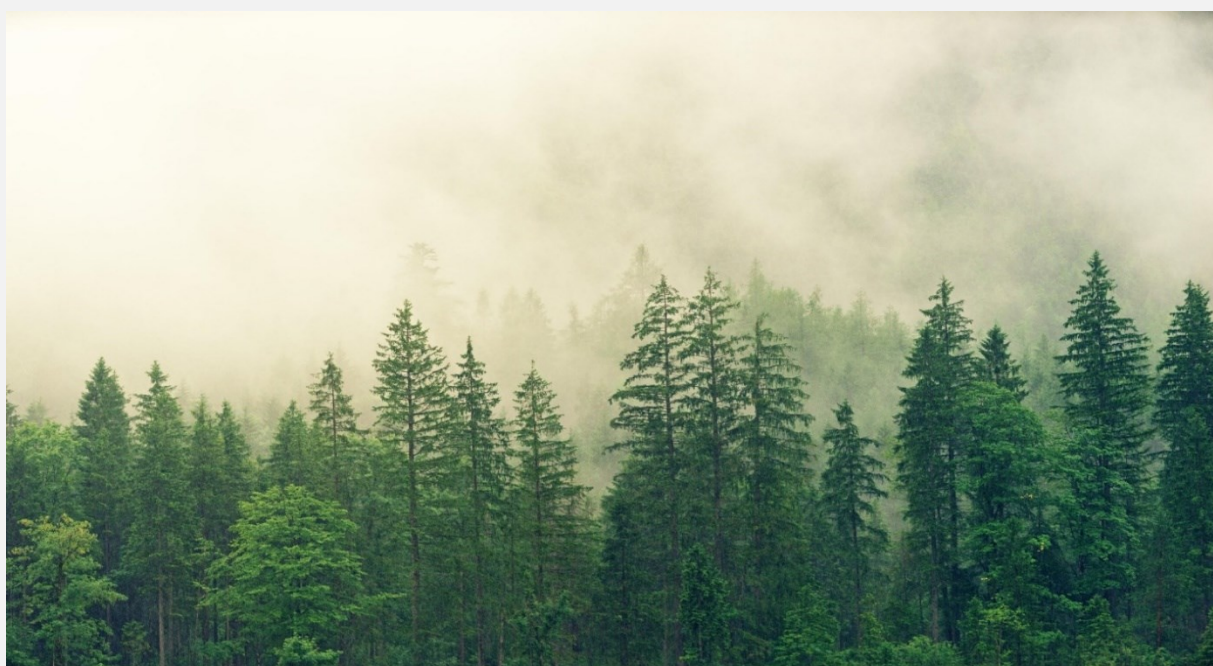


TOURISM FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC
CONFERENCE

18-19 MAY 2023, BULGARIA



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TOURISM STRATEGIC PLANNING OF THE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE IN THE HISTORIC CENTER OF JOÃO PESSOA-PB, BRAZIL

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Abstract: *The pedestrian route in the historic center in the city of João Pessoa-PB, Brazil, has suffered neglect by the government over the years. The lack of financial investment for maintenance, marketing, and security has caused the deterioration of the various attractions and promoted the withdrawal of tourists and the local community to visit and enjoy the historical and cultural aspects. In this scenario, this research is inserted, since it is necessary to establish a strategic planning process for these spaces, based on the historical and cultural relevance for the tourist destination and inhabitants. Thus, the aim of this research was to diagnose and analyze the current situation of pedestrian routes in the historic center of João Pessoa -PB, through the SWOT analysis method. The work was characterized as a case study of exploratory type, descriptive of qualitative approach. The results of this research demonstrated that in the internal environment, the weaknesses of the pedestrian routes are greater than the strengths, thus, it is up to local managers to pay more attention to the items that concern the degradation of the historical heritage. Concerning the external environment, several opportunities are glimpsed for this attraction, leaving it up to the public power to create public policies that can promote continuous improvements and diversify the attraction.*

Keywords: *SWOT Analysis; Historical Center; Pedestrian Route; Cultural Tourism; Historical Tourism.*

INTRODUCTION

Pedestrian routes or pedestrian routes began in Brazil with the project Linha Pinhão - footprints of Memory in Curitiba and can be characterized as activities in which the individual walks through specific and signposted spaces, to know the historical, environmental and cultural heritage of a particular place (Queiroz, Guilherme, et al. 2017).

