

# Department of Santa Rosa, Origin of the Xinca Culture, a Region of Diverse Nature in Guatemala, Center of the Americas and the Practice of Inward Green Tourism

Edgar Haroldo Torres Soto

Humanities Faculty, San Carlos de Guatemala University, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

## Email address:

etkimar@yahoo.com

## To cite this article:

Edgar Haroldo Torres Soto. Department of Santa Rosa, Origin of the Xinca Culture, a Region of Diverse Nature in Guatemala, Center of the Americas and the Practice of Inward Green Tourism. *International Journal of Science, Technology and Society*.

Vol. 10, No. 1, 2022, pp. 15-22. doi: 10.11648/j.ijsts.20221001.13

**Received:** September 19, 2021; **Accepted:** December 8, 2021; **Published:** February 9, 2022

---

**Abstract:** The State of Santa Rosa, located in the southern region of the Republic of Guatemala, has a diversity of attractive and natural surroundings which easily captivate visitors, such as Ayarza Lagoon, El Pino Lagoon, or Monterrico beaches; forming the foundation stones (fire, sky, water and earth) of the Xinca's culture. Tourism industry being a fast growing field and benchmark effect for the recovery of world's economy after humanity manages to overcome the COVID-19 (SARS-Cov2 and its different variants Delta, Omicron, etc.) pandemic represents an unprecedented challenge. The objective of this article is to present the findings related to the analysis of two careers offered by the Santa Rosa University Center (CUNSARO): First one is Tourism Technician and the second one is Bachelor's Degree in Tourism. In this study a mixed method (quantitative-qualitative) was applied. The unit of analysis is the graduates (graduated during the period 2012-2018) and their insertion in the local tourism industry. The main results of the research show a weakness in which graduates of both careers did not have prior any training in the field of tourism before starting the university. This limits them from achieving a better academic preparation at a higher level. This condition affects students because after they graduate they are not easily inserted in the tourist labor industry. This is reflected in negative numbers in the statistics of the effectiveness of the career. Added to this situation is the idiosyncrasy of the local inhabitants about the recurrent practice that is called in this study "inward green tourism", alluding to green tourism in relation to the nature of the environment that surrounds the region but also to the incipient local tourism industry, meanwhile, inward as a manifestation of not being receptive to foreign visitors but only to their own inhabitants so that they discover the region in which they live. The study concludes on the need to improve accessibility filters for careers that include previous certifications or introductory courses. In addition, it proposes a redesign of the curriculum to adjust the Professional Supervised Practice (required for graduation in Bachelor's Degree in Tourism in Santa Rosa), which must be performed in all areas taught in their academic training, and to provide students with a groundwork to enhance competent human skills which will allow them to enter the world's tourism market.

**Keywords:** Guatemala, Cunsaro, Higher Education, Inguat, Santa Rosa, Tourism, USAC, WTO

---

## 1. Introduction

Guatemala is a 108,889 km<sup>2</sup> country located in Central America, where four ancestral cultures coexist (Maya, Xinca, Garifuna and Mestizo). The focus of this study was centered in the department of Santa Rosa, cradle of the Xinca culture, located in the south of the republic, privileged for its diversity of climates and unique nature (the mountain region north of the department, with a cold climate, the central

plateau where the temperate climate predominates and to the south, the coastline bordered by the Pacific Ocean where a warm climate is enjoyed).

Since the 1960s, different Guatemalan administrations have made efforts to consolidate a tourist industry in the different regions of the country, managing to develop world-class tourist destinations such as Antigua Guatemala, Lake

Atitlán and the Tikal National Park [1].

In this sense, an incipient tourism industry has developed in the department of Santa Rosa, which has been conditioned to cultural, political, organizational, educational and social circumstances.

Tourism is a sensitive, delicate and susceptible activity in which a series of combined elements (social, economic, cultural, ideological factors, among others) of little understanding at first glance but cohesive in an intangible logic can be perceived through an experience of life in two ways: On one side, the person who visits and in the other, the person who receives that visit. In a simple analogy, tourism is similar to the hospitality that one person offers to another when they visit their home, the care, enthusiasm, service, and dedication, as well as, respect and appreciation that are provided to that guest will determine their willingness to come back.

