Dimensions of entrepreneurship around the reactivation of the economy based on tourism in central Mexico

Dimensiones de emprendimiento de la reactivación de la economía basada en el turismo en México central

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Abstract

The pandemic caused by SARS CoV-2 and the COVID-19 disease have linked tourism with local entrepreneurship. It is a phenomenon in which political actors, economic and social agents converge in order to reactivate the local economy. In this vein, the objective of this work was to validate an entrepreneurship scale, considering four dimensions: trust. opportunity, optimization and innovation. An exploratory, cross-sectional and psychometric work was carried out with a sample of 100 coffee growers from central Mexico. Four factors were established that explained 32% of the variance, suggesting the contrast in another sample. In relation to the state of the art, the scope of the study is discussed.

Resumen

La pandemia provocada por el SARS CoV-2 y la enfermedad COVID-19 han vinculado el turismo con el emprendimiento local. Es un fenómeno en el que convergen actores políticos, económicos y sociales con el fin de reactivar la economía local. En esta línea, el objetivo de este trabajo fue validar una escala de emprendimiento, considerando cuatro dimensiones: confianza, oportunidad, optimización e innovación. Se realizó un trabajo exploratorio, transversal y psicométrico con una muestra de 100 caficultores del centro de México. Se establecieron cuatro factores que explicaban el 32% de la varianza, sugiriendo el contraste en otra muestra. En relación al estado más reciente, se discute el alcance del estudio.

Keywords: Covid-19; Entrepreneurship; Tourism; Travel Culture

Palabras clave: Covid-19; Emprendimiento; Turismo; Cultura de Viaje

1. INTRODUCTION

As of April 2021, three million have died from the pandemic caused by the SARS CoV-2 coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease in the world. In Mexico, around 500 thousand victims are estimated if the cases of atypical pneumonia and the under-registration of deaths are counted and compared to the national annual average (WHO, 2021). In this scenario, mitigation policies have focused on social distancing and confinement, as well as restricting tests, treatments, and vaccines. Faced with such a situation, civil society has organized around self-financed or collaborative entrepreneurship with migrant capital. In this way, the pandemic reactivated the relationships between families and friends to encourage entrepreneurship and local economic reactivation.

The mitigation and containment policy of the pandemic in Mexico and according to the Secretary of Health (2022) is based on the epidemiological traffic light: 1) red corresponds to staying at home, restriction of economic activities, confinement for school activities and use mandatory face mask outdoors and indoors in public spaces; 2) orange means a reduction in community mobility, economic activities are reduced to 50%, the educational system remains remote and the use of face masks is only mandatory in public spaces; 3) yellow implies a restricted use of public spaces, economic activities are reduced to 75%, the educational system is remote, the use of face masks is mandatory in closed public spaces; 4) green without mobility restriction, usual economic activities, mandatory use of face masks only in public transport and distance, hybrid or face-to-face education system.

However, COVID-19 also exacerbated the trade structures subject to economic globalization, as well as the monopoly of products that multinationals place in local stores through strategic alliances to penetrate the community market (Garcia, 2020: p. 28). Or the entrepreneurship of micro companies has been oriented towards emerging products related to confinement and social distancing, such as contagion prevention devices.

Globalization implies less social equality and greater freedom in the individual. This imbalance characterizes the most globalized and localized liberal democracies. These open societies that hold individuals accountable by disintegrating their groups, their communities, their societies, and their present and future cultures (Martínez, Espinoza and García, 2019). The process of financial globalization and community location is gestated using technology. In the case of the Internet connection from root servers, the United States, Japan, Holland and Sweden are the main nodes. Japan is the nation with the highest connection speed (61.0 mbps), Sweden ranks fourth (18.2 mbps), Holland is sixth (8.8 mbps) and the United States occupies tenth place (4 .8 mbps). In economically

emerging countries, the benefits of information communication technologies (ICT) have only been exploited by organizations for insertion into the global market. In contrast, in the communities of these countries where ingrained localization processes are developed, ICTs have not been a factor of individual growth and much less of community development (Carreon, Villegas and García, 2019).

Indeed, economic and technological globalization has only benefited corporations by widening the economic and digital divide with the communities (Carreon, Hernandez and García, 2019). This process of globalization, in its social dimension, implies the decision-making of groups, communities, unions, organizations and corporations based on ICT. Such entities are transformed into networks and power flows that first compete and then monopolize the market (see the scheme). A model is a data management, production and transfer system organized in explanatory trends of past, current and future relationships. The emphasis on each suggests decision making and strategy execution. This is how the objective of the present work was to specify a model for the study of the perception of utility, considering the dimensions that literature contributes with respect to the acceptance of technology, the propensity to information and the motivation for achievement.

