

## Article

# Sustainable Tourism: A Competitiveness Strategy Perspective in Baja California

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**Abstract:** Sustainability plays an important role in society by improving long-term quality of life, including future generations, seeking harmony between economic growth, social development and the protection of the environment. For decades, companies focused their efforts on maximizing returns for their stakeholders, setting aside the preservation of the environment by making indiscriminate use of local resources, which had a direct impact on the social and economic well-being of it, however today the organizations analyze and evaluate the demands, tastes and preferences of new generations as a competitive strategy, because they seek healthier and safer spars, showing increasing interest in social indicators, economics and mid-environment, denying sustainable strategies for their stakeholders. The combination of statistical techniques of descriptive and contingency analysis the sustainability of the tourist micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) of the state of Baja California through the application of the travel and tourism competitive index. The main findings show that the sustainable good practices implemented by micro-entrepreneurs so far has allowed them to develop competitive value strategies focused on their Stakeholders, seeing an increase in their competitiveness.

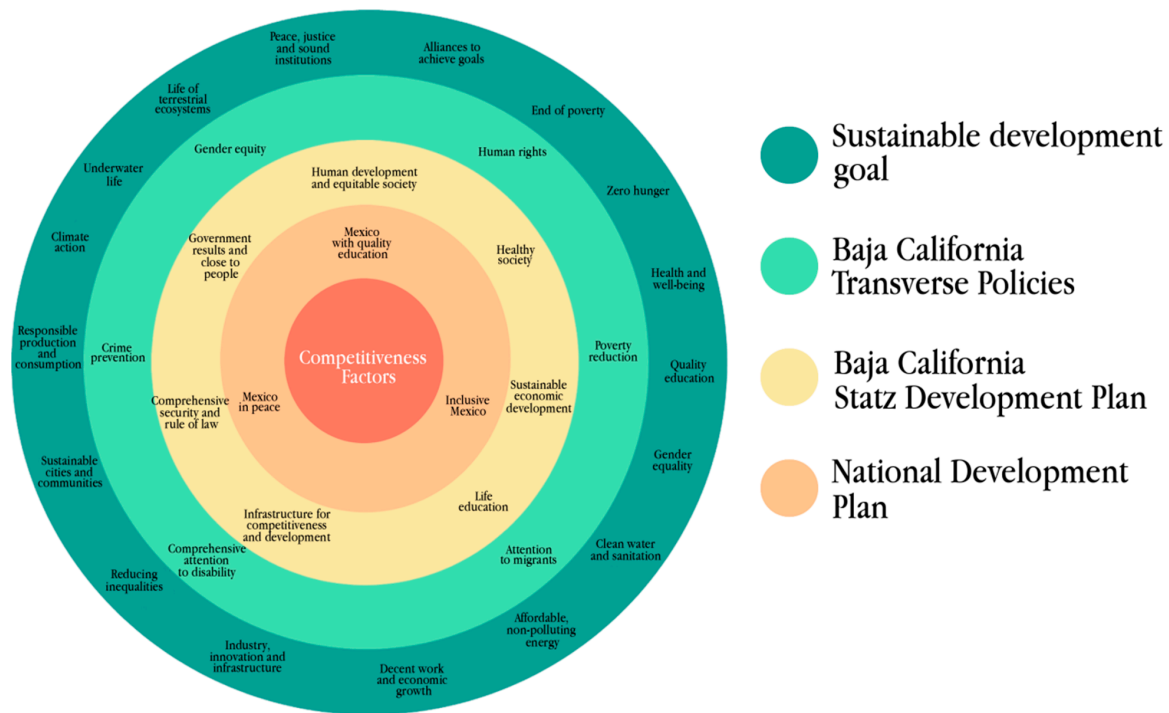
**Keywords:** sustainability; sustainable tourism; competitiveness and tourism competitiveness

## 1. Introduction

In Mexico, although the federal government expects an increase of up to 8.5% for next year in terms of activities carried out in the tourism sector—the same as at the moment it passes global indices-, the actions derived from this economic activity undoubtedly represent an important environmental, economic and social problem. This is due to the incalculable impact generated by both foreign and domestic residents and tourists within the protected natural areas, arising from the inappropriate management of strategies and programs that regulate and minimize the deterioration of the national heritage. That is why, the government of the state of Baja California (BC) within the policies considered to strengthen development based on competitiveness, considers promoting the diversity of tourism activities offered in the region; such as fairs, conventions, beach destinations, sports tourism and ecotourism, Baja California is distinguished by its competitiveness, a national level has been considered as an innovative and avant-garde entity; In this sense, the increase in the levels of regional competitiveness, translates into a higher level of social and economic well-being, which are normally measured by the increase in per capita income, educational level and life expectancy of its inhabitants [1]. For this, it was necessary to work hard in repositioning the Baja California brand by BC Norte [2].