Tourism is the curiosity of a person to visit a region (regardless of the distance, it can be a near place or as far away as taking a transatlantic or transpacific trip), once visitors arrive at the destination they hope to be pleasantly surprised by the charm of the place, its accommodations, and the numerous hosts who will meet their needs (offering a series of products, properties, and services with "added value and charm") providing experiences as close as possible to their daily life and the expectations generated through the information posted on media, which should compensate the price they paid so that the outcome of the visit becomes: a life experience connected to the "tourist value chain".

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Manuel de Oliveira Guterres [2] affirms about the importance of the affiliated members of the UNWTO as follows:

It is absolutely crucial to work towards the enhancement of a new generation of partnerships, partnerships not only with governments, not only with civil society and academia but equally partnerships with the business community in the context of the perspective of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, creating the conditions for an inclusive and sustainable development – the best way to prevent crises and conflicts in today's world.

The Guatemalan Government defines tourism as follows:

Tourism is consolidated at the beginning of the 21st century as an important economic activity, when it is placed, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), as an export category, in fourth place behind fuels, chemical products and products of the automotive industry. Considered an international commercial service, inbound tourism has become one of the main productive categories. The World Trade Organization includes tourism within the service sector, which broadens its scope of action [3].

The Guatemalan Tourism Institute (INGUAT) defines its general strategic objective as:

Consolidate tourism as the articulating axis of the economic and social development of Guatemala within the framework of sustainability, in such a way that it

contributes generating the necessary conditions to improve the competitiveness of the country in the international arena and to favor the access of Guatemalans to a dignified life [4].



**Figure 1.** Map of Guatemala in Central America, retrieved on November 27, 2021 from <https://www.google.com/maps/@15.7387974,-90.5149377,3052442m/data=!3m1!1e3>.

Due to this circumstance, education at various levels has aimed in its academic broad offer careers that allow students to become better hosts so that guests can be cared for even in a better way than at home. However, there is a permanent empirical training within tourism, where science has not been interconnected to the sustainable processes of development, combined with the lack of serious, appropriate, coherent and consistent planning that would allow setting common objectives and linking them to strengthening of a robust and overflowing tourism industry. The reason is simple: bureaucrats and technocrats do not understand what tourism is. The correlated results between Professional Supervised Practice (PSP) and concrete objective reality show a divorce between the theory and the practice.

Barrientos Ramírez [1] discusses the problems of these careers and proposes solutions based on the marketing of the academic offer. The object of this study is represented by graduated professionals and the way they have entered the tourism labor market.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This is a mixed study (qualitative-quantitative) applied to professionals who graduated from two careers: Tourism Technician and Bachelor's Degree in Tourism at the Santa Rosa University Center (Cunsaro), in which the inductive-deductive method was applied, using techniques such as statistical review of the constants, participation and behavior of student's community, observation of the unit of analysis and focus groups, and application of surveys and semi-structured interviews. In addition, the snowball technique was applied repeatedly, which allowed more participants to be included in the study by referrals.

**Table 1.** Label of acceptance of the carrers offered in CUNSAO.

Year	Tourism Technician		Bachelor's Degree in Tourism		Total of enrolled students
	M	F	M	F	
2007	5	14			19
2008	8	20			28
2009	7	27			34
2010	4	23	1	8	36
2011	6	20	3	13	42
2012	7	25	3	19	54
2013	10	19	3	17	49
2014	16	28	4	18	66
2015	14	22	6	21	63
2016	3	15	5	15	38
2017	3	13	3	16	35
2018	1	5	3	14	23
Total	84	231	31	141	487

Source: Centro Universitario de Santa Rosa Registry. Table done by author.

**Table 2.** Graduate profile achieved in Tourism careers.

Year	Tourism Technician		Bachelor's Degree in Tourism		Total of enrolled students
	M	F	M	F	
2007					0
2008					0
2009	5	14			19
2010	8	20			28
2011	7	27			34
2012	4	23	0	5	32
2013	6	20	0	1	27
2014	7	25	0	2	34
2015	10	19	0	0	29
2016	16	28	0	3	47
2017	14	22	2	5	43
2018	3	15	0	2	20
Total	80	213	2	18	313

Source: Centro Universitario de Santa Rosa Registry. Table done by author.

