase that underlies the attitude towards the brand and is based on experiences of satisfaction with the consumption of the brand, Additionally, the conative phase that underlies the intention to repurchase and is based on episodes of positive affection towards the brand, finally the action phase that underlies the commitment to action and is based on the preparation for the repurchase. (Oppermann, 200)

2.3. Research Typology

For its Applied Purpose. The research has sources of information extracted in a documentary way through existing sources and field research that allows the acquisition of knowledge about social reality. Thus, in the conceptual framework, a compendium and analysis of information is carried out, explaining the background and monitoring results from various sources such as: books, web documents, official information and previous studies. The information collected will be taken as a

unit of analysis In situ, since the research is focused on opinions of tourists, expressing their level of satisfaction regarding the image of the place.

By the In Situ Analysis Units. In situ analysis will be applied in the research, in order to evaluate the conditions in which the research problem is developed, the actors that are part of the research are: the Agua Blanca community, the GAD of Puerto López, the Ministry of the Environment and tourists visiting the community, to evaluate how the tourist image of the community is managed and its influence on the satisfaction of visitors who come to it.

For the Control of Non-Experimental Variables. The proposed research is non-experimental since it is impossible to manipulate variables such as cognitive, affective and global components, allowing to observe how events develop. The topic discussed has not been addressed previously and raises doubts so its scope is exploratory. Because, in the work of Tourist Image of the (Hernández, Fernández, B., 2003) Agua Blanca Community does not have enough management and development.

For the Descriptive scope. The analysis will be carried out in a place external to the study site, being appropriate for the treatment of the information that will be collected in the research process. For the interpretation of the information, descriptive statistics will be used as an appropriate tool since "it helps to present the data in such a way that its structure stands out". Therefore, it admits the identification of outstanding features, as well as unforeseen ones; according to Toro & Parra "will be responsible for the presentation, synthesis, summary and analysis of quantitative information". (Orellana, 2001, p. 3)(2006)

Gathering the necessary characteristics that will be used within the descriptive analysis of structured data, they have been adapted for this type of research. The object of the research is to study the variables of the tourist image, which are: cognitive image, affective image and global image, which makes it a case study. This "basically consists of referring to a real situation taken in its context and analyzing it to see how the phenomena for which the researcher is interested manifest and evolve".(Mucchielli, 2001, p. 102)

2.4. Procedure for Data Collection and Analysis

The procedure for the collection and analysis of data will be carried out virtually due to the health emergency that Ecuador and the world are going through, in addition to the impediment by the Government to visit other provinces. Tools such as Zoom, WhatsApp and Survey Monkey will be used to conduct surveys of tourists and interviews for representatives in charge of entities such as the Municipal GAD, Ministry of the Environment and the Community of Agua Blanca.

Field Technique. In the field technique the interview and the survey will be applied, the interviews will be carried out with the mayor Javier Pinca representative of the municipality of Puerto López,

Rolando Asunción president of the Agua Blanca Community and an official of the Ministry of the Environment, these being the managers of tourism activities within the community and in turn the elders involved in this research. On the other hand, national and foreign tourists who visit the place have been taken into account in order to know how they perceive the place before, during and after their visit. It is necessary to mention that both interviews and surveys will be carried out virtually due to the health emergency that Ecuador is going through at the moment.

Database. The research has taken into account data on the tourist plant that owns the community, the service it provides, those involved in the administration of the community and the management of reservations and website that it has and the influence it has generated on tourists, in addition to the figures of national and foreign tourists who visit the community and the way in which they integrate improvement plans so that the community preserves its natural and cultural heritage as well as training for native guides of the community.

Instruments

In the research, surveys are carried out virtually through the Survey Monkey program for national and foreign tourists who visit the Agua Blanca Community and virtual interviews will be applied through Zoom, the president of the Parish GAD of Puerto López, the highest authority in charge of the administration of the Agua Blanca Community and the official in charge of the MAE as main actors in the design of strategies and management of All areas for the performance of tourism.

Interview. The virtual interview is an instrument that is used within this research to obtain information about the cognitive image (natural resources, cultural, social, environmental, infrastructure and atmosphere) reflected in the data that can be evidenced by the authorities of the Agua Blanca community, in order to have a clearer vision of the current situation that this place presents and its operation to date.