On the other hand, it is important to define in terms of competitiveness the factors that make the state of Baja California a region with a sustainable tourism offer. That is why for in order to reinforce the positive image of the entity at the regional, national and national levels international lined. It should be noted that the Government of the State of Baja California aligned its State Development

Plan with the National; and these in turn with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), creating with this the first sustainable development model for the state, where the competitiveness factors are presented (see Figure 1), in this sense, both plans include sustainable development goals, with the purpose of contributing to eradicate poverty and safeguard the rights of people, considering the social and environmental cost of the region [1].



**Figure 1.** The first sustainable development model for the state. Planning Committee for the Development of the State of Baja California (2014) [1].

Tourism in Baja California is an important part of its economy, this state is visited not only by residents of the different municipalities that make it up; but due to its proximity to the northern border, its natural commercial ally is the state of California in the United States; As part of Mexican traditions, it is celebrated in the month of April–March; the Holy Week, which attracts thousands of tourists who reside in the United States but have their roots in this country, which keeps the family together and the traditions alive; It should be noted in this regard that this year there was an economic spill around 315 million of Mexican pesos, product of the festivities celebrated on those dates [3].

However, it is important to highlight the need to calculate social and environmental costs when planning the tourist offer of a destination, not only focusing on the economic benefits that this activity offers to businesses; since, there is a risk of ceasing to be sustainable in the long term; since tourism would be destroyed by tourism [4].

According to the Secretary of Tourism [5] Tijuana and Ensenada concentrates the 6.8% of the International Tourism that is received in the country, entering Baja California in one of the five destinations with greater flow of foreign tourism (equivalent to 84.7% of international tourism).

During the literature review a vast collection of publications on the study of sustainable development in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) tourism at the international level; whose main purpose is to create community initiatives that promote the sustainable development of the tourist destination through a public–private partnership, through the adoption of environmental management programs, economic and socio-cultural [6,7]. At the national level, studies based on systematic review of literature were found as a sustainable model design strategy [8] and at the local level the government of the state of BC designed the State Tourism Program to ensure the development of this activity [9]. After a thorough review of the literature, no specific study on sustainable tourism

was found in the MSMEs of that entity, so the findings obtained in this research, will be of great importance for the contribution of the state of regional art and the entrepreneurs of the tourism sector of the region.

As far as sustainability is concerned, it has become in recent decades a research topic of general interest, due to the high impact it provides to society, the economy and the environment; the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [10], considering itself as a philosophy of work and not as a passing fad; or worse, just pretending to be sustainable to meet the required accreditation standards of the industry in which it operates. In addition, in addition to sustainability, the selection of suppliers, the recruitment of workers, working conditions, the protection of natural ecosystems, wildlife conservation, soil conservation, conservation of water resources and the management of solid and liquid waste. From the perspective of entrepreneurs, sustainable development envisages managing strategies and initiatives that meet their demands and those of their stakeholders; in turn, design ingesting and implementing good sustainable practices regarding the use and planning of the natural and human resources needed in the future [11] (pp. 337–338).

For a better understanding of sustainable tourism and its implications with competitiveness, it is necessary to start by defining tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon associated with the transit of people to different places who are outside their usual residence, mainly for leisure and leisure reasons [12]; while sustainable tourism in accordance with the United Nations World Tourism Organization—UNWTO [13] prevents the economic, social and environmental consequences, the result of the supply of products and/or services derived from activities directly related to the attention of visitors, the protection of their environment and the preservation of host communities.

In this way, it is essential to note that the term “sustainable tourism” arises as a result of global warming and awareness of its effects on the environment, which gives rise to a more conscious tourist on environmental issues and their protection, which implies a higher requirement on the part of the target markets on the products and/or services they receive, which directly infers an increase in competitiveness among local bidders.

Competitiveness, on the other hand, competitiveness demands to treat sustainability as a strategy in companies and tourist destinations, the challenge that this entails is when choosing a type of strategy that absorbs the impacts that tourism leaves on the economy locality, but without neglecting social and cultural identity [14]. In other words, competitiveness can be measured through the ability of organizations to maintain or improve their relative position in an environment of constant confrontation by staying in the market.

Likewise, the tourist competitiveness of a destination refers to the capacity that has a place in relation to the quality tourist offer, its natural appeal, unique and innovative proposals to optimize its appeal, which guarantees a reasonable use of its resources; i.e., activities carried out to promote tourism are carried out in an efficient and sustainable manner [15] (p. 14).

