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Image Management of the hotel: a complementary approach between intangible and tangible resources

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Abstract

This research focuses on setting a theoretical and methodological proposal that allows the management of the image from the elements that determine its positive perception by hotel guests. The study provides a conceptual model that explains how the image of a hotel is determined by subjective and objective factors that are approached from the strategic direction as a successful way to achieve the desired image. In this proposal, the tracks are set to achieve successful complementarity between tangible and intangible resources, the key in hotel management. Another result of this research is the proposed procedure, which states that in order to achieve the desired image is necessary to make changes from the paradigms of internal and external diagnosis of the hotel. This allows to manage coherent image. By applying the procedure in eight case studies (surveyed people =1410) is then proved scientifically, the possibility to manage the desired hotel image.

Keywords: Intangibles Resources, Desired Image, hotels, Strategic Management

Introduction:
The Cuban economic and social model in its update process, conceived the strengthening of the role of autonomous management of enterprises. For this, they consider its various forms and peculiarities, all aimed to achieve increased efficiency and effectiveness in its core processes. This will allow these comply with the responsibility of ensuring sustainable development of Cuban society. The tourism sector is the sixth economic activity in contributions to GDP in Cuba (ONEI, 2015) therefore its importance for achieving the purposes described.

Tourism is an intangible product marketed through images. Academic tourism have recognized that the image of a hotel combined with the image of the destination and the country to which it belongs, as an inducer of determining purchase decision in tourism (Beerli, Martin & Moreno, 2008; Perelló, 2014; Anholt, 2014). As a result, it must be objective of any tourism entity to maintain a positive image in the market. Despite the hotel have the means to achieve the desired image; this goal is not always achieved. Which is due, ultimately, to the management of this variable from inconsistent theoretical perspectives. Although the importance of intangibles to achieve the objectives of the hotel market is recognized, its management remains inconsistent regarding their complementary relations with the tangible resources of these entities.

In business practice, the image, as a rule, is employed as an exclusive variable of external communication in the hotels. From the projection in the media, image is not managed focusing on the need to know the actual configuration of the clients. Generally, it is not taken into account as a project the image that it is based on tangible resources.

This research raises the need to address the image from the strategic direction, in order to design strategies that integrate the key elements that influence this, considering both tangible resources and other important intangible resources for the tourism sector. If the image is managed from this point of view, the incongruities between the image projected through communication and image that visitor perceives while staying at the hotel are avoided, which can reflect negatively on its satisfaction. It is important to consider that key processes sometimes lack of a plan according to the consumer's needs, desires and expectations. Consequently, the chances of support a positive image are reduced. These arguments synthesize the problematic situation of this paper. Therefore, this research focuses on identifying the elements that determine the shape of the image in the hotel guest's perception. Which also establishes the methodological sequence that allows implementing in this type of accommodation facilities successful strategies for achieving the desired image. To achieve this objective, the article adopts the following structure. The first section establishes the theoretical background through a review of the factors that determine the image of a hotel, and the foundations for a new approach to manage hotel image. The second section describes the methods (participants and procedures,) followed by the results and discussion of the hypothesis testing. The final section provides conclusions that highlights the implications, limitations, and suggests directions for future research. This study proposes and validates the structural model of the process of modelling the image of a hotel.

Theoretical basis of research:

Factors that determine the image of a hotel: new approach to management

A reflection about the image that makes abstraction of all contingent elements indicates that this is the result of subjective and objective factors. The subjective process responds to social, personal and psychological variables of the tourist. According to recent tourism research focus on ethnographic and ethnocentric approach, there is a universal tendency for people to judge other social practices from the perspective of their country of origin. People of each nation have a system codes and distinctive pattern of behavior, according to their material culture, social institutions, belief systems, aesthetic systems and language (Ning, 2011; Perelló, 2014). The authors believe that the objective factors determining the image of a hotel include communication image strategies designed in the country, destination and hotel corporation. Other objective factors are the key processes; identity and communication, where the perceived quality and customer satisfaction on the service received influence on the final perception of the hotel image. The Figure 1 shows these relationships.