Are there significant differences between the dimensions of entrepreneurship reported in the literature with respect to the factors to be established in this work?

The premise that guides this study indicates that the pandemic is a risk scenario for contagion, illness, and death. In this sense, the entrepreneurship opts for the optimization of resources which are assigned discretely by the State, forcing to resort to migrant family contacts to inject capital into new entrepreneurship projects emanating from the business opportunities that the pandemic and the distancing as the social confinement requires (Bustos et al., 2021: p. 20). These are products and services aimed at protecting people, as well as entertainment and recreation in confined, crowded and poorly ventilated places (Velázquez et al., 2020: p. 13). This is the case of the contagion prevention devices that the government suggests such as the mask or alcohol gel, but also those emanating from innovation such as masks. Or those that measure pressure, oxygenation, or CO2 emission.

Theory of entrepreneurship

This section reviews the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that explain the use of opportunities and the optimization of resources, as well as the innovation of processes based on the requirements of distancing and social confinement (Garcia, 2019: p. 3). These are theories that suggest the balance between the demands of the environment and the internal resources of confined persons, as well as the contradiction between them to establish levels of exposure to risks of contagion, illness, or death.

The economic, technological, and social consequences of globalization are described to propose the Theory of Mobile Consumption that explains the consumption of products and services through mobile telephony. A model is presented in which it is included and demonstrates that the perception of utility is the determinant of the use of mobile Internet (Villegas, Carreón & García, 2019).

Based on the above scenario, it is proposed that individuals, being immersed in information communication flows and networks, become potential consumers when acquiring a mobile phone. Precisely, in the following section, the Mobile Consumption Theory (TCM) is explained, which explains the determinants of consumption through a mobile phone (Villegas, Carreón and García, 2019).

The Theory of Mobile Consumption states that individuals carry out their purchases through a mobile phone based on their utilitarian perceptions and purchase decisions. The TCM maintains that people consume basic products and services through the consumption of secondary products. Individuals when buying a mobile phone or any product and technological information communication service, are exposed to the consumption of basic products and services that are advertised and sold through the technologies (Carreón, Espinoza and García, 2019). Therefore, the TCM argues that it is the perceptions of utility, innovation and efficiency that determine the consumption of products and services that are advertised and sold through the mobile phone.

TCM provides the indirect effect of perception of a technological innovation on the consumption of products and services via said mobile technology (Hernandez, Carreon and Garcia, 2019). It explains the relationship between ICTs with individuals saturated with multiple activities, people who buy and people who work as supervisors or vendors. The TCM predicts the use of the mobile Internet from a cognitive process that begins perceptually and ends behaviorally. From the TCM, the study detailed below was carried out.

In summary, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks warn that it is possible to observe the implementation of preventive devices of COVID-19 if they are registered or offered in electronic networks (Bermudez et al., 2019: p. 15). The anticipation of the consumption of these products and services related to the distancing and confinement of people will allow anticipating biosecurity scenarios for the reactivation of the local economy and tourism.

Studies of entrepreneurship

This section reviews the studies related to the entrepreneurship underlying the pandemic, including the relationships with the local reactivation of tourism as a collateral objective in the face of the pandemic. The axes and topics of discussion are established on the local agenda to anticipate risk thresholds. These are decision-making criteria in

the face of possible entrepreneurship scenarios according to the colors of the epidemiological traffic light and the exposure to contagion caused by the purchase and sale of protection devices (Carreon et al., 2020: p. 10). In this scenario, the reactivation of the local economy will be predictable from tourism aware of its protection.

In the process of converting human capital into intangible assets for organizations, the perception of utility explains the intensive use of information and communication technologies if organizations adopt management, production and knowledge transfer systems (Carreón, Fierro & García, 2019).

It is a process in which the formation of intellectual capital assimilates knowledge, experiences and skills to achieve objectives and goals through specific protocols for information processing (Carreón, Hernandez and García, 2019).

The perception of utility is the central axis of the knowledge management agenda because it translates statistical data into meanings of commitment, entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as generates new protocols for information processing whenever the objectives and goals are subject to the climate of tasks, supports and relationships between stakeholders (García, Martínez and Quintero, 2019).