Based on the aforementioned concepts, the importance of tourism in Mexico was analyzed; in accordance with the latest data available by in the North American Industrial Classification System (SCIAN) of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico (INEGI, for its acronym in Spanish) this economic activity contributed to the gross domestic product (GDP) at the end of 2017 8.7% of the national total [16]. Similarly, in order to know the behavior of the activity studied, a comparative analysis of 2009 to 2014 was carried out, noting that at the national level there are 551,840 economic units belonging to these activities, of which the 2.05% are in the state of Baja California, with a 35.69% change in the entity compared to 2009 to 2014. In addition, these economic activities contributed 3.08% to the gross domestic product (GDP) at the national level in 2014, noting an increase of 29.83% compared to 2009 in the GDP contributed by these activities, and at the state level, this 5.40% of Baja California’s GDP. Similarly, in the aforementioned years, a 18.91% variation in the staff employed in the entity was identified, and 12.09% in national [17].

The objective of this research is to present an analysis of the indicators of sustainable competitiveness implemented in tourism microenterprises of the state of Baja California, using the model travel and tourism competitive index developed by the World Economic Forum in 2019, which allows it to design competitive strategies related to good economic, social and environmental practices, contributing to the sustainable development and growth of the entity.

Among the main findings reported are those related to the tourist cargo capacity received annually in the state of Baja California by the different points of entry to the region and the lack of management and communication by government authorities to coordinate efforts with local micro-entrepreneurs, as well as ignorance of the tasks required to achieve sustainability, as most of their conscious actions are focused on care environmental environment (75%); benefit society with the generation of decent jobs 22% and increase their quality and lifestyles by 25%. This study shows that as more indicators are implemented in the organization related to the travel and tourism competitiveness index, the better the performance of economic, social and environmental sustainability will be.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Materials

For the collection of information, a structured type survey was designed with 74 items, distributed in three dimensions (economic, social and environmental); the same that was subjected to the Cronbach Alpha reliability test, obtaining an index 0.806, indicating that it is highly reliable (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Reliability statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Elements
0.806	74

### 2.2. Method

This research was descriptive, quantitative and transversal; the total universe of analysis consisted of 38,000 tourist MSEs of the State of Baja California registered in the national directory database of Economic Units [18]. The formula for finite populations was used for the determination of the sample size:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 * N * p * q}{e^2 (N-1) + (Z^2 * p * q)}$$
 establishing a maximum permissible error of 10% and a 90% confidence level, which projected a total sample of 320 study subjects, which were selected using the convenience method for each of the municipalities that make up the entity, thus obtaining the stratified sample (See Table 2).

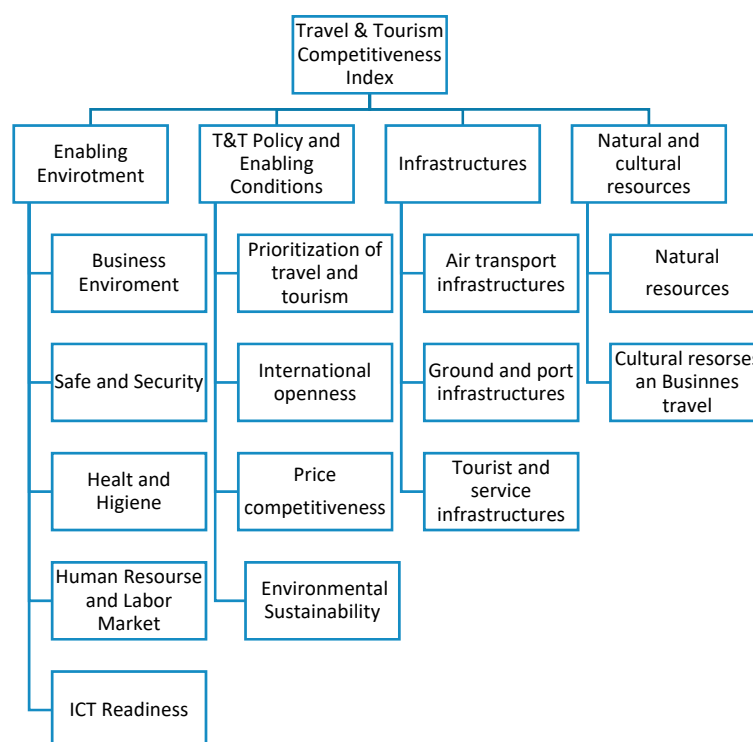
**Table 2.** Data sheet distribution of the stratified sample by municipality.

Municipality	Population	Sample
Ensenada	2100	66
Rosarito Beaches	647	62
Tijuana	5420	67
Tecate	365	58
Mexicali	3490	67
<b>Total</b>		320

### Model:

With regard to the tourist competitiveness indicators analyzed, the World Tourism and Travel Council's ranking [19] was taken as the basis, where Mexico ranks fourth in the World Tourism and Travel Council rankings competitiveness of the Top 10 of America, being led by the United States, Canada and Brazil successively. These indicators are classified into four pillars: suitable environment,

tourism and travel policy and appropriate conditions; as well as infrastructure, natural and cultural resource (see Figure 2). This model is considered as a strategic benchmarking tool for government and private companies to boost local, national and international tourism.