### 3. Results

Table 1 shows the level of acceptance that the Tourism Technician career had in the first cohorts. It shows a permanent increase in the student population from 2007 to 2009, when the first cohort would had graduated.

It must be considered that it was the women who repeatedly preferred to continue their studies in the tourism field, in comparison to the male gender, who never showed a growing interest in this type of academic field. The proportion according to gender in relation to the career at the Tourism technician level was 3:1 and at the Bachelor's Degree 4:1.

Beginning in 2010, the continuity of Tourism technician graduates who decided to continue their studies at the Bachelor's Degree in Tourism level was a repeated trend, but it never exceeded the acceptance levels reflected in the Tourism Technician, the latter becoming the most profitable for the number of students who completed their studies.

However, as of 2016, a decline in the enrollment levels of new students began, which could have evidenced a response to the difficulty that graduates had to join the labor market of the tourism industry, impact that had to be known by the

general population of the city of Cuilapa, where Cunsaro is located.

Sustainability shown by the Bachelor's Degree in Tourism in recent years should be taken with some caution, because there was a certain level of students repeting the year. In addition, the desertion of students, who after a while, resumed their studies to complete a higher level career should be considered (A singularity that occurs in Latin American countries where the vast majority of working people dedicate part of their time to study). Another situation to consider is the student's motivation to obtain a university degree but not really having a clear life project that included the desire to practice this profession, which means that the investment made by Alma Mater in their training is not reflected in consistent results of the concrete objective reality.

Table 2 Summarizes the information related to the level of professionals graduated from both careers. Again, a recurrence can be observed in the amount of females who show efficiency in finishing the career both at the technician and Bachelor's Degree level. Although the tendency shown in the Bachelor's Degree in Tourism responds only to 5% or 10% of students enrolled; It should not be forgotten that in 2015 no one graduated, which shows a profound crisis,

constantly evident during the 2012-2018 period.

The proportion by gender according to the chosen career shows that in the Tourism Technician level is 4:1, while at the Bachelor's Degree in Tourism level the trend is 9:1. Some particular situations must be analyzed, for example, the preference of women in both careers can respond to the ability they have to learn a foreign language or to the middle management that they can exercise within closed spaces (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tour operators, among others), where employers would rather hire women for certain highly specialized activities.

However, this tendency should not be surprising because in research work at other levels of education where careers are offered at technical and higher level with tourist orientation, the same preference of females for this type of academic training is demonstrated. This will be discussed in a future article.

It is clear that in one decade, students' interest in those careers has decreased, as a result of the little inclusion that graduated professionals achieved within the tourism industry. The development of this industry in the region is incipient and there is a lack of investment in tourism infrastructure from the central government, as well as, a deficient planning by the INGUAT. This should have had a significant impact on applicants to both careers, choosing more profitable options such as Business Administration or Attorney-at-law, careers that have a broader labor market.

## 4. Discussion

Some of the results achieved during the study have a strong correlation with the weakness showed by the fact that the students who entered both careers (Tourism technician and Bachelor's Degree in Tourism) did not have prior training that would have facilitated the academic training process and their subsequent insertion into the labor market of the tourism industry. In this sense, the Villareal proposal cited by Díaz-Barriga (2008, p. 88) must be considered:

A university profession makes those who exercise it accountable to respond both to the demands of their own work, and to the social needs related to their field of action. This ability is achieved through preparation in quality and coverage.

Consequently, the weakness of not having a previous preparation in this highly specialized area and the fact that this does not allow students to raise their level of knowledge and, as a result, they cannot opt for better-paid work spaces, has conditioned their possibilities of becoming established as successful professionals in other regions of the country and even outside national borders. In this regard, it is important to consider González cited by Díaz-Barriga [3] who makes an interesting differentiation between Tourism Technician and the Bachelor's degree:

(...) Not only the graduate from a higher education level can carry out a profession and, therefore, a professional can be anyone who practices an art or a trade, in such a way that they obtain a product or provide a service (...) the differentiation between technical and professional

knowledge, solely on the grounds that the professional has received a complete scientific and cultural education.