Survey. In the case of this research, it will be carried out virtually and is aimed at our target audience to measure the satisfaction of the tourist who visits the Agua Blanca Community. In this, the components that refer to the cognitive, affective and global image will be included, thus creating a more complete vision of the image generated by this tourist site in visiting travelers, data collection will be carried out through a questionnaire where people will respond anonymously, where cognitive perception will be evaluated, affective and global, which will allow to measure if the satisfaction of the tourist is indicated so that he returns or recommends the place.(Lopez & Fachelli, 2015, p. 8)

2.5. Procedure for Treatment and Analysis of Information

SurveyMonkey Data Analysis Program. This tool was used in the research in order to analyze the results generated by the surveys, graph them and finally analyze them in a visual, practical and

interesting way through reports that show the results of the surveys to national and foreign tourists of the Agua Blanca community, in addition the results will be easy to interpret by the reader.

Macroambiente

Trip Expectation. The expectation of travel presents elements that must be analyzed to have knowledge about the tourist sites present in the mind of the tourist, depending on the type of interaction that has had reinforces or weakens the expectation of the next places to visit. The most relevant components are: expectations about the elements of the place and the sources of information. The information that the person stores in his head prior to visiting the place influences when selecting the destination and wanting to know everything it offers.

Travel Experience. The experience of the trip is a factor closely linked to the satisfaction of the tourist, because the elements that are analyzed at this point can determine whether or not the tourist will return to the place. Therefore, it analyzes the tourist sites, activities, hospitality, atmosphere, among others. Similarly, the aspects that must be taken into account to improve the travel experience to make it more pleasant.

Satisfaction. Satisfaction is a process that begins with the choice of destination to the experiences lived on the site, the behavior of the tourist begins before the existence of factors that motivate him to make the trip. Subsequently, the subject seeks information about the places that have caught his attention and that influences to change the perception of the site, producing in his mind an induced image. Then, with all the information you have, you will generate your expectations that will evaluate them when you visit the site and can evaluate based on your experience if the place adjusted to your expectations and therefore the experience was satisfactory or on the contrary generates a feeling of discomfort.

Microenvironment

Preconceived image. The preconceived image of the tourist destination influences the formation of expectations and emotions generated by knowing a site. The image indicates a mental representation of destiny and thus anticipates the subject in his future experience. Then, it is conceived as a determinant of tourist satisfaction. Similarly, it affects the impact of the image of the destination in terms of tourist loyalty and the intention to return and recommend the site to family, friends, etc.

Motivations to Visit the Destination. Motivations are formed from the desire to reach a state of stability, when people consider having some kind of lack or need, they automatically feel desire to satisfy that need. In the case of tourism there is a coexistence between the needs or psychological forces with the consumer who wishes to participate in a type of tourist activity. The needs of the tourist are closely related to the benefits that the destination can offer. It is important to mention

that motivations intervene in the site selection process and there are push factors that relate internal and emotional aspects that motivate the tourist.

Loyalty of the Tourist towards the Destination. Loyalty within the overall satisfaction process refers to the commitment of the tourist to recommend or return to the site visited, on the one hand, talking about loyalty is the positive response of people from the experiences lived on the site. Then, if your expectations were met this will generate a state of satisfaction that will later allow you to strengthen a bond with the site and in your mind you will have pleasant thoughts about it.

Information about the Destination. The information about the tourist destination sometimes people acquire it from external sources or past experiences, also this information is conditioned by the demographic characteristics of the subjects, which is why perceptions vary from person to person significantly. One of the main means of information is word of mouth communication that manifests itself when a person has already known the place and can recommend it to others. Currently, the main sources of information are virtual, usually published on social networks, blogs, magazines, among others. Through information, people can form their expectations to go to the destination.

Tourist perception. The perception on the part of the tourist significantly influences his satisfaction, since at this moment he assimilates what he knew of the place and what he is living. The perception of tourists is influenced by some sociodemographic characteristics such as the gender component, it is very useful in this research, it helps us to determine the profile of the tourist and the direction of the current demand. Age in some cases can be considered as a limitation, due to the activities that can be done or not depending on the stage of life in which the tourist is. The level of education is a factor that indicates the knowledge of a tourist about a place and the understanding of some details that the place presents and could affect the overall image of the place. The place of origin of national and foreign tourists is important in research, this allows us to generate promotion strategies by physical or digital means.

Roasted experience in the Destination. The past experience in the destination refers to people who know the place and have been able to compare their expectations with the experience lived in such a way that they can generate a positive or negative criterion based on the activities, services, hospitality, climate, among other aspects that are in the place. Individuals who are more familiar with the destination have a more elaborate knowledge and for this reason can generate higher expectations according to their needs.