**Figure 2.** Travel and tourism competitive index. Based on the World Economic Forum (2019) [19].

### 3. Results

The results obtained were discussed in the order proposed by the travel and tourism competitiveness index model, but first it is necessary to characterize the subjects of this research, it should be noted that only the subjects of this research would present those results that contribute to the achievement of the objective of the study. The sample behaved as mentioned below: they were mostly male micro entrepreneurs (53.01%), located up to 40% in the central area of their locality (the distribution of the sample by municipality is presented in Table 3 and 36% in urban commercial areas with the largest tourist influx, whose businesses offered mostly food and beverage preparation services (70.9%) temporary accommodation service (17.2%). It should be noted that 65% of the establishments studied were microbusinesses, 29% small and 4% medium (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Municipality of establishment.

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Tijuana	67	20.9
Mexicali	67	20.9
Tecate	58	18.1
Rosarito	62	19.4
Ensenada	66	20.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Data is expressed in hard data.

### 3.1. Enabling Environment

#### 3.1.1. Business Environment

When talking about the business environment, aspects of the political conditions that were expected to do business were addressed. The link between the economic growth of the studied locality was evident; taking into account the costs and time that the tourist invests when planning his trip.

With regard to the business environment and economic factors analyzed, it was observed that 58% of the customers of the MSMEs were the residents of the localities themselves, who claim that in order to increase the competitiveness of the region is both government and private sector work promote events, festivities or tourist attractions in the region; which would drive an attractive regional image for a larger tourist market. In addition, 66.2% of the owners of the companies stated that compared to the previous year the tourist burden has been increased on a scale of 10–30%.

Another important economic factor is to determine the extent to which state MSMEs depend on tourism to be profitable and competitive; similarly, it is vital to know the period of the year when they are in high demand in order to be prepared to provide the best care (see Table 4). The state's businesses were mostly profitable by 58% due to their residents and their loyalty throughout the year; who said that in order to increase the competitiveness of the region it is the work of both the government and the private sector to promote events, festivities or tourist sites in the region; which would drive an attractive regional image for a larger tourist market.

Similarly, the contribution by foreign tourists from mainly the United States and Canada represented 33% of the sample studied, with the months of April to September being the most tourist heavy.

**Table 4.** Contingency table: customer type vs year period increased tourist demand.

		Customer Type Representing the Largest Percentage of Your Sales			Total
		Residents	National Tourist	Foreign Tourist	
Period of the year where there is the highest tourism demand	January–March	8	8	14	30
	April–June	8	4	35	47
	July–September	50	7	24	81
	October	55	3	6	64
	Same all year round	65	4	28	97
<b>Total</b>		186	26	107	319

Note: Data is expressed in hard data.

Based on the above information, it was observed that 47% of participating micro-entrepreneurs said that the number of visitors to their establishments during 2019 increased by 10% compared to last year. This is due to the region's traditional cultural and gastronomic events, which attract an average of 9,884,372 from abroad, according to data from the international traveler surveys, monthly series from August 2018 to June 2019, which report \$1111.65 million pesos as of 8 August 2019 [20].

In addition to the above, the MSMEs that reflect a lower mobility inter events are those located in Tijuana; while it is also the one that receives the largest number of visitors, mainly from Ensenada, Tecate and Playas de Rosarito; the above due to the growth and relevance that the gastronomic sector has represented for the city of Tijuana in recent years and to which it is considered as the capital of craft beer in Latin America; that is why 32% of tourists visiting Baja California make it motivated by the gastronomy of the region and its craft beer, allowing greater investment and growth in the town [21].

On the other hand; in general, the owners of the MSMEs established in Mexicali were characterized by not showing interest in mobility in the state; the above, derived from their own perception of the state capital, they see themselves as an instrument of passage for national and regional visitors who work in the United States for seasons or who are going to fix their immigration status, showing a worrying disinterest in tourism itself (see Table 5).



**Table 5.** Contingency table of state participation in local events.

		Municipality Attended a Tourist Event						Total
			Tijuana	Mexicali	Tecate	Rosarito	Ensenada	No
<b>Municipality of Residence</b>	Tijuana	52	4	0	0	6	5	67
	Mexicali	0	15	0	3	1	19	38
	Tecate	46	3	0	2	3	4	58
	Rosarito	17	3	2	22	2	14	60
	Ensenada	55	1	0	2	7	0	65
<b>Total</b>		170	26	2	29	19	42	288

Note: The data is expressed in the number of events.

Similarly, it was identified that the most benefited are the businesses belonging to the temporary accommodation service by local residents, followed by food and beverage preparation establishments, this stemming from inter-tourism municipalities made by its inhabitants; because as a strategy the state government has handled the advertising slogan “Tourist in Baja California,” it even offers a discount card to residents for the purpose of reviving the tourism economy of their community [22] (see Table 6).