Villa [8] affirms, competences are understood as good performance in diverse and authentic contexts based on the integration and activation of information, norms, techniques, procedures, abilities, skills, attitudes, and values. Among the basic competences that every professional must develop are: a) Instrumental competences, they have a medium function, a blend of manual skills and cognitive abilities that facilitate professional competence; b) Interpersonal skills, which are characterized by personal and relational skills, based on tolerance, respect for others and their ways of thinking, feeling and expressing their ideas; c) Systemic competencies, skills and abilities with the entire system, merging imagination, sensitivity and ability to understand relationships and their own construction, planning, designing and improving systems in a comprehensive way.

The weakness of the faculty in relation to not being experts on the subject or having little or no work experience related to the tourism industry also requires a deep analysis that allows a proposal of viable, measurable, and achievable solutions.

It is necessary to promote in the graduate a spirit of teamwork, a formation of competitive work teams, private enterprise and entrepreneurship, without neglecting their social and humanistic ties, which are the philosophical essence taught in the only public university of the country.

Another important result of the study is the need to redesign both careers and for the Professional Supervised Practice (PSP) to be systematically intertwined with their acquired academic training.

Regarding graduates, an analysis is required to identify their effective orientation towards the corresponding professional fields, the adaptation of the curriculum with their professional practice, and their performance in correspondence with the pursued objectives. The evaluation of the professional practice and their insertion into the occupational market go together. The goals accomplished in the ending periods of the career such as thesis, end of year exams, dissertations, reports, among others, should not be overlooked (Díaz-Barriga Arceo, Lule González, Pacheco Pinzón, Saad Dayán, & Rojas-Drummond, 2008, p. 73).

Many universities in different countries are redesigning their curriculum through new academic-professional profiles in which they include a series of competencies, which represent aspects of individual and group development that allow the improvement of personal resources to be integrated into their work environment. On a personal level, competencies are effective to the extent in which each person establishes the base and reference for self-improvement (Villa Sánchez, Aurelio; Poblete Ruíz, Manuel [10]).

From this perspective, technical-professional training has been linked to the economic development needs of each country and has suffered the crises inherent in the process of the productive forces. In this sense, from the twentieth century, non-optional schools surpassed university faculties with the discourse of giving more opportunity to the disadvantaged

classes, although the intention was to satisfy the needs of economic growth itself, which required qualified workers and technicians of the new branches of industry created by inventions and material progress (Lombardo Toledano, [11]).

Foster [5] in the prologue highlights a reality that at that time was a determining factor and currently is a conditioning factor:

Few are the professional fields that offer as many opportunities for adventure and personal enrichment as those that correspond to travel and tourism. However, there is an inherent commercial side to traveling that cannot be overlooked. And while it is true that some of the functions performed by a travel agent (and even a tourism professional in any other branch of the tourism sector) may be routine, the field of travel itself never becomes so. The industry is constantly changing and growing rapidly, becoming more complex every year.

And he adds in this regard:

Long ago the education of a professional in travel (and tourism) had in their experience its best, and sometimes, only teacher. And while on-the-job training remains an invaluable factor, experienced agents no longer have the time to train newcomers. The worldwide adoption of technologies and the infinity of details that are observed in the ever-changing programs, fees and regulations, have made a formal education essential in a field that is well-known by its accelerated growth (Foster, [5]).

Goeldner & Ritchie [5]: "Tourism industry is characterized by the large number of direct service jobs that must be carried out for tourism to function effectively (...) As it can be assumed, the performance of the numerous identified tasks requires thousands of individuals who are trained to execute each specialized task in an effective and friendly manner. But this is just the "face of tourism" that incorporates the many service jobs for which the industry is sometimes criticized, and even ridiculed. Behind that face (which, by the way, generates many basic part-time jobs or first jobs for students and less prepared members of our society) an extremely large number of highly attractive executive positions that require advanced technical skills and/or administrative training can be found.