In João Pessoa, the state of Paraíba, the pedestrian route was inserted on December 8th, 2008, in commemoration of one year of the historic center's toppling, by a partnership between Prefeitura Municipal de João Pessoa (PMJP) and the Ministry of Tourism (Mtur), consisting of

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two circuits called Cidade Baixa (Lower City) and Cidade Alta (Upper City), guided by 162 signs with information of the monuments (Queiroz, Guilherme, et al. 2017).

However, over time, this route suffered from the neglect of the public authorities, with little investment in maintenance, promotion, and safety, causing the deterioration and promoting the tourist repulsion of tourists to visit. Given the above, this research is inserted, since it is necessary to strategically plan these spaces, considering that they have great relevance for people who visit the historic center and residents. For Fernandes (2021), strategic planning can be considered a managerial process in which one seeks to promote organizational strategies supported by the company's mission and environment, to promote more efficiency and effectiveness, based on the balance between the objectives and its existing resources.

In strategic planning, different tools can be used, among them the SWOT analysis. For Dantas and Melo, (2008), this analysis is a potential instrument to establish the level of tourism development in which localities and has the purpose of monitoring the internal environment Strengths, Weaknesses, and external environment Opportunities and Threats of a particular company or activity (Kotler, 2012). Thus, the objective of this research is to diagnose and analyze the current situation of pedestrian routes in the historic center of João Pessoa -PB, through the SWOT analysis method.

This work is justified by the importance of acknowledging and stimulating the improvement of pedestrian routes in the historic center of the city of João Pessoa, PB. Moreover, this study was the fruit of an extension project entitled "Pedestrian Route in the city of João Pessoa and the Stimulus to the Development of cultural tourism", which culminated in the elaboration of the book *Rota de Pedestres do Centro Histórico da Cidade de João Pessoa-PB* (Pedestrian route of the historic center of João Pessoa city), published by CCTA/UFPB and available online in the open access system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategic tourism planning through SWOT analysis

Strategic planning can be considered a managerial process to promote organizational strategies supported by the company's mission and environment, to promote more efficiency and effectiveness, based on the balance between objectives and existing resources. It is up to the top management the responsibility of its execution because they are responsible for directing the operational levels (Filho, Araújo, et al., 2014).

In strategic planning, scenario analysis is one of the primary factors for decision-making. It is performed through SWOT analysis that enables the study of the internal environment and the reflection of external variables. Its origin is dated in 1950 by researcher Peter Drucker (Medeiros, Nascimento, and Perinotto, 2017) and its development from 1960s, at the Harvard Business School, seeking ways to balance the "Strengths" and "Weaknesses" of an organization, as well as its distinctive competence, and the "Opportunities" and "Threats" of a corporate environment (Fernandes & Figueiredo, 2021.)

The expression SWOT is an acronym, of English origin, it means Strengths (strengths), Weaknesses (weaknesses), Opportunities (opportunities), and Threats (threats) and that, as explained by Sobral and Peci (2013, p. 214), aims to study, in a managerial and integrated way, the "process of strategic analysis, after identifying the environmental opportunities and threats and the strengths and weaknesses of the organization". In this sense, Oliveira (2007, p. 37) explains:

"1. Strength - is the differentiation achieved by the company - controllable variable - that gives it an operational advantage in the business environment (where the issues not controllable by the company are).

2. Weakness - is the inadequate situation of the company - controllable variable - that gives it an operational disadvantage in the business environment.

3. Opportunity - is the environmental force uncontrollable by the company, which may favor its strategic action, provided that it is known and satisfactorily taken advantage of while it lasts.

4. Threat - is the environmental force uncontrollable by the company, which creates obstacles to its strategic action, but which may or may not be avoided, provided it is recognized in a timely manner."