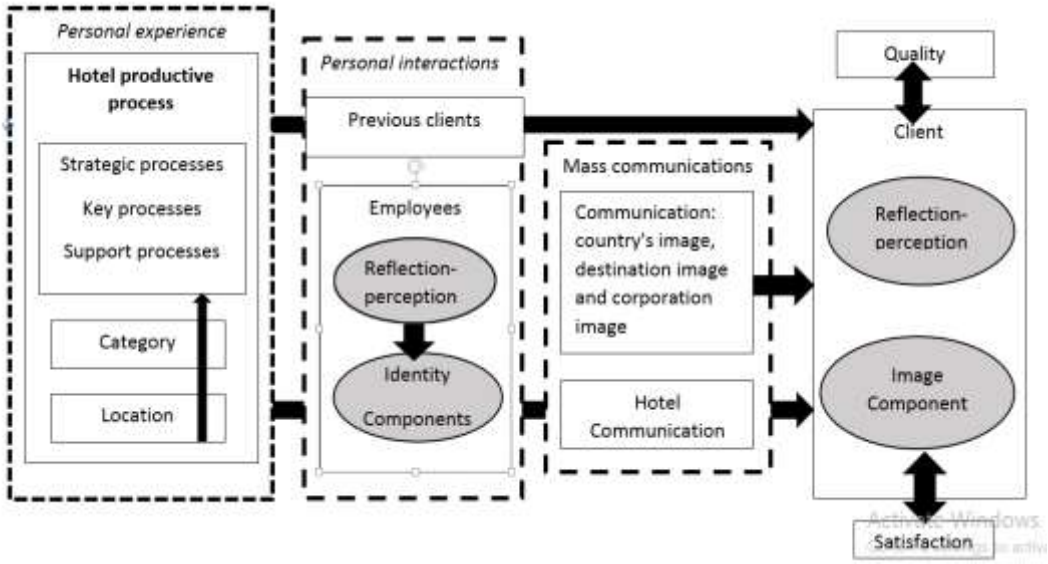


Figure 1. Structural model of the process of forming the hotel image

This model differs from the trends that prevail in the literature, which identified as main inductor element in the formation of the image, communication processes. In this model (Figure 1) can be identified the areas described by Capriotti (2013) regarding the formation of the image: mass communication, the reciprocal personal interactions, and the field of personal experience in the hotel, where the objective is independent of the individual concerned and acts as an inducer of all subjective process (Duffus & Pons, 2014). This proposal takes into account the research of Sanz de la Tajada(1994); Muñiz (2009), Tanda (2011) and Capriotti (2013) .At the same time this model supports the integration between intangible and tangibles resources in the hotel management for a consistent external communication function.

In this model, the field of mass communication involves all messages that the hotel sends to its public through the mass media, which expresses what the company says it is (Sanz de la Tajada, 1994. Anholt (2014) states that the message is used to influence the image formed on customers, should be aligned with the strategic vision of the organization, it must be credible, sustainable, and must be supported by a real improvement of tangible and intangible elements. These communications also include all information disseminated massively, coming from competitors, the sector to which the organization belongs, and even messages of general nature that may affect the company. In shaping the image of the hotel, communicating directly influences the country's image; the latter if positive serves as an attractive tourist demand (Koniszczer, 2013). The image of the hotel must respect the guidelines dictated from the corporation and must be in harmony with the image of the destination in which it is located (Duffus & Pons, 2014). All these other messages that reach the individual may be on line or in dissonance with those issued by the organization, which can lead to a reinforcement of messages (if consistent), but can also generate a noise in the communication of the organization (if they are dissonant). Mass communications are characterized by unidirectional, because the public can not possibly respond to messages. It is distant, due to little or no involvement affective receiver (Tsaur & Lin, 2004; Capriotti, 2013).