The World Travel & Tourism Council [15] states that 2015 results affirmed the following:

Travel and Tourism directly contributes more to GDP than the automobile and chemical manufacturing industries combined in all regions of the world. In the case of the automobile industry, Travel and Tourism contributes three times more to GDP in America and twice as much in Europe. With 105 million people working directly for this sector in 2014, Travel & Tourism directly employs more people than many other sectors.

Obviously, these results have been affected by the prolongation of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the recovery capacity that the tourism industry has historically proved, augurs better times.

Fonseca [4] indicates:

Tourism is usually defined as the 'multisector activity that

requires the concurrence of various productive areas - agriculture, construction, manufacturing- and of the public and private sectors to provide the goods and services used by tourists'. It has no clearly determined limits not a tangible product, but rather a production of services that varies depending on each country.

Bote Gómez [2] focuses on a local definition that helps to understand this singularity from another perspective:

The tourist phenomenon in Spain constitutes an economic activity of considerable importance, both for the role it plays in the national economy, and for the possibilities it offers or can offer in future economic and socio-cultural development. Despite this, Spanish tourism development has been accompanied by prejudices or misgivings, due to the fundamental nature of an intangible asset or service and to the classification of temporary or unstable activity due to its nature of luxury consumption.

Viñals Blasco [18] considers that

(...) Tourism maintains close relations of dependence with the environment, since it obtains from it a series of basic resources without which it could not develop. The environment provides water, energy, construction materials, fauna, vegetation, landscape, etc., resources that are themselves generators of tourist activity or are essential for its maintenance. It constitutes, at the same time, its physical support, and it is the recipient or receiver of the pollutants (gases, sewage, solid waste of different nature) that it generates (...) The tourist is increasingly demanding with regard to quality environmental and therefore, without a doubt, will motivate the adoption of competitiveness strategies where the environmental factor prevails over others".

As for Guatemala, current national tourism is the result of decades of improvisation, empiricism, disinterest, lack of political will and little or no economic and tax incentives for Mipymes, favoring the consolidation of monopolies of large companies, a very bad long-term planning, reflected in mediocre results that barely lead the service of 2.5 million tourists annually (a figure that has been significantly reduced to more than 40% due to the COVID-19 pandemic), according to UNWTO [19] experts A gradual recovery is expected worldwide from 2022.

Of course, not everything is bad, there are institutions and companies committed to tourism that have left an important legacy at the national level, although the replacement has been lacking innovative plans due to a short-range vision of the main stakeholders who do not have the capacity to see their immediate competitors and replicate the successful strategies that have allowed them to develop a thriving and economically strong tourism industry.

The structural changes of the most recognized and visited tourist destinations are basically non-existent, the renovation is very slow and the supply of tourist destinations is repetitive, obsolete and counterproductive to national interests. INGUAT's efforts are focused on traditional destinations such as Antigua Guatemala (the colonial city most visited by tourists), Tikal National Park, Lake Atitlan and the town of Panajachel, Río Dulce, Lake Izabal and



Livingston, Puerto Quetzal and Monterrico beaches. Obviously, it is in these destinations where the Creole and coffee oligarchy infrastructure - which has historically dominated the country - has its greatest investments in hotel, gastronomic and tertiary sector. Despite this, there is no dynamism in the development of the tourism industry and financial investment is limited, exclusive and not very competitive.

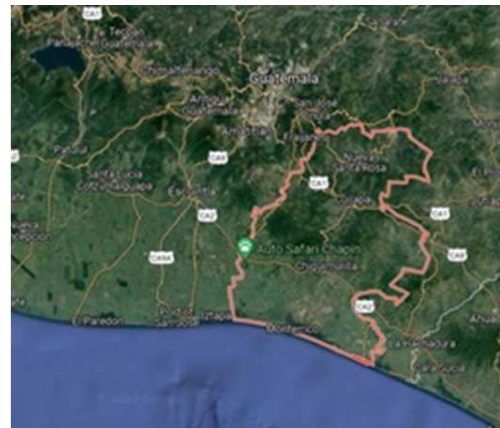


**Figure 2.** Map of the Republic of Guatemala, retrieved on November 27, 2021 from <https://www.google.com/maps/@15.7387974,-90.5149377,763110m/data=!3m1!1e3>.

