




## Modelo de gestión del turismo rural en la comunidad kichwa de Pandanuque

*Rural tourism management model in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque*

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**Palabras**

**claves:** Modelo de gestión, turismo rural, desarrollo económico, comunidades indígenas, Ecuador

**Keywords:**

Management model, rural

**Resumen**

**Introducción.** El modelo de gestión del turismo rural en la comunidad Kichwa de Pandanuque es de vital importancia para mejorar las actividades turísticas y promover el desarrollo económico. El turismo rural, que se ha consolidado en Ecuador en las últimas décadas, es una importante fuente de desarrollo económico y social. La comunidad Kichwa de Pandanuque, situada en un entorno rico cultural y naturalmente, es un potencial destino turístico que podría beneficiarse de un modelo de gestión eficaz para optimizar el bienestar de sus habitantes. **Objetivo.** La presente investigación tiene como objetivo general diseñar un modelo de gestión integral para el turismo rural en la comunidad kichwa de Pandanuque que promueva el desarrollo sostenible y mejore la calidad de vida de los habitantes. **Metodología.** La investigación se enfoca en la población económicamente activa de la comunidad kichwa de Pandanuque, es de carácter no experimental y transversal. Se recopilieron datos a través de encuestas a 86 personas, utilizando técnicas cuantitativas y cualitativas. Se analizaron las respuestas para identificar la percepción sobre el modelo de gestión y el turismo rural. **Resultados.** Los resultados muestran que la mayoría de los encuestados considera que el turismo rural es crucial para el desarrollo económico de Pandanuque. La artesanía se destaca como la principal oportunidad de desarrollo económico, seguida por el turismo sostenible. En cuanto a las atracciones turísticas, el turismo gastronómico es el más relevante. La comunidad apoya fuertemente la implementación de un modelo de gestión eficaz para maximizar los beneficios del turismo rural y asegurar su sostenibilidad. **Conclusión.** La comunidad Kichwa de Pandanuque posee un gran potencial turístico que, con un modelo de gestión adecuado, puede ser desarrollado para impulsar el desarrollo económico y potenciar las condiciones vitales de sus habitantes. El turismo gastronómico y comunitario se presentan como las principales atracciones, y la artesanía se destaca como una oportunidad viable de progreso económico. **Área de estudio general:** Administración de Empresas. **Área de estudio específica:** Gestión de proyectos.

**Abstract**

**Introduction.** The management model of rural tourism in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque is of vital importance to improve tourist

tourism,  
economic  
development,  
indigenous  
communities,  
Ecuador.

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activities and promote economic development. Rural tourism, which has consolidated in Ecuador in recent decades, is an important source of economic and social development. The Kichwa community of Pandanuque, situated in a culturally and naturally rich environment, is a potential tourist destination that could benefit from an effective management model to optimize the well-being of its inhabitants. objective. The general objective of this research is to design an integral management model for rural tourism in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque that promotes sustainable development and improves the quality of life of the inhabitants. Methodology. The research focuses on the economically active population of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque. It is non-experimental and cross-sectional in nature. Data were collected through surveys of 86 people, using quantitative and qualitative techniques. The responses were analyzed to identify the perception of the management model and rural tourism. Results. The results show that the majority of respondents consider rural tourism crucial for the economic development of Pandanuque. Handicrafts stand out as the main opportunity for economic development, followed by sustainable tourism. Regarding tourist attractions, gastronomic tourism is the most relevant. The community strongly supports the implementation of an effective management model to maximize the benefits of rural tourism and ensure its sustainability. Conclusion. The Kichwa community of Pandanuque has great tourist potential that, with an adequate management model, can be developed to boost economic development and enhance the living conditions of its inhabitants. Gastronomic and community tourism are presented as the main attractions, and handicrafts stand out as a viable opportunity for economic progress. General area of study: Business Administration. Specific area of study: Project Management

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## Introduction

The rural tourism management model is a tool that allows establishing an organizational and strategic structure to coordinate tourism activities. It also seeks to extend economic benefits and preserve the cultural and natural heritage of the community by achieving community participation.

Rural tourism, as a type of tourism that is developed in rural areas and involves the participation of local communities, has emerged as a promising alternative for the sustainable development of various regions around the world. In this context, the Kichwa community of Pandanuque, located in a natural and culturally rich environment in Ecuador, stands out as a potential destination for the implementation of a tourism management model that integrates heritage conservation, local economic development and the strengthening of cultural identity.