From the Mobile Consumption Theory, a new model was designed with the variables that met the criteria of reliability (alpha greater than .60) and validity (factorial weight greater than .300). The convergence (indicated by the factor weight) of the reagents with respect to the factor. Considering the factor weights of the perceptual variable of self-efficiency, the convergence of four reagents is demonstrated. Multiple linear regression was calculated to establish the determinants of the dependent variable and the non-linear relationship between independent variables (Bustos et al., 2020: p. 71). The scheme shows that the perception factor of academic utility is the main determinant of the level factor of Internet use for academic purposes. This finding indicates a modification of the TCM measurement model by proposing a direct, positive and significant effect of the utility factor on the use for academic purposes. That is, a person looking to buy for example a book, could get it if there was a virtual library connected to the mobile phone. Similar reasoning would imply the perception factor of self-efficiency as a determinant of academic mobile use. An individual looking for academic information could find it through his mobile phone.

However, the causal relationship lacking the required significance suggests the exclusion of the variable. The strength of association between independent variables indicates its spurious implication. Finally, the level of mobile Internet use for academic purposes is explained by the two independent variables in 22 percent of their variability (Quiroz et al., 2020: p. 20). From the original measurement model only two variables maintain a causal relationship that selects them for inclusion in another measurement model. These consequences and implications are discussed below. The perception of utility has been

the fundamental construct in the models developed to predict the behavior of a consumer on the Internet. This research has shown that the academic factor of said perception determines another factor referred to mobile use for academic purposes. The validity of the instrument that found a one-dimensional variable that explained 32% of the variance was established, but the research design limited the results to the research scenario, suggesting the extension of the work.

However, the relationship between the perception of utility with other variables such as the perception of self-efficiency, reported by other studies, has been spurious. This means that the variables could belong to different cognitive processes. The perception of utility could belong to a set of affective variables while the perception of self-efficiency could belong to a group of rational variables (Garcia, 2021: p. 183). This would explain why in the use of the mobile Internet for academic purposes the perception of utility is the variable that predicts it. However, it will be necessary to demonstrate the relationship of the perception of utility with affective variables. Values, norms and identity could be those variables that associated with the perception of utility, could configure a measurement model with the likelihood necessary to explain the use of the mobile Internet.

In summary, the investigations allusive to the undertaking of contagion preventive devices suggest that electronic networks instruct the usefulness of tourism through self-care. This is so because the parties involved develop trust mechanisms in products, technology and science (Carreon et al., 2019: p. 856). In this framework of empathy, the reactivation of tourism and with it of local development will additionally allow the social responsibility that the observance of preventive measures entails.

Modelling entrepreneurship

In this instance, the relationships between variables that explain and anticipate local entrepreneurship based on the sale of preventive devices for tourism can be established, following two principles. One that reflects the phenomenon that the investigation of the indicators of trust, opportunism, optimization, and innovation supposes (Carreon et al., 2021: p. 11). Another related to the relationships between these factors to be able to anticipate the decisions and possible actions to be compared based on a hypothetical green traffic light. The TCM raises three explanations of the consumption of products and services through the mobile phone.

The first trajectory includes: perception of innovation è propensity to consumption è use of mobile Internet. Such is the case of people who acquire a sophisticated and multifunctional mobile phone that exposes them and leads them to accept and consume seasonal promotions. However, this type of consumer can acquire a phone only for some function (Villegas, 2019). It may happen that the consumer buys a phone for its functions of playback of files digitized in mp3 and is not interested in seasonal promotions. It can

be inferred that technological innovation translated into multiple functions is an added value for users that can lead to secondary consumption.

The second path includes: perception of innovation è perception of utility è propensity to consume è use of mobile Internet. In addition to analyzing the impact of technological innovations on human behavior, the second path explains the association between an innovation and its usefulness as the determinants of mobile decision and consumption. The perception of utility being a variable that indicates the selection and categorization of objects, influences consumption decisions and the subsequent purchase of a product or service (García, Espinoza and Carreon, 2018). A person who buys a mobile phone with the latest technology differs from the consumer who seeks secondary benefits derived from the use of technologies. It is a potential consumer who acquires some technology to consume products and services exclusive to the network or elite flow of communication information. A person looking for mp3 files only available in virtual stores will buy a mobile phone connected to the virtual store.

The third route includes: perception of innovation è perception of efficiency è propensity to consumption è use of mobile Internet. The behavior of the consumer, explained by this third route, denotes a person engaged in the purchase and sale of products and services (Quiroz, 2020: p. 1001). Precisely, the perception of efficiency suggests the use of a technology for its competitive advantages rather than for its comparative advantages. A sales supervisor will acquire a phone with multiple functions if he perceives that these functions will allow him to supervise his salesmen.

In summa, trajectories and relationships are outlined that explain and anticipate the reactivation of the economy based on responsible and preventive tourism. These are possible decision paths built from possible biosafety thresholds. In other words, the prevention of contagion would be an additional value to tourist services.