SWOT analysis has been used as an important tool for the strategic planning of tourism destinations because for Medeiros, Nascimento & Perinotto, (2017), it is constituted as a tool of simple use and suitable for dealing with the evolving and constant process of tourism activity.

Historic and Cultural Heritage in the Pedestrian Route in João Pessoa – PB

In Rolim's (2013, p. 7-8) view, heritage is seen as "a sign of memory", which makes heritage preservation, a self-affirmation to the citizens as "participant of a society and a culture". Dantas (2015, p. 32) suggests that the word heritage refers to the "idea of appropriation by individuals", adding "individual and social" value to the historical assets of a particular location. The author also analyzes that the cultural heritage comes from a construction made by society, that is, what is considered by a particular group of people "worthy of being bequeathed to future

generations" (Dantas, 2015, p. 32). Still about the heritage, Silva (2011, p. 1) understands that it "is seen as an asset capable of boosting the local economy when it presents peculiarities that attract the eye, that instigate the search for knowledge and leisure, generating visits".

Thus, it can be said that the historical cultural heritage brings the idea of belonging of people by the tangible and intangible assets, dealing with a symbolic identity of a community, linked to affective memories arising from the history of this place, as Lopis (2017) explains. It is in this context that the locus of this research is inserted, since the capital of Paraíba is the third oldest city in the country and for having a vast and rich cultural heritage spread throughout its historic center, it was listed by the Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), including the Lower Town (Varadouro and Porto do Capim) and Upper Town (IPHAN, s. d), ensuring that the history and culture of Paraíba are perpetuated over the years, bringing identity and belonging to a group of individuals as one of the most representative forms of the place.

João Pessoa is known for being among the most forested cities in the country, and for being considered as the place where the sun rises first (Brambilla, Vanzella & Baptista, 2013). Its population is estimated at 809,015 thousand inhabitants, has a territorial extension of 210.044 km², with a characteristic biome of Atlantic forest, and with a Municipal Human Development Index (IDHM) of 0.763 in the year 2010 (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2019). Its foundation is dated August 05, 1585, having as stage the banks of the Sanhauá River, going towards the seashore of the region Federal University of Paraíba [UFPB], 2020).

The central area of João Pessoa keeps its history and culture, which must be preserved, as well as developed by the tourism sector, considering that cultural tourism in the city has been growing, for its beautiful mansions, squares, churches and many other monuments that refer to the colonization and development of the city. As Evangelista, Brambilla, and Vanzella (2018, p. 249) expose, the capital of Paraíba has become one of the destinations for Brazilian cultural tourism, since "its historic buildings compose a unique heritage, attracting the attention of visitors and thus composing a great potential for cultural tourism."

To make better use of this space, the Pedestrian Routes were created and started to be signposted on December 08th, 2008, in celebration of the one year anniversary of the historic center and it was done through a partnership between the Municipality of João Pessoa (PMJP) and the Ministry of Tourism (Mtur), consisting of two circuits named Cidade Baixa and Cidade Alta (Lower City and Upper City), guided by 162 signs with information about the monuments.

Rota Cidade Alta (Upper City Route) - this tour has 20 tourist attractions to be visited along the way, starting at Solon de Lucena Park and ending at João Pessoa Square. Among the main attractions can be mentioned: Nossa Senhora do Carmo Church, Academia Paraibana de Letras, São Francisco Church, Santa Roza Theater, Tea Pavilion, Court of Justice (Guilherme, Queiroz & Vanzella, 2018).

Rota Cidade Baixa (Lower City Route) - has 4 attractions to be visited by the tourist, they are: Hotel Globo, São Pedro Gonçalves Church, Antenor Navarro Square and Tito Silva Wine Factory (Guilherme, Queiroz et al., 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Initially, bibliographic and documental research was carried out, constituting the literature review and the deepening of the main subjects addressed in these studies, such as Cultural Tourism, SWOT Analysis, Historical Heritage, Historical Center and the city of João Pessoa.