**Table 6.** Contingency table for the type of business that gets the most benefits from tourism activities.

		Customer Type Representing the Largest Percentage of Your Sales			Total
		Residents	National Tourist	Foreign Tourist	
Business activity believes it benefits most from the arrival of tourists	Artistic, cultural and sporting services	10	2	11	23
	Museums, historical sites and zoos	15	0	5	20
	Entertainment services	27	8	16	51
	Temporary accommodation services	71	7	33	111
	Food and beverage preparation services	64	9	42	115
	Total	187	26	107	320

Note: Data expressed in study subjects.

With regard to social indicators, the benefits received by participants with respect to tourism-related activities were highlighted, with 41% considering that poverty reduction is contributed, 25% considered it was important to integrate their communities into tourism activities, tourist event or place and 22% said that the generation of formal jobs is the key to increasing the competitiveness of the region, since it highlights workers who have a living and sufficient wage to meet their food and non-food needs; taking into account that the formal employment index in the entity increased 62.4% compared to the national value equal to 43.7% [23], the expectations of the region’s entrepreneurs are encouraging against the poverty eradication in their community.

### 3.1.2. Human Resources and Labor Market

This section of the model measured the degree of training of workers, the skills and the education they received. This study found that 5% of the sample had master’s degree studies, 59% undergraduate, 8% high school and 22% secondary level; so they have a greater opportunity to be assigned to the

labor market. With regard to the frequency and type of training granted to its employees, 34% of the study subjects fortnightly trained their subordinates, mainly with regard to technical knowledge of their duties (42%) and customer service (35%); demonstrating the growing interest on the part of micro-entrepreneurs to offer better quality products that guarantee them a competitive position in the market; but above all to offer their employees the capacity to grow work and personnel. Good practices of the staff of this type of business have led that 34% of entrepreneurs do not need to hire more staff when the tourist burden increases in the festivities; however, 37% of entrepreneurs in coastal areas such as Rosarito and Ensenada said that it requires a temporary increase of their staff between 10% and 20% derived from the city's port tourism and festivities.

Another important point is the participation of women in this market, the efficiency and openness of this market, in terms of the participation of women, was evident of gender equality in the labor supply in this sector, since the difference was minimal between the sample studied, with 53% male staff and female staff observed at 47%; implying, that both had the same possibility of obtaining decent, well-paid jobs, where they could feel productive and safe.

### 3.1.3. Safety, Health and Hygiene

Tourists may be influenced not to travel to places or countries that may be considered dangerous, which would cause the sector and travel and tourism in these sites not to develop. Therefore, consideration must be given to the cost of common crime and violence, as well as terrorism, and the reliability of the local police to provide security against crime. Considering that the most security index measures the percentage of companies that have been the victim of a crime in the past year, in Baja California a 62.4% crime was reported [24]; that is why the company's entrepreneurs were asked whether they considered that the government provides the security service during an event, festival or tourist venue and whether the local police are prepared to meet the tourist demand, to which respondents by 10% agreed fully, 21% agreed and 12% to stand by with respect to such questions (see Table 7).

**Table 7.** Contingency considers that the government provides the security service during an event, festival or tourist venue Local police are considered to meet tourist demand.

		Local Police are Prepared to Meet Tourist Demand					Total
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
The government provides the security service during a festival event or tourist venue	(1)	33	2	2	0	3	40
	(2)	4	23	7	5	4	43
	(3)	7	7	37	20	4	75
	(4)	3	4	10	67	17	101
	(5)	0	3	12	15	31	61
<b>Total</b>		47	39	68	107	59	320

Note: being (1) totally disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree and (5) totally agree. Data expressed in study subjects.

They were also asked if the arrival of tourists in the town created security-related problems, to which 45% responded positively and the rest said no, however, only 13% of the total sample claimed to agree with the fact that the crime rate increased from the previous year, and 7% said they fully agreed. This implies a positive openness to local, national and international tourism by the state's entrepreneurs; it should be noted that in some destinations such as Valle de Guadalupe, Tecate and Rosarito its greatest income is from this economic activity (see Table 8).



**Table 8.** Contingency: crime has increased in the state. There are problems with the arrival of tourists in the town.

		There are Problems with the Arrival of Tourists in the Town		Total
		Yes	No	
It has increased crime in the state	(1)	17	19	36
	(2)	15	17	32
	(3)	42	50	92
	(4)	42	45	87
	(5)	23	40	63
	No	4	6	10
Total		143	177	320

Note: being (1) totally disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree and (5) totally agree. Data expressed in study subjects.

### Health and hygiene:

The medical sector must be able to guarantee the attention of both its residents and its tourists, since the risk of traveling to another country and contracting some disease or virus is always latent in the minds of tourists, which is why it must be shown that it is prepared to meet tourist demand at any time, as well as provide the health services required during scheduled holidays or events.