Although tourism in Ecuador began its modern development in the 1950s, it has only been in the last three decades that it has begun to consolidate itself as an economic and sociocultural activity. Today, tourism represents the third most important economic activity in the country, after oil and bananas. It is worth mentioning that for every dollar generated in the national economy, 10 cents correspond to tourism. It is also important to mention that for every direct job generated in tourism, between 3 and 6 indirect jobs are created. Thus, tourism is relevant to overcoming poverty and the sustainable development of the country.

Indigenous and rural communities began tourism activity during the last three decades of the 20th century, adopting a proposal called community tourism. (Ruiz, 2007).

In many regions of the world, rural tourism has become an important source of economic and social development. Tourists have the opportunity to experience rural life, explore nature and participate in cultural and traditional activities through this type of tourism. To fully exploit the potential of rural tourism and ensure its long-term sustainability, it is essential to have an efficient management model adapted to the characteristics and needs of each community.

The management of a tourist destination must be adapted to the specific situation and needs, taking into account three important aspects to guarantee its competitiveness, such as planning, destination development, tourist services, and destination promotion. These activities seek to maximize the benefits of tourism. Firstly, the tourism management model must meet the needs of the inhabitants, therefore, the strategies to be designed must be aligned with the objectives and conditions of the place that allow the enrichment of the culture (Pérez et al., 2021).

The Kichwa community of Pandanuque is considered part of the area of direct influence. Most of the population belongs to the indigenous ethnic group, Kichwa nationality, and they preserve their mother tongue, customs, beliefs and gastronomy. They also have basic services, while the main access route to the community is a second-order gravel road.

The idea is to design a comprehensive management model for rural tourism in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque that promotes sustainable development and improves the

quality of life of the inhabitants. The process that led to this research work is detailed below.

First, the theoretical framework containing some concepts regarding the management model, community-based rural tourism and economic development is outlined. Then, Find the methodological framework that was used for the research study, such as the type of research population and sample, the techniques and instruments with which it will be worked.

Finally, the results obtained from the instrument applied will be shown in order to achieve the central objective of the research study, which is design a comprehensive management model for rural tourism in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque that promotes sustainable development and improves the quality of life of the inhabitants, which seeks to encourage the development of community attractions, generating income to improve the current living conditions of the inhabitants of the community under analysis. Under the considerations described above, the research work will answer the following research question: What is the impact of the rural tourism management model implemented in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque in terms of economic development and preservation of cultural and natural heritage?

### **Theoretical foundation**

#### **Management model**

Huertas, et al. (2020) mentions that it is necessary to clearly define the management model, so that the company includes and integrates all the capabilities it has, in order to recognize, identify, interpret and understand in order to take advantage of the strengths and minimize the weaknesses, in order to make the necessary improvements. The authors then indicate that it is important to design and implement a management model within the company, for decision-making and achieving objectives.

On the other hand, a tourism management model is a methodological instrument that guarantees the management of sustainable tourism through planning and work organization processes. In addition, a diagnosis of the territory must be made and a thorough study must be carried out to obtain the best strategies in order to apply them and promote the development of the community in order to obtain economic improvements, taking into account respect for natural resources. However, it must be taken into account that by not coordinating the elements of planning, organization, execution and control, the management model will deteriorate and will not meet what the company wants to achieve. (Alcívar & Mendoza, 2020).

#### **Rural tourism**

Community-based rural tourism has become a fundamental tool to promote sustainable development in rural areas around the world. Traditional tourism management focused on attracting tourists and generating income without taking into account the negative effects it generates on the environment and local communities. Therefore, a comprehensive and sustainable tourism management has emerged that seeks to balance economic, social and environmental aspects. This method recognizes the importance of preserving the natural and cultural heritage of tourist sites to promote more conscious and sustainable tourism in the future (Marcillo et al., 2023).

Rural tourism is mainly aimed at city dwellers who are looking for holidays in the countryside to be in contact with nature and with local people where they can carry out activities related to recreational aspects, accommodations and related services located in rural areas. The accommodation aspect has a very important link with rural tourism, since visitors are attracted by the use of rural houses. It is important to mention that rural tourism largely helps the development of the territory (Bauzá & Melgosa, 2020).