The scope of personal interactions recognizes the reciprocal influence exerted by members of a group, an issue that is increasingly recognized and studied. Relations between members of a group superlatively influence how group members perceive the world around them (Capriotti, 2013). The groups develop

their life in a continuous assembly of the actions of its members, which are produced in response to or in relation to the others. Moreover, the subjects involved in the interaction must take on the role of the other, so they are obliged to take into account the actions of others when acting (Berelson, 1952; Martínez, Laria, Cueto, & Alfonso, 2012). The execution of such acts implies a double process: to tell others how they should act and interpret the signs of others. The interaction between people is characterized by direct, two-way and strongly emotional because of the existence of proximity between the sender and the receiver, and affections existing between them (Capriotti, 2013).

Within personal interaction, it plays a key role called "opinion leaders", that means that when there are people who enjoy a certain recognition, it exerts a greater influence on the group's other members (Stoner, 2006; Capriotti, 2013). They are identified in shaping the image of a hotel across the two types of opinion leaders reciprocal personal interactions: tourists with previous experience of travel and hotel employees. The first frame, limit or expand the interpretive possibilities of members of the public regarding the country's image, destination and hotel to visit for future customers without previous experience. Employees for outside public, are part of the organization, and become functional leaders of opinion, as are given a deeper self that knowledge about the organization.This is one of the basic reasons that work in shaping the identity profile. It should be a strategic project for the hotel.

In international literature there is a variety of concepts to define the term "identity of the company", these are grouped into the design approach and organizational approach (Capriotti, 2009). In this research, it is assumed the organizational approach as the most appropriate to define the identity of the hotel. Costa, 2003; Capriotti, 2009 identity as the set of central, enduring and distinctive organization features with which this identifies and differentiates itself from other organizations of their environment (Villafañe, 2002 quoted by; Mayol, 2010). This set of features gives the organization its specificity; stability and consistency, without preventing to evolve according to its environment (Costa, 2008; Tanda, 2011).

In the field of personal experience in the hotel, tourists come at some point, in direct and personal contact with the organization. This makes individuals try to confirm with their own experience, have the image of the organization (Capriotti, 2013). The receiver itself experiencing any deviation between the supposed truth (secondary image) and lived truth (primary image) (Costa, 2008). This is a key area in forming the image, because people judge the hotel directly, without intermediaries. Therefore perceptions in this area are very strong, and permeate all structures of individual interpretation. The field of personal experience is bidirectional, because both the organization and tourists are able to send and receive messages at the time of contact. It is direct, since no technical means involved in sending and receiving messages, and it is emotional, because individuals are involved heavily. This area involves employees who are a crucial part of the production process at the hotel (Camargo, Ucio & Rodriguez, 2012; Huawen, 2015) and project their identity through the service.

During this experience, the customer can directly assess the characteristics of the service offered, expressed through key processes of the hotel, seen from a cognitive and emotional perspective resulting in certain behavior to the entity. This assessment involved directly perceived quality and experienced service satisfaction. In the hotel sector it is essential for the perceived quality, satisfaction and creation of certain image, meet basic requirements related to them and locations, which create expectations for these variables. The perceived quality is defined as the ability to produce satisfactions, whether goods and / or services who fill the expectations and needs of users (Deming, 1996; Kelada, 2011; Fernández-Companioni, 2013). Current approaches to quality give great importance to the combination of technical quality with functional quality. Both elements make up the quality perceived by the customer. The Nordic School of Perceived Quality of Services reflects these ideas in the image model, which considers that the quality perceived by the consumer is influenced by three factors: technical quality, functional quality and corporative image (Grönroos, 1990; Nguyen, 1991; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry 1993; Valls, 2006, Patrik & Mård, 2007). Grönroos (1983) showed that service quality is the most important for the

formation of the image in the minds of consumer's factor (Bigné *et al.*, 2001; Diaz, 2010). It can be assumed, therefore the ratio and image quality perceived as bidirectional.