That is why when asking the subjects to show their opinion on the prior preparation made by the government to offer medical services during the festivities organized, they mostly did not know the information by up to 35%, this phenomenon was presented mainly in the Valle de Guadalupe because it is still a rural area with few medical services, but a high tourist burden derived from its agricultural, livestock and wine making activity, as it is part of the Wine Route comprising the San Valles Antonio de las Minas, Ojos Negros, Santo Tomas, San Vicente, La Grulla, Tanama, Las Palmas and San Valentin (90% of Mexican wine is produced) [25]; however, in the rest of the municipalities 29% agree that the government plans ahead for the medical services needed to ensure the health of its visitors during its festivities (see Table 9). However, opinions were widely expressed regarding the installation of health services during the festivities; in fact, it would perish as if the state government abdicated this responsibility to the participating establishments of the events.

**Table 9.** Contingency: the government provides the medical service during an event, festival or tourist venue vs. the flow of visitors is previously organized by the government.

		The Flow of Visitors is Previously Organized by the Government					Total
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
Government health services offered	(1)	13	7	18	4	1	43
	(2)	7	2	13	3	5	30
	(3)	14	6	19	15	8	62
	(4)	21	19	43	31	9	123
	(5)	16	7	20	12	6	61
Total		71	41	113	65	29	319

Note: being (1) totally disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree or disagree, (4) agree and (5) totally agree. Data expressed in study subjects.

### 3.1.4. ICT Availability

Another factor to consider in the business environment is the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as marketing and advertising tools for tourism services, noting in this study that 43.4% continued to make use of traditional advertising such as steering wheel, fences, tarpaulins and spectacular; however, 36.9% made use of social media as the main means of marketing, advertising and even offering promotions by electronic money; only 8% claimed to have a properly structured website to facilitate the travel and tourism experience of users and another 8% claimed not to use any advertising medium arguing that it was an unnecessary expense, because they were already

recognized and had its well-identified customers. In addition, it was identified that less than 3% of study subjects used some type of tourist platform as an associate, standing out among the most used by companies to Trivago (5%), TripAdvisor (4%) and Booking.com (3%; see Table 10).

**Table 10.** Advertising medium used to spread your business.

Advertising Medium	Frequency	Percentage
Newspaper	5	1.6
Traditional advertising	139	43.4
Social media	118	36.9
Website	26	8.1
Tourism platform affiliation	9	2.8
No	23	7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Data is expressed in hard data.

With regard to the main partner that companies have to attract new tourists and customers, the sample behaved as follows: 60% was due to social networks and their business partners such as other tourism companies by up to 10%, business recommendations close to them by 8%, 7% was due to the tourist platforms available and only 3% was due to the banks. This was because they were mostly micro-businesses that claimed not to need another means of advertising, since their treatment was direct with customers, allowing them to offer unique experiences and long-term relationships.

### 3.2. Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index

#### 3.2.1. Prioritization of Travel and Tourism

This section shows the degree to which the government prioritizes and influences the attraction of private and tourist investment through tourism campaigns, development programs, support to private industry in the organization of events, which allows it to increase competitiveness of the region. It should be mentioned that the participants in this study, claimed by up to 41% that the government did the necessary publicity to promote the events and tourist activities of their localities; however, 36% said they were not taken into account for such planning; which did not allow them to plan with regard to the expected tourist burden. This puts micro-entrepreneurs in an unfavorable position because they do not sometimes have the resources to be able to serve tourists during the events organized by the government, this is due to an obvious lack of coordination of the government. This is because only 3% of the entity's entrepreneurs trust that the current government is performing its functions in the right way [26].

#### 3.2.2. International Opening

This indicator refers to the opening of travel, requirement of permits and special visas to enter the country, which may result in a reduction in the willingness to visit such tourist destination, in the specific case of the state of Baja California, its nature tourist offers its visitors various ways to enter, either from abroad or from the interior of the country. For example, in the specific case of Ensenada, at the end of June 2019. One hundred and fourteen cruises arrived at the port, with 296,396 passengers from around the world [27]; in this regard, local entrepreneurs responded by 70% to be satisfied with the arrival of this particular type of tourism, as they come down from the boat to know the city, eat, drink, buy their handicrafts and leave without further time, in addition for them to account for 80% of their tourism demand.

Since Baja California shares a border with the United States, the commercial relationship and foreign tourism is part of the state's own activities, and requiring a visa to be admitted to the country is not an impediment to tourism development; in fact, at the end of June this year, 36,812,341 people were reported in the income by the different cross border, with Mexicali (26,292,162) and Tijuana (24,872,408) with the highest influx, compared to Tecate as it only reported at the end of the second quarter of the 1,419,754 people crossings [28].