On the other hand, (Murga, 2023) indicates that rural tourism is all the activities that the visitor enjoys such as the relationship with nature, ways of life, cultures, gastronomy, dances and music. It is worth mentioning that it is an economic dynamizer generated through an exchange of experiences and authentic experiences of the community towards tourists, which generates an empowerment of the community due to the opportunities that are presented, and also helps to improve the standards of living. In addition, it is important to understand that it is called rural due to the geographical area where the communities are located.

### **Economic development**

The main objective of economic development is to improve the quality and standard of living of the population that seeks to achieve balanced and equitable growth, but sustainable economic development is not always achieved, in the case of Ecuador, which has a difficult road ahead due to the negative figures in socioeconomic indicators in different parts of the country. (Cordova & Sanchez, 2021).

Economic development is known as the process by which local government and the business sector participate to boost economic activity and achieve community improvement. (Velazco, 2020).

(Sabry, 2023) It mentions that economic development is the process by which economic well-being and the quality of life of a country, the destiny of nations, regions and local communities are improved, transforming people's lives to achieve certain objectives or goals. In addition, it consists of forging a path towards a better world. This field studies how nations grow, innovate and reduce poverty.

### Indigenous communities

FAO emphasizes the word indigenous (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2021) It refers to the native, traditional, or ancestral nature of an entity in a geographic location. However, indigenous communities are those that belong to towns with a small number of inhabitants, and they also tend to face common challenges related to the protection of their territorial, cultural, and human rights. They are also those that have their own cultures with ancestral knowledge and practices, including languages and traditional medicines. Communities have always resorted to their ancestral ways of relating to nature and their bodies cannot be invaded by other types of practices that cause them any harm FAO and FILAC (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean., 2021).

The indigenous community is the group of families that belong to an indigenous people, they share their own social organization as well as their cultural and historical past. They have a consciousness of identity and common values, with territorial rights as forms of government, their own normative systems that distinguish them from other communities. In addition, to achieve individual well-being they do so through collective action and thus achieve benefits for all or part of the community. (Albertos & Martín, 2021).

### Ecuador

The Ecuadorian population, due to its ethnic diversity, its own culture and tourist sites, is recognized as a cultural heritage for its numerous natural beauty, which has led communities to begin participating in tourism activities. It is important to mention that to develop sustainable tourism in Ecuador there are policies, which are supported by the Tourism Law, Supplement to the Official Registry No. 733, December 27, 2022. According to Chapter I, Art. 4.-The state policy in relation to the tourism sector must meet the following objectives:

- a) Recognizing that tourism activity corresponds to private and community initiative or self-management, and to the state in that it must enhance activities by promoting and fostering a competitive tourism product.
- b) Ensure the rational use of the Nation's natural, historical, cultural and archaeological resources.
- c) Protect tourists and promote tourism awareness.
- d) Promote the coordination of the different levels of the National Government and local governments to achieve tourism objectives.
- e) Promote the technical and professional training of those who legally engage in tourism activities.

- f) Promote the country and its attractions internationally in conjunction with other public sector organizations and the private sector.
- g) Promote and encourage domestic tourism.

However, it is considered that increasing the promotion of Community Rural Tourism (TRC) among Ecuadorians would help to value cultural wealth and strengthen identity.(Mendoza & Fatima, 2016).

### Methodology

The research methodology was focused on studying the problem and interests of the researcher, whether a person or a group, and was also oriented towards obtaining new knowledge through scientific methods, which seek to obtain systematized, relevant and reliable information for understanding phenomena, using a set of techniques that seek to explain a phenomenon or problem through observation, creation of hypotheses or research questions.(Guerrero & Guerrero, 2020). Thus, the following methodology has been used in the present research.

The type of study was non-experimental, because the study variables were not manipulated; The study was developed in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque, in the Arajuno canton, Pastaza province. In addition, the level of research was cross-sectional because information about the participants will be obtained at a single time; that is, the sample will be studied only once during the duration of the research, and it will also allow observing and analyzing different variables at the time of the study. It was also descriptive because it was used when formulating specific objectives, which will be used as questions in the questionnaire, which will serve to obtain clear data for the development of the product. Thus, for the collection of information, bibliographical research techniques such as scientific articles, books, research projects and magazines were used, in the same way a field trip was made to collect information using the survey as a technique, in this way the quantitative type of data is obtained in the tabulation of the survey by obtaining numerical data. While the qualitative type of data is achieved in the interpretation of the results obtained. The study population is the EAP (Economically Active Population) are those people aged 15 years and older who worked at least 1 hour in the reference week or, even if they did not work, had work (employed) and people who were not employed but were available to work and looking for work (unemployed) this information is obtained from the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC). Thus, to calculate the sample, the finite population formula was used, because the total universe of the study population is known, with 95% confidence margin and 5% error, obtaining a total of 86 surveys, the questionnaire has 9 questions divided into two variables, management model and rural tourism.