The relationship between image and satisfaction is widely discussed in literature, recognizing several directions at defining concept, which preceeds and determines the other. Lindestad & Andreassen (1998), Zins (2001) and Apaolaza & Hartmann (2009) understand that the image has a direct influence on customer satisfaction. Other researchers, such as Selnes (1993), Johnson & Gustafsson (2000) consider the satisfaction variable is pressing towards the formation of certain image. It is considered that these positions, though seemingly opposite, have important complementarities, as the dialectical relationship between the variables recognized image and satisfaction.

On the other hand, it can be said that the satisfaction that the tourist has experienced is directly related to the expectations generated prior to this. What makes essential that they correspond to the maximum extent possible with the reality that the visitor will find in the hotel (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Hart, 2000; Gandara, Torres, & Costa, 2007). It is understood that the secondary image is a variable generating customer expectations, which then determines the travel experience and forms a primary image; a degree of satisfaction. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction is correlated with the evaluation of the previous congruence of tourists and perceptions of experience expectations. Therefore, the information available to the tourist must be grounded in reality (Guisasola, 2003; Gandara *et al.*, 2007).

The role of the image is well recognized as an antecedent of customer satisfaction. This does not necessarily contradict the fact that customer satisfaction should also be understood as a previous variable image. Thus, the level of satisfaction experienced by the client during their stay at the hotel later influences their perception about the image of this. That is, the primary image is a function of cumulative effect satisfactory / unsatisfactory client experiences (Bloemer & Ruyter, 1998; Apaolaza & Hartmann, 2009).

The model to determine the image of a hotel to the conclusion that the three areas of imaging hotel not act independently, but are integrated and interact with each other. In this interaction, the three fields do not have the same importance, being the areas of personal interaction more influential than mass communications, when set the image experience. This is because the individual directly and actively participates in the first two, knows has more confidence, gives them more credibility, and therefore is influenced and guided largely than it does with mass communications. The image of the hotel is the result of that interaction, not of a specific situation, but the cumulative interpretation of information that reaches the public. The image formation is a slow process, which involves patient work in the form of coordinated actions in a long-term program. To manage the image of a hotel effectively it is needed to consider:

• Evaluate the correspondence between the message delivered by the hotel (secondary image) and the reality that expresses the production process of this, which is interpreted by clients during their visit (primary image).

• Tourists visiting the hotel are an effective means of communicating the image of the organization to its potential customers.

• The projected by employees identity should match the objectives and strategies of the hotel, while sustaining a positive image.

• The most effective way to achieve the positive image of the hotel environment is to achieve excellence in the development of the production process of this, taking into account the peculiarities of their size, category and location.

Research methodology

To assess the relevance of the theoretical proposal a descriptive nature administrative investigation was conducted. It combines qualitative and quantitative methods. For this study, the authors propose a

procedure based on the experience of seven years of implementation in hotels in Cuba. This has allowed in different iterations to correct, adapt and gradually improve the characteristics of the research methods used to meet the objective of achieving the desired image in hotels (Duffus & Pons, 2014). In this sense are introduced in this methodological proposal, the main achievements of 30 previous procedures. It is conceived in each phase eliminating deficiencies within these proposals can quote Chu & Choi (2000); Anholt (2003); Pike & Ryan (2004); Tanda (2011) and Martinez *et al*. (2012). The procedure consists of three phases and 13 stages in which information is recorded in 10 documents that allow traceability and efficient use is handled.

Research Model

The research approach seeks to evaluate the proposed conceptual model (Figure 1), in which the achievement of the desired image in the hotel is determined not only by the communication process but by the identity and perceived reality during the visit of tourists to the hotel; with the above hypothesis is constructed as follows:

H 1. If an assessment procedure of the image in the strategic direction of hotels in Cuba applies, it is possible to achieve the desired image thereof.