Subsequently, an in-loco visit was made to the pedestrian route that connects the Cidade Baixa and Alta to the Historic Center of João Pessoa, located in the state of Paraíba. It is worth mentioning that the visit was carried out in December 2020 and was updated in February 2022 for the publication of the Primer Pedestrian Route of the Historic Downtown of João Pessoa, PB. The visit was carried out with the support of a research script and brochure of both routes and the aid of field notes of the main attractions, equipment, and tourist services, as well as the collection of materials such as folders, and capture of photos to provide better interaction with the reality studied. It is worth mentioning that the necessary safety measures were observed to avoid contamination by Covid-19. After data collection and updating, a SWOT matrix was prepared with the main findings, which will be described, and discussed in the results and discussion.

The data analysis was performed by four thematic axes, divided into strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. After dividing the components into these four groups, a detailed analysis of each one was conducted, as explained by Dantas & Melo (2008, p. 121), "it is necessary to cross Opportunities with Strengths and Weaknesses with Threats, seeking to establish strategies that minimize and monitor the negative aspects and maximize the potential", to generate growth and development of the tourist destination/attraction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the participant observation of the pedestrian route in downtown João Pessoa, it was observed thematic axes that are indispensable for its development, taking as a starting point the attractions present in the pedestrian route of Cidade Alta (Upper City) and Cidade Baixa (Lower City), reporting which are the most active strengths, the most debilitating weaknesses of the internal environment; and which are the most accessible opportunities, and the most important threats of the external environment for the development of tourism (Table 1).

Table 1. SWOT Matrix: Upper and Lower City.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Localization - Historical and Cultural Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historical Heritage Degradation - Precarious and outdated touristic signaling - Lack of tourist signaling in other languages - Unevenness and lack of maintenance of access sidewalks - Lack of Tourist Information Offices. - Absence of public bathrooms - Lack of Tourist Support Equipment - Absence of Public Safety - Inappropriate disposal of residues - Inadequate hygiene and cleaning of the spaces
EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased demand for outdoor activities due to the pandemic. - Growth in demand for experience tourism. - Use of technology and internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deficient security - Lack of incentive from the public power

Source: Developed by the authors, 2020

Strengths of the Pedestrian Route in the Historic Centre of João Pessoa - PB

The location proved to be a positive factor for the route since its beginning is located in the center of the city of João Pessoa, close to the main commercial routes and other benefits that can be enjoyed during the route. In addition, the historical heritage of the city is composed of a rich and vast set of churches, houses, and other monuments; most of these monuments are in a good state of conservation.

Weaknesses of the Walking Routes in the Historical Center of João Pessoa - PB

Some historical monuments are abandoned, being degraded with time, like the old IPHAN building in Praça Rio Branco, in Cidade Alta (Upper City), as well as graffiti on the houses, making them look ugly and dirty (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Casarios located in the Square Antenor Navarro - Rota Cidade Baixa (Lower City Route)



Source: Authors' personal archive, 2020

The tourist signs are almost all erased, rusty or depreciated, outdated and lacking translation into other languages. Therefore, this fact limits the tourist to obtain information and better use of the route (Figure 2)

Figure 2. A) Plaque in the Square Venâncio Neiva - Pavilhão do Chá - Rota Cidade Alta (Upper City Route); B) Plaque in the Square Antenor Navarro - Rota Cidade Baixa (Lower City Route)



Source: Authors' personal archive, 2020

Another point worth mentioning is that most of the sidewalks and paths located in the city are full of holes and unevenness, making it difficult for a person with reduced mobility and disability, whether permanent or temporary. In this way, the sidewalks and paths without the

maintenance of their floors incur such people to imminent risks of accidents or falls. (Figure 3/A)

Solid waste was another problem found, in some tourist attractions or even on the routes, it was observed the inappropriate disposal of solid waste (garbage) by squares and sidewalks, leaving the ugly look and dirty to the tourist or any passerby who passes by these places (Figure 3/B).