### Results



It is considered that 56% of the respondents are female and 44% male. Likewise, 97% of the inhabitants are indigenous to the Amazon entity, while 2% are mestizos and 1% are Afro, thus the following results were obtained:

In the aspect of management model and rural tourism, Table 1 indicates the correlation that exists between the dependent and independent variables, where it is known that The Kichwa community of Pandanuque highly values rural tourism as a means of economic development, in turn, to achieve a sustained and effective impact, an adequate and efficient management model is required. The results obtained are detailed below.

**Table 1**

*Correlation between dependent and independent variables to establish the rural tourism management model*

| Do you consider rural tourism to be an important activity for the economic development of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque? | Do you consider it appropriate for the Kichwa community of Pandanuque to have a management model implemented in terms of effectiveness to promote economic development and sustainability? |          |             |               |                  | Total |
|---|--|----------|-------------|---------------|------------------|-------|
|   | OK   | Disagree | Indifferent | Totally agree | Totally disagree |       |
| Important   | 3  | 0        | 6           | 11            | 5                | 25    |
| Indifferent   | 2  | 2        | 0           | 7             | 0                | 11    |
| Very important  | 11   | 0        | 2           | 34            | 1                | 48    |
| Unimportant   | 0  | 0        | 1           | 0             | 1                | 2     |
| Total   | 16   | 2        | 9           | 52            | 7                | 86    |

*Note.* The table shows the correlation between dependent and independent variables to establish the rural tourism management model.

**Analysis and interpretation:** Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents consider rural tourism to be an important activity for the economic development of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque, with a total of 52 people fully agreeing, 34 people rating it as very important and 11 rating it as important. In contrast, only 2 people disagree and 7 strongly disagree. This highlights the positive perception of rural tourism as a key driver for the local economy and its sustainability, highlighting the need to implement an effective management model that allows maximizing benefits in the community.

Below is a binomial contrast of economic development opportunities identified in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque.

**Table 2**

*Contrast in relation to the value 0.5 of the economic development opportunities identified in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque*

| Variable   | Level                      | Counts | Total | Proportion | p      |
|--|----------------------------|--------|-------|------------|--------|
| What economic development opportunities do you identify in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque? | Craft                      | 58     | 86    | 0.674      | 0.002  |
|  | Environmental conservation | 3      | 86    | 0.035      | < .001 |
|  | Sustainable tourism        | 25     | 86    | 0.291      | < .001 |

*Note.* Contrasting proportions in relation to value: 0.5.

Analysis and interpretation: Table 2, using a binomial contrast, reveals that the majority of respondents, with a significant proportion of 0.674 ( $p = 0.002$ ), identify crafts as the main opportunity for economic development in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque. In comparison, environmental conservation and sustainable tourism are identified as less relevant opportunities, with proportions of 0.035 and 0.291 respectively, both with  $p < .001$ , indicating a statistically significant difference. This trend underlines that, although there is interest in various activities, crafts are perceived as the most viable and promising for local economic development.

Table 3 of frequencies highlights the type of tourist attractions that are most relevant in the community, as detailed in the following table.

**Table 3**

*Frequencies for: What types of tourist attractions exist in the community.*

| Frequencies for. What types of tourist attractions exist in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque? |           |            |                  |                       |
|---|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| What types of tourist attractions exist in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque?                  | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
| Cultural festivals  | 7         | 8.140      | 8.140            | 8.140                 |
| Community tourism   | 30        | 34.884     | 34.884           | 43.023                |
| Gastronomic tourism   | 35        | 40.698     | 40.698           | 166,279               |
| Historical tourism  | 14        | 15.116     | 16.279           | 198,837               |
| Absent  | 0         | 0.000      |                  |                       |
| Total   | 86        | 100,000    |                  |                       |

*Note.* The table shows the frequencies for: What type of tourist attractions exist in the community.

Analysis and interpretation: It is observed that the Kichwa community of Pandanuque offers a variety of tourist attractions, the most relevant being gastronomic tourism with

40.70%. Followed by community tourism with 34.88% and historical tourism with 15.12%. Cultural festivals are also recognized, although to a lesser extent, with 8.14%.