Procedure

Phase I: Initial conditions of the hotel for the application of the procedure is to determine the characteristics of the hotel and its surroundings, which must be taken into account for measuring its image. For better organization of this phase it is divided into two stages and seven steps. The first stage of this phase offers the possibility of knowing the starting point for the treatment of the image of the hotel, as the identifying attributes of the country's image, destination and the corporation to which this type of accommodation establishment belongs. In addition, the stage meets the need to typify the hotel to choose the correct attributes in order to measure their image, to which you add determine its economic and financial future to address needed changes in their strategies possibilities. The second step is to determine the characteristics and limitations of strategic management process that takes place in the hotel to introduce the same image evaluation in terms of achieving its desired state. During Phase I it is proposed to use as techniques for obtaining and processing information, document analysis, Simple Random Sampling, descriptive statistics and vertical analysis of reasons.

Phase II: Evaluation of the hotel image, seeks to obtain as a result the image measurement hotel considering valid and reliable assessment of the factors that influence the achievement of its desired state. For it is part of the characterization of the terms of the promotion of hotel attributes. In addition, it is considering the proposed dimensions and attributes for describing the image. These are determined according to the type generic dimensions corresponding to the hotel by category and location (Table 1). These dimensions are reflected in a survey that is one of the instruments to measure this construct, which are tailored to the particular characteristics of the establishment under study where its validity and reliability is valued. After this phase provides a profile of the primary image of the hotel based on the assessment of the reality of this for their customers, where elements of identity and influential external communications are identified.

Table 1. Components of hotel image

Components	Dimensions					
Distinctive Component	Depents on the particular caracterictics of the hotel					
Affective Component	Unpleasant-Friendly	Bored-Exciting	Loud-Quiet	Tense-Relaxed	Insecure -safe	Indifferent-attractive
Cognitive Component	General Services	Rooms	Food, drink and recreation	Services and complementary facilities	Conditions of Tourism Destiny	
Conative Component	Extremely Negative	Negative	Not Negative or positive	Positive	Extremely Positive	

Note: This is a generic proposal for meseaure image, each dimesion have others attributes that describe the hotel particular situation as it showed in the survey

For better organization of this phase, it is divided into 7 stages. These steps include: identification of the attributes of external communication, development and validation of dimensions and generic attributes to measure the image; adjusting the instruments proposed to the conditions of each hotel; measuring the identity and primary image; analysis of reliability of the instruments as well as the processing and analysis of data resulting from the measurement. Not all hotels where this procedure applies have the same conditions. Hence, these stages are applied according to the characteristics presented by the object of analysis.

During this Phase II are used as techniques for obtaining and processing information: content analysis, quota sampling, sampling Stratified Random proportional type, document analysis, expert judgment, direct observation, focus groups, survey, interview, pretest, retest, the evaluation System image Hotel (SEIH vs.1)[*] and descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 2. Technical details of the research

Universe	Employees	Tourism*	Experts
Sampling unit	529	866	15
Sampling Procedure	Proportional Stratified random: by occupancy.	Proportional stratified random: by nationality.	Cyret y March (1965) Method
Sampling error	9 %	9 %	9 %
Confidence level	95 %	95 %	95 %
Fieldwork	January 2009- December 2014		

*This universe refers the hotel capacity places

Phase III: Incorporation of results of measuring the image to the process of strategic management at the hotel, it is characterized by four stages; in which comparisons are made to determine differences between elements that should work harmoniously. Such is the case of secondary image with the primary image; the image with the identity and strategic profile of the hotel and profile including opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses detected by employees and customers. Phase III intends to make the appropriate changes in the internal and external diagnosis, to include the perspectives of employees and customers in

[*] Software created by the lead author together with a multidisciplinary team of professionals from Central University "Marta Abreu" of Las Villas, Cuba.

determining the strategic direction of the hotel focused on sustaining the desired image. To obtain and process information at this stage the ideogram, the identigram, the imageogram and matrix performance-important factor is used.