Figura 3. A) Calçada da Rua Duque de Caxias - Rota Cidade Alta (Upper City Route). B) Improper disposal of solid waste at Venâncio Neiva Square (Tea Pavilion) – Rota Cidade Alta (Lower City Route)



Source: Authors' personal archive, 2020

It is also noteworthy that during all routes there was not located any tourist information office, where tourists can ask questions about the route and visit the monuments, constituting a limitation for individuals who want to know more about the attractions and other important information about João Pessoa.

The absence of public toilets is another difficulty diagnosed, only in Hotel Globo, located on the Cidade Baixa (Lower City). In Cidade Alta (Upper City), only in the Centro Cultural São Francisco, where to use it you need to pay an entrance ticket to enter the museum and have access. Public bathrooms along the route are necessary, since the route, especially the upper city route, is extensive, making the tourist, at some point, need to use them along the way.

Lack of tourist support equipment with food services and tourist support products to generate economy around these places now visited and lack of policing Throughout the route there was only one Military Police station and one Municipal Guard station located in the Parque Solon de Lucena, where the Cidade Alta (Upper City) begins, while in Cidade Baixa (Lower City) there was only one municipal guard that is inside the Hotel Globo.

Opportunities of the Pedestrian Route in the Historic Centre of João Pessoa - PB

It is observed as an opportunity for the increase in the demand for outdoor activities due to the pandemic that intensified this practice, given the contagion issue and the agglomeration of people in closed places. Another point is the growth in demand for experience tourism because tourists want to go beyond the photo and enjoy the spaces, they want to live authentic and lasting experiences, so this factor can be an increase, if well worked out, can provide inclusive tours and unique experiences.

Finally, the development of technology and the use of the internet can offer more visibility to this attraction, attracting several people, besides offering more interactivity with the use of applications to improve the tourist experience.

Threats of the Pedestrian Routes in the Historical Center of João Pessoa - PB

The main threat is the lack of security, since the whole route of Cidade Alta (Upper City) is insecure and with the risk of theft or robbery to the tourist with little policing. As for Cidade Baixa, it was found that, regardless of the time the route is done, the whole route is empty and unsafe, except the Hotel Globo which has a municipal guard inside the historical monument, where people go to enjoy the sunset from its terrace.

CONCLUSION

The pedestrian routes emerged as a way to promote cultural tourism in the cities, to value the culture and history of a place, through a walk by the tourist who wanted to explore the spaces. The Historical Center of João Pessoa is inserted in this context because it is rich in culture, history, and monuments of rich value for the identity of the local people. However, the fact of being the third oldest city in Brazil does not make the historical heritage preserved in its fullness or even prepared for the development of local cultural tourism, because a pedestrian route was established, but little has been encouraged and given the necessary attention.

The results of this research showed that in the internal environment, the weaknesses of the Pedestrian Route are greater than the strengths, thus, it is up to local managers to pay more attention to the items that concern the degradation of the historical heritage, precarious and outdated tourist signaling, absence of tourist signaling in other languages, unevenness and lack of maintenance of access sidewalks, absence of tourist information offices absence of public bathrooms, absence of tourist support equipment, absence of public security, inappropriate

disposal of residues, inadequate hygiene and cleaning of the spaces, the exhaustive itinerary of the Cidade Alta (Upper City).

About the external environment, several opportunities are glimpsed for this attraction, leaving it up to the government to create public policies that can promote continuous improvements and diversify the attraction. In this context, we can see the need to promote public policies for the development of the tourist attraction, enabling more economic growth and greater participation in the process of reducing environmental and social impacts.

It is necessary that the municipal management, in partnership with the state management, act strongly in the promotion of these routes, as well as bringing necessary items so that these routes are safe both in the visitation of these monuments and in the slopes and streets that the tourist needs to pass through to do the route in a trustworthy way. Understanding and trying to promote these changes for greater development of this tourist destination is a way to make these routes to leave the drawing board and start to be done continuously and not sporadically by the tourist who comes to visit the city, that is, that besides knowing the beautiful beaches of the coast of Paraíba, they can know first of all the history of the capital of Paraíba, its customs, culture, and its people.

It is suggested that new studies be done on the pedestrian route, based on the insertion accessibility for people with disabilities and reduced mobility, aiming to encourage social inclusion in this space.

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