Destination Image. The formation of the image of the destination begins from the impressions before and after visiting the place. The first formation of the image is organic because it is obtained from the various sources of information to proceed to an image induced by obtaining information of a commercial nature and finally the image is modified from the initial perception of the

destination when the subject visits the place and the image is more real or complex. Therefore, the organic, induced and complex image of the destination is part of the knowledge of tourists, promotions and their own experience lived in the place on different components that the destination presents such as: tourist services, hospitality, atmosphere, natural environment, cultural, infrastructure, among others.

3. Results

The results are presented based on the theoretical model of tourist destination image, which according to , is the global perception of the destination formed by the individual through various sources of information over time, which is made up of "before your visit", which indicates the expectation of the trip about all the components of the place; "during your visit", this represents an assessment of the tangible and intangible elements perceived throughout the visit to the site; and, "after your visit", which indicates the satisfaction of the tourist in terms of the experience he has had of the place.(Assael, 1984, p. 190)

The results obtained from the surveys and interviews were classified using the Likert scale, where, 1 equals "lowest score", and 5 represents the "highest score". Once the information obtained in the data tabulation has been condensed, Table 1 presents the maximum occurrences of the surveys in relation to the tourist profile.

Variable	Tourists	
	Foreign	National
Place of origin	Netherlands-Spain	Guayaquil
Who are you traveling with?	Friends/Family	Family
Reason for travel	Tourism	Tourism
Gender	Male	Female
Age	26-31	26-31
Level of education	Third Level	Third Level- Secondary

Table 1: Profile of National and Foreign Tourists

Source: Authors.

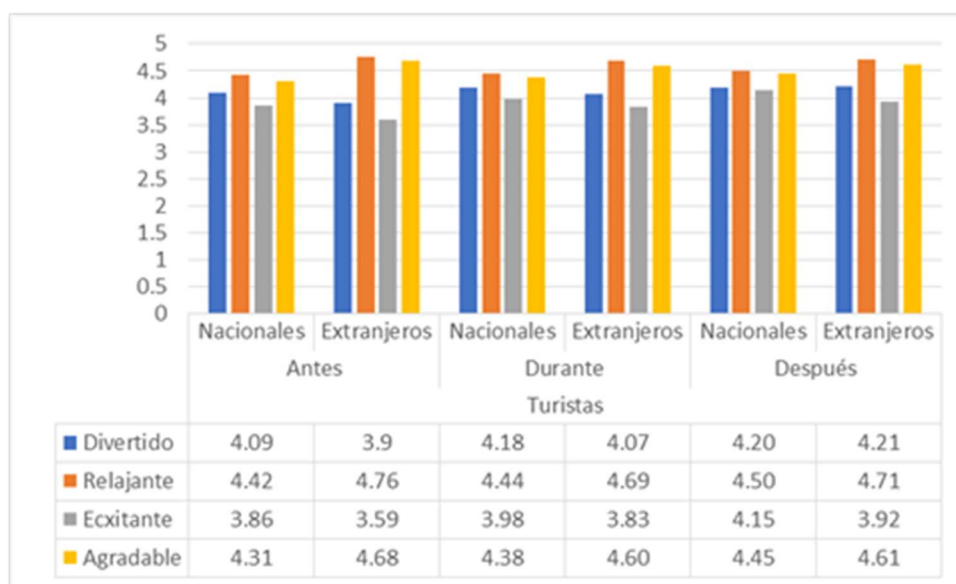
If you consider the variable of attractiveness that motivates the choice of destination, you can obtain results of cognitive dissonance in tourists, both domestic and foreign, classifying these in before, during and after the visit, in table 2 the results are shown in the percentages obtained in bases los different attractions analyzedors.

	Tourists					
	Before		During		After	
	National	Foreign	National	Foreign	National	Foreign
Sulfur lagoon	48.46%	36.59%	57.27%	48.78%	55.07%	43.90%
Bird watching	8.37%	9.76%	5.73%	7.32%	8.37%	4.88%
Balcony	13.66%	2%	14.10%	4.88%	12.33%	7.96%

Humid dry forest	14.10%	7%	11.45%	2.44%	13.66%	4.88%
Archaeological						
Museum	5.72%	0.25%	6.61%	9.76%	6.17%	7.32%
Archaeological sites	7.49%	43.90%	4.84%	26.83%	4.41%	29.27%
Other	2.20%	0.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Table 2: Cognitive dissonance of tourist attractions that motivate the visit of the community of Agua Blanca

To determine how the tourist categorizes, in general terms, the study site, four categories are proposed, fun, relaxing, exciting and enjoyable. Also using a Likert scale, the results obtained can be graphed in graph 1, where it is evident that the national and foreign tourist, in the three moments (before, during and after), is categorized mostly as relaxing, followed closely by those who qualify it as pleasant.