The figure detailed below refers to the diagram of the rural tourism management model.

**Figure 1**

*Rural tourism management model diagram*



*Note.* Diagram of the dependent and independent variable  
Source: the authors.

The figure shows a series of pie charts that present the results of a survey conducted in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque on aspects of the management model and rural tourism. Each of the graphs is then analyzed and the following is obtained. Based on question 1, the main economic activity that the inhabitants of the community engage in to obtain their daily livelihood is agriculture with 61%. Regarding question 3, the vast majority of the members of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque consider that rural tourism is an important activity for the economic development of the community. Finally, in question 5, the majority of the members of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque consider that it is opportune to implement an effective management model to promote the economic development and sustainability of rural tourism.

**Discussion**

The purpose of the management model is to solve the needs of the environment to be studied and to allow the structure, representation and understanding of the reality of the situation. In this way, the operations to be carried out will be managed and directed effectively. It is important to mention that the management model, being a comprehensive

operating pattern, must include the mission, vision, values, objectives, processes and indicators. According to (Drucker, 2006) Effective management is essential to organizational success as it provides clear direction and a framework for decision making.

Creating an efficiently functioning organization is possible through an integrative thinking approach. (Porter, 1985) stresses that the integration of strategies allows organizations to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage. Furthermore, as a quality model, it will allow the movement to be circular, promoting continuous improvement. (Deming, 1986) Finally, another implicit benefit of models is that they provide activity performance indicators, making it easier to measure performance and achieve results. (Quintana & Del Carmen, 2020)

Therefore, the Kichwa community of Pandanuque considers the implementation of an effective management model to be a necessity, since effective management is crucial to maximizing the benefits of rural tourism and ensuring sustainable development. (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) An effective management system must also include the active participation of all stakeholders to align organizational objectives with community expectations.

Management models are seen as a self-assessment tool that allows you to organize all the actions to be carried out, avoiding loss of time and money, and provides the opportunity to see the problems that arise and gain greater control of the situation. The model is so practical that it allows the restructuring of new strategies, opening a new cycle of self-assessment, where better results can be obtained in case of not obtaining positive results according to the objectives set at the beginning of its execution. (Morales, González, & Nieto, 2022). Besides, (Mintzberg, 1994) highlights that management models facilitate understanding and implementation of functions by stakeholders, improving communication and efficiency.

The lack of sources of employment creates an obstacle to economic development, limiting opportunities to improve the well-being and economic capacity of people. (Sen, 1999) argues that economic development is not just about increasing incomes, but about expanding people's capabilities and freedoms. (Debraj, 2022) It indicates that the issue of economic development is not easy to resolve. When we talk about a developing society, we think that the population is well fed, well clothed and has access to a variety of products and luxuries, above all that it lives in a healthy environment. In addition, it is believed that there is no discrimination and that the sick receive proper medical care. For this reason, there are different strategies to achieve sustainable economic development, taking advantage of local resources and capacities to improve living conditions and ensure active community participation.

Therefore, it is essential to enhance community participation as part of the management model that the community needs to drive economic development and well-being in Pandanuque. Active community participation in the development and implementation of the management model ensures that strategies are relevant and sustainable. This not only fosters economic development, but also strengthens the social and cultural fabric of the community.

### Conclusions

- The implementation of an integrated management model is essential to structure and coordinate tourism activities in the Kichwa community of Pandanuque. A well-designed model can maximize economic benefits and ensure sustainable development, while respecting the cultural and natural heritage of the community.
- The Kichwa community of Pandanuque has great tourism potential that, with an appropriate management model, can be developed to boost economic development and improve the quality of life of its inhabitants. Gastronomic and community tourism are presented as the main attractions, and crafts stand out as a viable opportunity for economic development. To this end, the implementation of a management model will ensure the sustainability of rural tourism in the community.
- Since there is no model for rural tourism management in the community, this research determined that the community greatly values rural tourism and verified exactly which tourist attractions and economic development opportunities should be emphasized to promote economic growth.
- The active participation of the Kichwa community of Pandanuque is fundamental to the success of this model, ensuring that economic benefits are equitably distributed and that the cultural and natural values of the region are preserved.
- The results of the research indicate a positive perception towards rural tourism and highlight the need to implement a management model that takes advantage of the opportunities that the community has. A focus on the development of these areas can generate a sustainable positive impact, promoting economic growth and preserving the cultural traditions of the community.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to the submitted article.

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