Such a situation allows a more in-depth analysis of the results that are given regarding the educational field oriented to tourism. In that sense, Velásquez Juárez [20], bases his study on the teaching experience he had in the Tourism Technician and Bachelor's Degree in Tourism careers at the University Center of Chimaltenango (Cundech), highlighting the teachers' attitude and aptitude to apply innovative teaching-learning techniques and strategies, as well as his experience with students who took courses many times, did not commit to their training, and were constantly generating delay strategies that wore down the training process, forcing endless curricular readjustments, without realizing that in the end they were harming themselves, since they failed to fully develop required capacities, abilities and skills. This, added to the possible training deficiencies of the teachers who are mostly not specialized in the tourism industry. Furthermore, it is outstanding that the student population is scarce, not exceeding 5 or 7 students in each annual school year, which makes the process of coherent and reliable planning required by students is to prepare a greater number of professionals in the tourism field, with the budget assigned by the authorities from San Carlos de Guatemala University more difficult.

The treatment of the topic of Tourism is complex, specialized and tendentious if it is considered from the position of the person who reads and interprets it, however, it is necessary to treat it in a broader way, without leaving the context of the careers of Technician and Bachelor's Degree in Tourism offered at CUNSARO, trying to stay within a local

and geographically defined area of the department of Santa Rosa.



**Figure 3.** Map of the department of Santa Rosa, Guatemala, retrieved on November 27, 2021 from <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Santa+Rosa+Department/@14.1466336,-90.926925,192198m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x85881351cb632b7d:0x8d6727d1ada25ef0!8m2!3d14.1928003!4d-90.3748354https://www.google.com/maps/place/Santa+Rosa+Department/@14.1466336,-90.926925,192198m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x85881351cb632b7d:0x8d6727d1ada25ef0!8m2!3d14.1928003!4d-90.3748354>.

Barrientos Ramírez [1] highlights two aspects in his research: 1. It refers to a study carried out on teachers and students of the CUNSARO Tourism Technician and Bachelor's degree in Tourism. The study is not comprehensively done and the results remain in a mere romantic delusion due to the weaknesses shown by students. And, 2. A marketing proposal to position Laguna El Pino as a tourist destination, evidently there are methodological mistakes and errors resulting from the lack of experience in the matter. Nevertheless, his research has some redeemable elements such as the proposal of a marketing merge, including the concept of "Inward tourism" that has been established in the department of Santa Rosa.

Being a term coined from the author's own harvest, "inward green tourism" is the local tendency to interpret tourism as a result of general unfamiliarity about the way in which national and international tourist destinations converge offering a variety of integrated tourist attractions. In this regard, the mistake is to consider the entire department of Santa Rosa as a tourist attraction in itself, a situation that is impossible to consolidate due to the interpretation that is given in reference to what a tourist destination is. Nowhere in the world, there is a complete region that has a tourist vocation, nor is it practical for tourists to stay in the same region for several days to travel for one or two hours by road until they reach their destination to see only a cultural or gastronomic expression, handicrafts, a church, an archaeological site (not yet intervened by specialists), a farm, a cave, a lake or a river, climbing a mountain or a volcano (which are scattered throughout the department) and then go back. That is the main problem that the proposal presents, where the natural, cultural and architectural resources are

listed, pretending that it is the tourist who goes on pilgrimage from place to place to get to know them.

This situation deepens when it is observed how the graduates of Technical and Bachelor's Degree in Tourism replicate this practice convinced that they have a region that is completely tourist, forgetting the shortcomings in relation to the almost non-existent development of minimal tourist infrastructure, adequate conditions for customer service, tourist and a culture that encourages cordiality towards the foreign national or foreign visitor.

In that order of ideas, tourism development strategies must be designed to optimize visitor time, the cost of visiting that place compared to what they will get and what they already know in other latitudes, in significant quantity and quality, even in their own country, services, accesses and amenities offered by the visited destination (in this sense, the classification presented does not have a point of comparison in relation to a tourist destination of national or international importance). One must put aside the belief that the entire department of Santa Rosa is a tourist attraction, as well as to abandon the insistent proposal of "green tourism inward" because that does not generate a tourist vocation or an economic leak.