2. METHOD

The setting in which the study was developed was the municipality of Huehuetoca, State of Mexico, located in the center of the country, adjacent to the states of Michoacan, Tlaxcala, Puebla, Morelos, and Mexico City. 10,023 people live in the town, the houses reach 24,872, with an average size of four people. 4,582 families are managed by heads of families, the average education is 9.1 years, and they have 108 middle and higher schools. 34.1 is in a social deprivation, 8.1 is vulnerable in terms of income, 21.4 is neither poor nor vulnerable, 30.7 is located in the moderate poverty line and 5.7 in extreme poverty (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Huehuetoca, Estado de Mexico. Source: INEGI (2022)

Services in the town of Huehuetoca are linked to Central American migrants on their way to the United States. From shelter to food, the municipality provides basic services to migrants. Migration is a local, regional and transnational phenomenon, since various media outlets cover migratory flows. The economic spillover from media coverage of migrants, conflicts with authorities and disappearances activates the local economy. In addition, the town has tourist attractions related to recreation and ecotourism. The services provided by coffee cooperatives range from the sale of handicrafts, derived products and lodging.

Given that the study of tourism as a determinant of the undertaking of preventive devices is recent, an exploratory and cross-sectional investigation was outlined, considering the possible reactivation scenarios, but assuming that the pandemic is a risk event that could be contingent and volatile. In this sense, a psychometric work was proposed since the perception of entrepreneurship, trust and tourist diffusion are phenomena that can be measured from expectations.

There were 100 coffee growers (M = 35,4 DE = 2,13 age; M = 9’832 SD = 342,1 USD).

Scale of the perception of trust. 5 items ("COVID-19 brought me closer to clients who care about their respiratory health for tourists") with response options from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

Scale of the perception of opportunism. 5 items ("COVID-19 opened my eyes to the business of health prevention for tourists") with response options from “never” to “always”.

Scale of the perception optimization. 5 items ("COVID-19 forced me to offer the sanitary devices that tourists need") with response options from “less than ten minutes” to “more than twenty minutes.

Scale of the perception of innovation. 5 items ("COVID-19 forced me to offer products that tourists do not find elsewhere") with response options from "strongly useful" to "strongly useful".

The reliability and validity of the instruments that measured the five variables was built and established. The likelihood of adjusting indirect and direct, negative and positive, and significant causal relationships between the study variables was modeled and demonstrated. Twelve indicators were established that configured three dimensions for the five variables of the measurement model that were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis of the main components with varimax rotation and maximum likelihood. The results reject the hypothesis of factorial unidimensionality for three variables of the measurement model. The psychometric properties of the instruments that measure the study variables are detailed in the table where they meet the requirements for multivariable analysis.

3. RESULTS

The values reached minimum levels essential to carry out more in-depth analyzes such as the establishment of factors from the normal distribution of the responses to the instrument (see Table 1).

R	M	SD	A	F1	F2	F3	F4
r1	4,32	1,43	,762	,632			
r2	4,35	1,54	,783	,512			
r3	4,81	1,89	,751	,430			
r4	4,53	1,54	,704	,623			
r5	4,29	1,21	,735	,603			
r6	4,38	1,34	,792		,439		
r7	4,56	1,70	,743		,325		
r8	4,68	1,54	,703		,476		
r9	4,12	1,45	,793		,405		
r10	4,30	1,65	,752		,549		
r11	4,89	1,24	,722			,623	
r12	4,65	1,90	,703			,571	
r13	4,23	1,78	,793			,539	
r14	4,13	1,54	,789			,623	
r15	4,39	1,35	,783			,605	
r16	4,54	1,82	,793				,573
r17	4,32	1,43	,752				,632
r18	4,41	1,24	,761				,548
r19	4,58	1,41	,704				,521

r20	4,56	1,50	,742		,519

Table 1. Descriptive instrument. Source: elaborated by the authors

Note: Elaborated with data study: R = Reactive, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, A = Alpha excluded item value. Method: Principal Axes, Rotation: Promax. Adequation (KMO = ,765), Sphericity ⌈χ2 = 13,21 (16 df) p < ,05⌋. F1 = Trust (14% total variance explained and alpha with ,782), F2 = Opportunism (10% total variance explained and alpha with ,724), F3 = Optimization (7% total variance explained and alpha with ,770), F4 = Innovation (1% total variance explained and alpha with ,725).

Having established the four factors that explained 32% of the total variance, we proceeded to estimate the structure of their relationships, considering the associations and covariances between the four dimensions (see Table 2).