While strategic management of image is a process that involves the long term; it is necessary to control the change systematically. Accordingly, it is proposed to apply this procedure annually. Considering the Balanced Scoreboard within this process, the image is seen as an indicator of customer; where their systematic measurement to detect progress and setbacks on the way to achieve the desired image as well as in achieving integrated approach to customer orientation.

Results and discussion

To verify that the methods proposed to achieve the desired image on hotels in Cuba through its strategic direction evaluation are valid and reliable the procedure was applied in seven hotels in Cuba on eigth occasions. These accommodation establishments were selected under the purposive sampling method. In each case were taken into account, the characterization of the object of study, the economic and financial situation of each hotel as well as the strengths and weaknesses of their strategic management process.

Criterion issued by the experts respect the procedure proposed

The study of the response of the experts can say according to the degree of significance showing the coefficient W of Kendall, a match between the criteria issued by the experts and this is high. Corroborating these findings, according to the significance of the Kruskal Wallis is found that there is no contradiction between the arguments given by the experts for the presence of any of the characteristics evaluated for the procedure. The criterion most prevalent among them, expressed by mode is considered; so it can be said that the procedure implements fully the theoretical model that sustains it and at the same time is able to meet the proposed objectives.

Furthermore, these proceedings are highly systemic and comprehensive. Its logical consistency and participatory and flexible nature are suitable. It has a great capacity for continuous improvement management, as well as a high methodological value and rationality. It is understood by most experts viability and structure are appropriate. The results obtained by descriptive statistics, are checked by calculating the Index Content Validity (IVC) which was adapted from the proposal made by Lawshe (1975). Where the suitability of all the features described the proposed procedure are evaluated as positive. Although the procedure obtained good evaluation of judges in general, this should be under constant review. Since aspects such as structuring and participatory needed to be improved, as expressing the average, the relative frequency and IVC. It can be stated that the survey used by experts to validate the procedure has internal consistency, so the results derived from it are reliable.See Table 3 for the detailed result of expert review.

Table 3. Characteristics of expert opinion regarding the proposed procedure

Features procedure	Media	Mode	Relative frequency (%)				
			Average level of suitabless	Suitable	Very suitable	IVC	Kruskal Wallis
Adaptation to the model	4.80	5	0	20.0	80.0	1	0.459
Systemic	4,73	5	0	26.7	73.3	1	0.196
Logical consistency	4,33	4	0	66.7	33.3	1	0.186
Participating	4,20	4 *	20.0	40.0	40.0	0.6	0.312
Flexible	4,40	4	0	60.0	40.0	1	0.540
Continuous improvement	4,67	5	0	33.3	66.7	1	0.079
Methodological value	4,53	5	0	46.7	53.3	1	0.939

Viability	4,27	4	0	73.3	26.7	1	0.108
Structuring	3,87	4	13.3	86.7	0	0.73	0.546
Rationality	4,53	5	0	46.7	53.3	1	0.126
Achievement of goals	4.73	5	0	26.6	73.4	1	0.385
Kendall Coefficient = 0.615		W Kendall significance: 0,000			Cronbach's Alpha = 0.726		

***** There are multiple modes; the lower value is shown.

Analysis of the metric properties of the proposed scale for measuring image hotels

The Table 4 show the result of surveys to measure identity and image in internal and external customers.

Table 4. Analysis of consistency to the survey to measure identity and image Hotel

Hotels⁄ Alpha de Cronbach	Year	Questionnaire Image	Number of respondents	Questionnaire Identity	Number of respondents
Los Caneyes	2009	0.711	118	0.702	60
Brisas Trinidad del Mar	2009	0.910	118	0.812	90
Kohly	2010	0.897	120	0.798	89
Ancón	2011	0.922	120	0.962	62
Hanabanilla	2011	0.852	118	0.758	30
Las Cuevas	2012	0.971	118	0.767	82
Brisas Trinidad del Mar	2014	0.953	106	0.894	90
América	2014	0.911	48	0.908	26

In assessing the reliability of surveys to measure the image of hotels they were considered as criteria interobservable internal consistency and agreement. The consistency of both surveys is checked through Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for all cases where evaluated, this statistician acquires satisfactory values, so it is possible to say that the measurement scale for identity and image are consistent.