The sentiment of the inhabitants of Santa Rosa is supportive and binding, however, this does not allow them to understand the dimension of tourism, which should not be exploited indiscriminately as a whole, but rather give spaces for recovery to current tourist destinations by new tourist destinations that emerge and constitute a planned replacement in the department of Santa Rosa.

For this purpose, the proposal of Cárdenas (1991, p. 47) can be considered, also referred to by Varisco [22] presenting a classification provided by CICATUR-OEA in a hierarchical way:

According to the methodology applied by CICATUR-OEA for the inventory of communal tourist heritage, there are five benchmarks: 1) Inventory of tourist attractions (natural sites, museums and cultural and historical manifestations, folklore and contemporary technical achievements); 2) Tourist facilities (critical examination on objective and comparable bases); 3) Infrastructure (vulnerability, exploitation of the tourist attraction, accessibility, equipment and communal tourist support services, communal infrastructure); 4) Activities (communal cultural activities, tourist plant (lodging, food, transportation, tourist guides, tourist information offices, event centers, vineyards and farms, sports complexes, other recreational centers) considering only their presence or absence); 5) Market rate (although it is variable, it indicates the need for a market price for which people are willing to pay to see the tourist attraction).

Quintero Venegas [23] comments that there are factors that intervene in tourist mobility, being: 1. Budget of tourist time (making effective the time used to visit tourist places); 2. Personal factors: "(...) reflects a different narrative of how individuals experience the place and interpret the meaning of leisure time and tourism", adding: "Cultural distance also affects the behavior of tourists. Those who come from

cultural emitter spaces that are closer to the receiving spaces go much further into the destination sites, visit more places and travel to different areas than those who come from places with a certain cultural distance from the receiving space (Flogenfeldt, 1999; Lew, 1987)"; 3. Knowledge of the place: "The information used when tourists conceptualize a place configures their impression of what it offers and, above all, the way in which the experiences will be consumed (Dann, 1996 cited in Ryan, 2000)".

## 5. Conclusions

It has been detected that students who enter these tourism-oriented careers require prior knowledge in tourism and, if possible, work experience, this, due to the level of required specialization. This can only be accomplished if the teachers have been trained in a related field of education, a condition that rarely happens, so to reduce the lack of knowledge, the Santa Rosa University Center is required to provide introductory and/or training courses and/or certification programs to support students so that when they enroll in the careers included in the academic offer they do not have to start from basic concepts and procedures that lower-level students already possess and practice in their jobs.

Decreasing this knowledge gap allows students of Tourism Technician to develop profitable tourism products; while in the Bachelor's Degree students to have the ability to generate tourism ventures, project development and strategic alliances in world's markets.

After accomplishing this, the needed skills, abilities, and competencies will have been developed to become an enhanced competent human talent. Professionals will be able to aim for jobs with greater responsibility, challenging decision-making and better economic salary.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to review the current educational curriculum, make the necessary changes and adjustments to a new normal and execute them in such way that they can be achievable, measurable and verifiable, motivating future professionals to achieve their goals and to get a true insertion to the tourist industry.

## Note

All research was done in Spanish Language resources, since the original article was written in Spanish Language.

## References

- [1] Barrientos Ramírez, K. S. (2016). La formación en turismo y el desarrollo económico del departamento de Santa Rosa: Estudio realizado con docentes y estudiantes del Centro Universitario de Cuilapa Santa Rosa, de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. [Training in tourism and the economic development of the department of Santa Rosa: Study carried out with teachers and students of the University Center of Cuilapa Santa Rosa, San Carlos de Guatemala University] Guatemala: USAC.