	M	SD	F1	F2	F3	F4	F1	F2	F3	F4
F1	25,32	13,24	1,000				1,783	,436	,532	,346
F2	22,31	15,46	,543*	1,000				1,802	,657	,438
F3	24,36	17,68	,325**	,680*	1,000				1,532	,650
F4	20,43	14,69	,578***	,543*	,412*	1,000				1,141

Table 2. Relations between factors. Source: elaborated by the authors

Elaborated with data study; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, F1 = Trust, F2 = Opportunism, F3 = Optimization, F4 = Innovation; * p < ,01; ** p < ,001; *** p < ,0001

The validity of the instrument indicates four predominant and convergent dimensions with the general scale. It is about trust, opportunism, optimization and innovation, although the latter explains the lower percentage of variance, it is possible that they correlate with a common factor which is considered to be the entrepreneurship observed in the Covid-19 era.

4. DISCUSSION

This work provides a model for the study of coffee entrepreneurship in the reactivation of local tourism. The proposed model warns that trust, opportunism, optimization and innovation of products and services related to coffee farming contribute to the local economy. Trust between political and social actors leads to a cooperative synergy in which the local government finances the projects of local merchants. The budget allocated as seed capital complements the remittances received by migrant families and both are oriented towards the production and sale of confectionery. The optimization of resources is an entrepreneurial skill that the locality develops by being able to finance itself with remittances and credits in cooperatives led by heads of families. The innovation

of coffee-based confectionery explains the local entrepreneurship. The sale of these products in archaeological or ecotourist zones represents a stable income for families.

The contribution of this work to the state of the art lies in the establishment of the validity of an instrument that measured four dimensions related to trust, opportunity, optimization, and innovation. These are explanatory factors of entrepreneurship because they reflect it in four aspects that link the purchase and sale of contagion prevention devices with the reactivation of tourism. The four axes explained 32% of the variance, indicating the inclusion of another factor that the literature identifies as coupling to account for the convergence of the first factors in a common second-order factor. The empirical test of a model with the exposed dimensions will allow to increase the construct validity of the instrument in question.

Ratten (2020: p. 543) Identify the key to entrepreneurship in the culture of success. It warns that the responses to the pandemic are already latent through its materialization in opportunism. In this way, the differences between cultures explain levels or degrees of entrepreneurship according to attachment to place, identity or social pressure. In the present work, it is observed that innovation explains the lowest percentage of total variance. This is so because the culture of optimization is related to the effort and resilience that distinguishes Mexico from other cultures. Thus, innovation is an area of opportunity that could emerge in the absence of public microfinance.

Ratten (2021: p. 91) suggests that entrepreneurship is the result of the inclusion of social actors and financial agents that converge in the pandemic. It is a strategy of opportunity, competitiveness and dual growth between government, society and the market. The competition of private sectors in public spheres and state investment in business consortia will increase the supply of products and services, generating employment and competitiveness, as well as innovation by consolidating itself as a local development strategy. In this study, opportunity is distinguished with innovation based on trust. In other words, empathy between actors can generate competition without innovation. this is so for more cultural reasons.

Ratten & Jones (2021: p. 3) suggest that entrepreneurship is a permanent training process in interaction with academic learning levels that are developed in the classroom, but its implementation in professional practice implies going beyond the consensus of trust and opportunity. In the present work, optimization has been considered as a factor of academic specialization that reflects entrepreneurship in risk perspective. It is a skill that can be computational in the dissemination of products and services, as well as the establishment of networks for the permanent formation of criteria of opportunity, purchase and sale.

In relation to the state of the art, the lines of research can be carried out with the inclusion of competitiveness in the reflective model, transforming it into a hybrid proposal. Entrepreneurship reflected as opportunity and innovation would be determined by trust between the parties involved and this would indirectly affect competitiveness as a target variable for the prediction of cultural, social, organizational and cognitive factors.

5. CONCLUSION

The objective of the present work was to specify a model for the study of the perception of utility, considering the dimensions reported in the literature, as well as those established in the present work, but its design limited the contributions to the analyzed sample, suggesting the extension of work towards other scenarios and other study samples. In distinction from the literature, this work assumes that entrepreneurship has not developed in the surveyed sample and therefore it is necessary to observe it with respect to a new modeling of its factors and trajectories. The measurement of entrepreneurship would include two dimensions related to opportunity and optimization as determinants of competitiveness. In turn, trust would affect these three variables directly and innovation indirectly. In other words, the proposed model would anticipate innovation and competitiveness scenarios based on work culture and entrepreneurial skills. In relation to public microfinance policies, the model to be contrasted will make it possible to evaluate the effect of austerity or public investment in micro, small and medium-sized companies in the Covid-19 era.

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