Seeks to demonstrate the validity of criteria, another way of being measured endorse what is intended. For this demonstration, usually result of previous studies are taken and the results obtained with the instrument are compared to validate. As in this case there are no references of proven validity (Duffus & Pons, 2014) to measure the image of hotels they are used as Gold Standard the relationship demonstrated theoretically and by empirical studies between purchase behavior, primary image, and satisfaction (Beerli *et al*., 2008). To do this, considering the criteria issued by employees and customers, which is measured by the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient. The aim is to show that these behave, for case studies that relate in the same way as described the literature, where a better image, greater satisfaction; as well as customers who evaluate the image of the hotel have greater willingness to return to this. Table 5 shown the results.

Table 5. Relationship between variables image, satisfaction and post purchase decision

Hotels	According to customers				According to employees	
	Image / Satisfaction		Image/ Post purchase decision		Image/ Satisfaction	
	Correlation coefficient	Coefficient Tau-b	Coeficiente de Correlación	Coeficiente Tau-b	Coeficiente de Correlación	Coeficiente Tau-b
Los Caneyes (2009)	0.775	0.765	0.676	0.701	0.500	0.503
Brisas Trinidad del Mar (2009)	0.722	0.709	0.656	0.666	0.511	0.511
Kohly(2010)	0,652	0.671	0.652	0.654	0.617	0.612

Ancón (2011)	0.796	0.761	0.672	0.613	0.567	0.574
Hanabanilla (2011)	0.642	0.696	0.684	0.617	0.643	0.671
Las Cuevas (2012)	0.843	0.819	0.797	0.766	0.520	0.584
Brisas Trinidad del Mar (2014)	0.749	0.722	0.808	0.747	0.692	0.601
América (2014)	0.559	0.561	0.540	0.790	0.524	0.510

In the eight occasions when individuals are surveyed to 1395[†] total to measure identity and image in seven hotels in Cuba in different categories and location; in all cases a strong and direct linear association between the image and satisfaction as well as between the image and the post purchase behavior is demonstrated. On this basis, the existence of valid criteria for the proposed instruments is demonstrated.

This study prove scientifically evaluate the scales to be considered to measure the image of a hotel, unlike several previous studies where proposals lacking a solid conceptual structure are made. These are characterized by an excess of attributes to be measured, which may result in the inapplicability of the analysis results, considering toaddress an overwhelming number of elements in addition to exhausting questionnaires that limit reasoned and honest answers. Other authors start from a very small number of attributes, and leave without assessing major defining components of the image, which the results of these investigations are no longer valid.

Impact of the new management model image of hotels in Cuba

There is a better public image as related to the objectives and strategies to achieve this multidimensional construct implemented so that increase customer satisfaction with the service received (Beerli *et al*., 2008). The satisfaction has a direct and strong relationship with the congruence between primary image and secondary image in hotels. Hence, after applying the actions proposed in the procedure for these hotels, an indicator showing the impact of this on the achievement of the desired image is the satisfaction index. The researchers acknowledge that there are uncontrollable psychosocial elements that can influence the results shown, but consider not detract from the quality of the research. The year before application of the procedure, the management of the hotels in the sample did not implement other strategies than those proposed to support a positive image based on the desired image.

In 100% of cases in which the procedure for evaluating the image on the strategic direction of hotels in Cuba (Figure 2) applies an increase in the rate of satisfaction is achieved. Therefore, it is possible to state that the procedure improves the perception of the image on clients, considering direct and strong relationship between the image and satisfaction. Whereas the proposed conceptual model is implemented through the procedure explained in section 2 it is possible to accept the hypothesis.