### 3.2.3. Competitive Prices

Accessible travel-related costs include accommodations, fuel, passenger and food, among other aspects; versus the purchasing power of the tourist, it can increase the attractiveness of a tourist place to go to visit. Tourism companies participating in the same market are looking to place their products or services competitively priced, which is why they put their main rivals as a benchmark for allocating their prices. The most common way to do this is by assigning equal prices (please the competition), above or below the competition. This study showed that the pricing strategies most commonly used by tourism micro entrepreneurs was to match the prices to those of their competitors by up to 45.3% and less than the rest of the participants up to 47.2%, this with the aim to ensure its position in the market and increase its competitiveness.

### 3.2.4. Environmental Sustainability

This indicator seeks a balance between the tourist offer and the assurance of flora and fauna for future generations, so it is vitally important to identify the practices with the care of the environment of a country or city. In this sense, the findings show that both the state government and the tourist businessmen took mediation for the care of marine life fauna (49% and 44%). This is derived from good practices adopted by its inhabitants in this regard, such as ensuring that their resources are renewable, taking care that the rate of use (consumption) harvesting or fishing does not exceed the regeneration rate of each (19.7%). In addition, of the environmental policies implemented such as protecting biodiversity (6.3%), marine life as well as nature reserves (15.6%) and practices associated with the reuse, recycling and elimination of residues in a sustainable way that contributes to reducing the impact of environmental pollution (35.6%; see Table 11). In addition to the above, ecotourism (22.8%) took a very important role in environmental sustainability, because its purpose is to attract tourists who wish to engage in outdoor activities in a responsible way, that is, without altering the flora and fauna, as well as marine life.

**Table 11.** Environmental protection policies.

	Frequency	Percentage
Ecotourism	73	22.8
Marine protection and nature reserves	50	15.6
Biodiversity conservation	20	6.3
Sustainable production and consumption	63	19.7
Reducing pollutants	114	35.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Data is expressed in hard data.

### 3.3. Infrastructure

This indicator includes air transport infrastructure, land and transport infrastructure, as well as tourism services infrastructure, such as roads, information functions, distribution of physical spaces, public stations, among others. Baja California has two airports, one in Mexicali and another in Tijuana, without a doubt is the last is the most important of the entity with more than 75 daily flights inland and exterior of the country, today it already offers the first direct flight to Japan with two departures per week [29].

With regard to this indicator of tourist competitiveness, entrepreneurs claimed for the most time (48%) that the government considers infrastructure as an indicator of tourism sustainability, not only during the festiveness, but permanently maintaining the access roads in optimal conditions (40%) except for the Mexicali center, where the owners claimed that because it is one of the oldest areas of that municipality the passage of time becomes more and more evident; which represents a bad image not only for its establishments, but of the city in general; however, they recognize that it is an area of opportunity for improvement since they believe in 33% that the distribution of physical spaces are not appropriate to equate with the tourist load that is normally served, which makes it difficult to transit locally.

With regard to public transport, 60% said that if there are sufficient units to serve local and outsiders; however, the Guadalupe Valley was characterized by completely lacking this service, to which the owners of the vineyards replied that it is because the business model is aimed at the upper middle class that has its own vehicle and is willing to drive to its establishments to taste its famous wines and gastronomy. In addition, they claimed that the provision of temporary and permanent parking is also part of their infrastructure (40%).

Regarding the provision of information modules at the main points of interest of each municipality, the locals stated that by up to 55% that they operate permanently, increasing even in the festive times the modules, and digital means to promote events, provide information on medical services, hospitals, restaurants, hotels and gas stations, among others.

### 3.4. Natural and Cultural Resources

This indicator includes aspects related to natural attractions that make a tourist destination interesting, the cleanliness of its beaches and parkland and the richness of its flora and fauna are key factors for the sustainable development of any city. In Baja California there are a sufficient variety of animal species, among them the gray whale, which although it does not live in Baja California, it migrates from Alaska to make a trip to mate and give birth in the south of Baja California for its warm waters, making stops along the lower north coast, more specifically, in Ensenada [30]. Annually the whales arrive in december and stay until april, so every year [31], about 50,000 tourists arrive between that time period seeing the phenomenon of migration and sometimes interacting with whales, registering a total of approximately \$2.7 million annually, for ecotourism, which directly benefits local communities as employment opportunities are generated.

The vegetation found in Baja California is very varied, as well as the destinations for ecotourism such as the black-eyed valley, Sierra de Juarez and San Pedro Martir, island of Cedros, isla de Guadalupe, chaparral and the sands, among others; where the agave and Dudley predominate, which are well approved for their healing properties, textiles by the indigenous groups of the locality. It should be noted that of 450 species listed nationally as of great economic importance 211 are located in the state of Baja California, of which 47% are for edible use, 29% medicinal and the rest are used in the sector industrial shard [32].