Graph 1: Cognitive dissonance of tourist attractions in the community of Agua Blanca

Finally, once the tourist has concluded the visit and has all the necessary elements to evaluate his visit, the level of satisfaction is evaluated to determine the degree of loyalty he will have in the future, the results shown in table 3, show that the place is more accepted by the national tourist, in this result the Likert scale was used, being 5 the highest level of satisfaction.

Experience of the visited site			
Variable		National Tourists	Foreign Tourists
Loyalty to the site	Visit in the future	4.5	4.19
	Recommend the site	4.45	4.42

Table 3: Tourism Site Loyalty

The possibility of recommending the site based on the fulfillment of the expectations of the tourist is associated with the degree of satisfaction that the visit has produced to the community, tourists confirm that the sites that are within the Agua Blanca community preserve a relaxing and pleasant atmosphere that helps maintain the loyalty of the tourist towards it.

The dissemination of the community through satisfactory testimonials of tourists is based on the possibility of returning or recommending tourist sites. During the visit and stay at the site, tourists recognized the activities that were appropriate to recommend based on their experience, such as enjoying the healing properties of the sulfur lagoon, adventure activities (hiking and bird watching), knowing the culture, customs, traditions and gastronomy.

4. Discussion

The satisfaction of the tourist is decisive in the sustainability of tourism globally, when a place has facilities and services that allow to maintain loyalty, the tourist generates advertising that reaches potential visitors and their experience contributes to the expectation of the tourist attraction, this effect can be multiplied by making use of information and communication technologies, The use of social networks has allowed the creation of virtual communities, where tourists post their experience comments and the attractive potential becomes the main destination to capture new tourists, having a favorable result in cognitive dissonance.

In the study carried out by , (Garrido, 2005) called "Strategic behavior of the Spanish tourism promotion", where it investigates, analyzes and concludes on how the advertising market has grown, in order to build a positive tourist image of promoted geographical areas, it is also analyzed, the attributes of the consumer of tourist destinations, the peculiarities of tourist communication and, finally, the utilities and limitations that advertising offers to this communicative system taking into account the cognitive dissonance that can cause certain effects of this advertising in some potential tourists, this study analyzes above all the perception that is had of the tourist destinations, With infrastructures, and as they can be perceived in a better way, to be considered with a complete package, however, it is necessary to indicate that many tourists prefer the experiences of living nature in their natural environment, many times the infrastructure gives certain comforts that limit living and feeling an experience.

In this same sense, (Alves & Pinheiro, 2010) analyzes the main elements that impact on the formation and construction of the image of a tourist destination, here it is mentioned that the brain implants a tourist image fed by certain factors that transmit it and it is very difficult to change it, especially with relatively short information, coming from of a visit or short stay, which may have different information than the one that was initially formed, turning it into a cognitive dissonance, it is for this reason, that the experience that the tourist lives becomes extremely important, to change the negative image and erase this dissonance , created by bad experiences of one's own or those of others.

In general, most communicative actions (advertising, public relations, promotional, etc.) address fragments of a complex cognitive process that occurs in the mind of the consumer, who perceives

it as a single life experience. This is one of the fundamental problems with which tourist communication is encountered, the fragmentation and disconnection between the various messages received by the receiver, which can lead to unpleasant situations of cognitive dissonance.

5. Conclusions

· The study was based on Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance, which focuses on three stages that are: before (expectations), during (perception) and after (experience), allowing the proper analysis of the target image. In this way, the theoretical framework was an important pillar in the foundation of the subject.

· The research methodology was based on a descriptive study of quantitative and qualitative cut, the instruments were created based on the dimensions and variables identified in the study, in turn these facilitated the collection of data and its subsequent processing.

· One of the factors that affects the image of the community is the infrastructure in terms of accommodation and food service that is not completely adequate to provide a service that denotes higher quality.

· According to the results obtained in the interviews with the actors involved in the tourist activity, it was determined that the community has a great natural and cultural attraction that needs to be enhanced in the tourism market.

· In the interpretation of results, the data obtained in the surveys and interviews were related that allowed to know how the image of the community is and if the tourists who visit it intend to recommend or revisit the site.

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