[†] This number did not incluyed the experts.

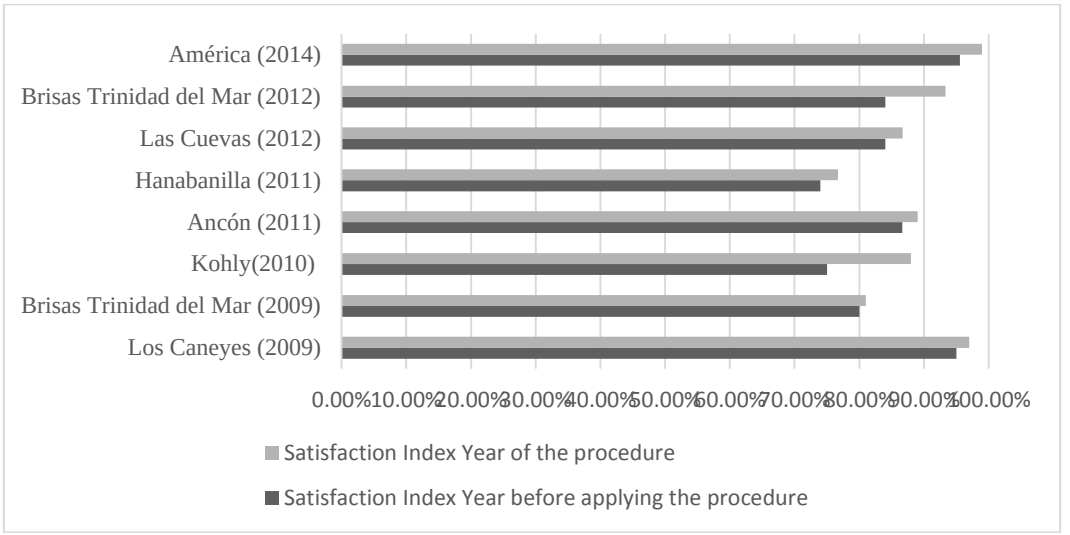


Figure 2. Satisfaction Index in each of the hotel case study

Conclusion

The theoretical and methodological concepts presented in science so far regarding the treatment of intangible resources in managing hotels continues showing significant gaps in its dialectical integration with tangible resources.

In the case of the image of hotels in this research, tangible and intangible resources that determine the achievement of its desired state are identified. These are approached from the strategic direction to look for complementarity between the managenment strategies and external communication strategies related to the consolidation of the identity of the hotel and the achievement of quality in key processes.

The image evaluation in the strategic direction of hotels in Cuba must understand changes since the diagnosis of the hotel where the prospects for customers and employees in determining the strategic direction thereof are included. This allows work on the formation of the desired image from planning of services and not just from the projection to the market as is done so far.

The methodology proposed to implement the theoretical model (Figure 1) to include the image evaluation in strategic direction, align messages with the vision of the hotel, enables the design of communication strategies that do not distort reality, where there are involved different actors over time. In considering these issues the experts determined that the procedure implements the theoretical model that supports it meets the objectives proposed, it is systemic and comprehensive, has methodological value, rationality, capacity improvement; logical consistency, participatory, flexibility, feasibility and structuring.

The proposed procedure to implement theoretical model is able to achieve improved image perception on Hotel for tourists, also it has a positive impact on the satisfaction index, which is validated with the comprehensive and systematic implementation of the procedure case studies in hotels in Cuba for the past 7 years.

Recommendations for future study

Continue studies to enrich the results achieved from the following lines of research:

• Generation and validation of scales for measuring image in other types of hotels not contemplated.

• Models of integrated management of the image of the destination, and hotel chain.

• Computerized instruments for generalization and validation of dimensions and attributes to measure the image of the destination, and the hotel chain.

The proposed method can be implemented in other objects of practical study, such as villas and hostels, which was found in the analysis of case studies during the research process.

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