Despite measures taken by the state government to preserve and protect the region's natural reserves and marine and terrestrial species, fish and hunting remains an unregulated activity in its entirety, which means that several species are in extinction such as the turtle, totoaba, blue whale, sheep Cimarron and sea wolf, among others. In this regard, the entrepreneurs subject to this study said that more than 60% of visitors do not respect the flora or fauna of the locality, so it is vital to take action on this, such as designing public policies that regulate and sanction this phenomenon. Another environmental problem that requires immediate attention is the treatment of garbage, its collection, treatment and/or recycle; as well as the treatment of wastewater. Since according to this research, the accumulation of garbage (70%), environmental pollution (85%) and road traffic (60%) are the main problems that have to deal with the different tourist destinations of the state.

Baja California is also rich in culture, so it is considered to have a unique artistic and cultural identity; for example, its traditional Mexican cuisine, community culture, ancestral and style of life, the difference of any other. It can be said that traditional Mexican cuisine is a complete cultural model that converges agricultural activities, rituals, knowledge and ancient culinary techniques, customs and modes of ancestral community behavior, passed down between generations through the collective practice of their stakeholders, field producers, day laborers, high-level cooks and companies that promote their typical dishes.

It should be noted that the entity is located with 11 assets declared as cultural heritage [33], highlighting the manifestation of cultural interest: “The Kitchen of Baja California” (4 May 2018); with respect to Ensenada, the most representative are the Bodegas de Santo Tomas, Ensenada (7 September 2001) and the Riviera Social, Civic and Cultural Center of Ensenada (31 January 2014); in Mexicali is located the casa de la Cultura (11 August 2006), Pantheon Municipal No. 1 (4 July 2014), Water Tank “La Bombera” (4 July 2014). For its part in Tijuana there is Escuela Alvaro Obregon (Casa de la Cultura de Tijuana; 31 January 2014), Municipal Palace of Tijuana (31 January 2014), the Park Lieutenant Miguel Guerrero (31 January 2014) and as a manifestation of cultural interest: “Burrocebra, Binomio Carreta-Burro”, Tijuana (4 May 2018).

In this regard, entrepreneurs in the region were of their entire opinion that their customs and traditions had not been affected despite their proximity to the United States, since the cultural roots were so strong that it adopted some as its own external influences without eradicating their own. However, this proximity promotes the proliferation of marriages between local and foreign citizens that causes a cultural mix (plural and diversified) for the generations future.

#### 4. Conclusions

Based on the findings described above, it is important for entrepreneurs to generate actions that align sustainability to the day-to-day operations of their organizations, strategies designed to increase their competitiveness in the current market and the expected performance of these. It will only be possible if the entrepreneurs involved work collaboratively between stakeholders in search of value generation for each of them, such as investors, employees, customers, government and society. It is important to mention that, regardless of the economic benefits that can be obtained with the tourist offer, it is necessary to balance the social and environmental costs, since there is a risk of destroying tourism due to an overflowed and poorly planned tourism. Since, you must work to preserve natural resources and respect the customs and traditions of any tourist destination.

The approach of the travel and tourism competitive index model applied to micro, small and medium-sized tourism companies is considered specifically innovative because this model has been used to date only to measure the competitive development of tourism in countries and/or cities, so this article could be a guide for the tourism industry and its owners, as well as for researchers on this issue as it contributes to the generation of sustainable development.

On the other hand, business development focuses mostly on the satisfaction of the interests of its stakeholders through value creation, which will be reflected in the profit-making mainly financial statements; in addition to this, it is necessary to involve all the value-generating parts to achieve the systemic transformation of all their products and processes, with the aim of making them safe, healthy and regenerative. This implies an increase in the organization’s ability to be profitable in the long term and thereby sustain its value proposition over time.

With regard to cargo capacity, it is essential to recognize that it is the central axis for the planning and control of tourism demand in order to protect the environment and preserve natural resources and cultural areas, since having no control measures in place in this regard often deteriorates public spaces, historical and archaeological spaces.

On gender equality, the state government had done a great job on raising awareness of citizenship about inclusive posture and generating social practices that promote equality of gender, without discrimination and equal opportunity in the social, political, economic and cultural spheres.

In this regard, entrepreneurs in the region consider that equality and non-discrimination are basic and universal principles of the protection of human rights. They are the foundation of democratic societies, whose purpose is to offer egalitarian and fairer conditions for all regardless of gender.

On the other hand, the ability of micro-entrepreneurs in the state of Baja California developed a value proposition of their business different from the others that would give them greater opportunities to design sustainable strategies by implementing good practices aimed at attracting more foreign tourists and retaining the current market through proper management of indicators of sustainable tourism and joint collaboration with their stakeholders. Finally, companies seeking sustainable development should be managing activities aimed at the well-being of their stakeholders, not only in terms of benefits to environmental protection, equity and social justice.

As a recommendation, sustainable tourism can be a strategy to promote and improve public and private services related to health services, health and hygiene, communication and transport that allow them to be placed in a better competitive position, making the different tourist destinations even more attractive and profitable. Similarly, new job opportunities derived from tourism can be an area of opportunity for new generations, to develop in this sector, innovating and developing processes sustainable products in line with tourism demands.

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