Chapter 8

Professional Training in Tourism Through Hybrid Learning in Relation to Target 4.c of Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality Education

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ABSTRACT

The World Tourism Organization indicates that 2022 has been the year to rethink tourism. Countries around the world turned UNWTO's vision of a greener, smarter, and more inclusive sector into real action. The objective of this research is to identify the characteristics of the training of tourism professionals through hybrid learning derived from the health contingency caused by COVID-19 and the relationship between goal 4.c of SDG 4, with the purpose of propose a scheme of tools used by teachers for the development of tourism professional competencies. To investigate the teaching practices developed in the pandemic context, an information matrix

was used, which was designed based on learning management platforms (LMS), videoconference and online communication, online educational content, online collaboration tools, online evaluation and feedback, and interactive and multimedia resources. Likewise, a scheme of the competences that a professional in the tourism sector should acquire and develop in higher education institutions is proposed.

INTRODUCTION

The training of professionals in tourism through hybrid learning during the health contingency caused by COVID-19, represented an unprecedented challenge for higher education institutions, especially for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 Quality education, which is oriented towards guaranteeing an inclusive, equitable and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 pandemic, the immediate reaction of governments worldwide to prevent the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus; was the implementation of mobility restriction provisions such as quarantine periods, physical distancing, as well as social isolation. One of the most significant results derived from the measures of the health contingency was the integration of educational formats in digital environments for the development of the teaching-learning process as the most viable option to continue the training of students of all academic levels in the world. Teaching practices were modified and adapted to virtual contexts through various digital tools that enabled the continuity of academic activities in many countries. And that resulted in hybrid educational forms in the post-pandemic stage.

Regarding the data published by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2022a, paras. 1 and 2) they mention the significant role that tourism plays in the recovery of national economies and world trade on the situation and prospects of the world economy (known as the World Economic Situation and Prospects, WESP report). It also describes that after a global contraction of 3.4% in 2020 and a rebound of 5.5% in 2021, the world economy is expected to grow 4% in 2022 and then 3.5% in 2023. Due to the importance as a main category export (before the pandemic, the economic activity of tourism was the third in the world, after fuels and chemical products), and recognizing its role as a source of employment and economic development, the recovery of the tourism sector is expected to boost growth. growth in all regions of the world.

Likewise, the Secretary General of the UNWTO, Zurab Pololikashvili mentioned "that at the beginning of 2023 tourism revealed its extraordinary capacity for recovery. Many parts of the world are close to or even above pre-pandemic levels of arrivals. However, challenges such as geopolitical insecurity, staff shortages and the possible

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