- [2] Bote Gómez, V. (2011). Turismo en espacio rural: Rehabilitación del patrimonio sociocultural y de la economía social. [Tourism in rural areas: Rehabilitation of the sociocultural heritage and the social economy.] Madrid: Editorial Popular, S. A.
- [3] Díaz-Barriga Arceo, F., Lule González, M. d., Pacheco Pinzón, D., Saad Dayán, E., & Rojas-Drummond, S. (2008). Diseño curricular para la educación superior. [Curriculum design for higher education] México: Editorial Trillas, S. A. de C. V.
- [4] Fonseca, Elena. (2011). Turismo, hotelería y restaurantes. [Tourism, hotels and restaurants] Barcelona: Lexus Editores.
- [5] Foster, D. L. (1990). Agencias de Viajes: Administración y operación. [Travel Agencies: Administration and operation.] México: McGraw-Hill.
- [6] Gobierno de Guatemala. (2012). Política Nacional para el Desarrollo Turístico Sostenible de Guatemala 2012-2022. Guatemala: Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo. [National Policy for Sustainable Tourism Development in Guatemala 2012-2022. Guatemala: Guatemalan Institute of Tourism.]
- [7] Goeldner, C. R., & Ritchie, J. R. (2010). Turismo: Planeación, administración y perspectivas [Tourism: Planning, administration and perspectives] (Tercera ed.). México: Limusa Wiley Noriega Editores.
- [8] Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo. (1996). Antecedentes Históricos del Turismo en Guatemala. Guatemala: Inguat. [Historical Background of Tourism in Guatemala. Guatemala: INGUAT.]
- [9] Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo. (2016). Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo. [Guatemalan Tourism Institute] Obtenido de Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo: [www.inguat.gob.gt](http://www.inguat.gob.gt)
- [10] Lombardo Toledano, V. (2015). Obra Educativa: Estructura de la educación en México [Educational Work: Structure of education in Mexico] (Vol. III). México: CEFPSVLT.
- [11] Lombardo Toledano, V. (2015). Obra Educativa: Política Educativa Nacional [Educational Work: National Educational Policy] (Vol. II). México: CEFPSVLT.
- [12] Organización Mundial del Turismo OMT/WTO. (01 de Abril de 2020). Organización Mundial del Turismo OMT/WTO. [World Tourism Organization].
- [13] Obtenido de <https://www.unwto.org/es/news/apoyo-al-empleo-y-a-la-economia-a-traves-de-los-viajes-y-el-turismo>.
- [14] Quintero Venegas, G. J. (2017). La integración regional de América Central: La ruta turística terrestre Ticabus/Transnica. [The regional integration of Central America: The Ticabus / Transnica land tourist route] México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- [15] United Nations World Tourism Organization. (12 de Enero de 2020). UNWTO - World Tourism Organization. Obtenido de UNWTO: <http://unwto.org>
- [16] Varisco, C., Castellucci, D., González, M. G., Muñoz, M. J., Padilla, N., Campoliete, L., & Benseny, G. (s.f.). El Relevantamiento Turístico: De CICATUR a la planificación participativa. [The Tourist rebuild: From CICATUR to participatory planning.] Nulan: Portal de promoción y difusión pública del conocimiento académico y científico, 1-16.
- [17] Velásquez Juárez, A. (2014). Factores relacionados con la repitencia estudiantil, en la carrera de Licenciatura en Turismo, del Centro Universitario de Chimaltenango (CUNDECH), de la Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (USAC). [Factors related to student repetition in the Bachelor's degree of Tourism career] Guatemala: USAC.
- [18] Villa Sánchez, Aurelio; Poblete Ruíz, Manuel. (2008). Aprendizaje basado en competencias. [Competency-based learning.] Bilbao: Ediciones Mensajero, S. A. U.
- [19] Viñals Blasco, M. J. (2010). Turismo Rural: Teoría, casos y análisis del impacto económico ambiental. [Rural Tourism: Theory, cases and analysis of the environmental economic impact] México: Editorial Limusa, S. A. de C. V.
- [20] WTTC. (04 de Febrero de 2020). [sp.wttc.org](http://sp.wttc.org). Obtenido de World Travel & Tourism Council: <https://sp.wttc.org>

## Biography

**Edgar Haroldo Torres Soto** Master degree in teaching at university level, Humanities Faculty, San Carlos de Guatemala University. BA in History School of History, San Carlos de Guatemala University. Researcher Level 1 General Direction of Investigations (DIGI), San Carlos de Guatemala University. Substitute Professor at the Engineering Faculty, San Carlos de Guatemala University. Member of the Editorial Board of the Magazine: Egresados de la Escuela de Historia, San Carlos de Guatemala University (2014-2021). Consultant on Tourism and Business topics.