



## A socioeconomic look at knowledge management in Scientific-Technical Event Tourism.

*A socioeconomic look at knowledge management in the Tourism of Scientific-Technical Events.*

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**Palabras**

**claves:** Gestión del Conocimiento, Turismo de Eventos Científico-Técnicos, La Habana

**Keywords:**

Knowledge Management, Tourism of Scientific-Technical Events, Havana

**Resumen**

El presente artículo aborda la relación entre Gestión del Conocimiento y Turismo de Eventos Científico-Técnicos en La Habana desde una visión socioeconómica posibilitando valorar la gestión de ambos desde sus condicionamientos sociales que sólo pueden ser analizados en relación con su contexto; así como sus incidencias en la sociedad y la economía ya que la propia interacción humana está signada por los elementos del entorno y los propios valores individuales y grupales. Este estudio es el resultado de investigaciones de campo, realizadas con fines académicos y aplicados en los últimos 4 años, visualizados o valorados desde la arista de los estudios sociales de la ciencia y la técnica, con la consideración que en la propia gestión de eventos confluyen también principios y postulados de las ciencias económicas, comerciales y de la comunicación.

**Abstract**

This article addresses the relationship between Knowledge Management and Tourism of Scientific-Technical Events in Havana from a socioeconomic perspective, making it possible to assess the management of both from their social conditioning that can only be analyzed in relation to their context; As well as its impact on society and the economy, since human interaction itself is marked by elements of the environment and individual and group values. This study is the result of field research, carried out for academic purposes and applied in the last 4 years, visualized or valued from the edge of social studies of science and technology, with the consideration that event management itself converges. also principles and postulates of economic, commercial and communication sciences.

**Introduction**

Society has entered a completely different era, with the transition from the industrial society paradigm to the knowledge society paradigm that is still in development (Drucker, 1994). The productivity revolution with the increase in productivity by optimizing the fragmentation of work or applying traditional schemes is no longer the solution. The new era of work involves the application of knowledge as the new source of value and wealth creation. The generation of added value, via knowledge, is the innovation and improvement of the company's products and services that come from the intelligence and creativity of people (Torres, 2010).

Drucker (cited by Malvicino and Serra, 2006) has identified knowledge as “the new basis of competitiveness”, and Stanford economist Paul Romer (cited by Malvicino and Serra, 2006) has defined knowledge as “the only unlimited resource, the only asset that increases with use”. Alvarado (2003) recognises that, in the current competitive, globalised and uncertain context, the greatest value of a company is centred on its core competencies, on its intellectual capital. The formulation of successful strategies today is based on knowledge rather than on the management of the company's tangible assets. This author defines a “knowledge-based economy” as an economy based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information.

Precisely this knowledge, its rapid dissemination, the shortening of its life cycle is linked to the approach of Núñez and Figaredo (2008), who establish a relationship between the development of science and technology, the advance of productive forces and the process of globalization. On the other hand, whether by face-to-face or virtual means - highly used in the SARCOV-2 pandemic - events play a particular role in this context, being considered as a means that guarantees timely, efficient and effective contact between two or more parties interested in exchanging information, relating and communicating... a particular type of social communication (Olivera and Pérez, 2006).

This interaction has motivated the movement with the interest of participation in events, increasing these tourist flows in the last decades, behavior explained by Rodriguez (2014) as a source of evolution by the emergence of new formulas of organization, provision of services and products and thus the conjunction for the success of tourism management and event management. Based on this postulate, cities present their strategic orientation as event destinations.

On the other hand, considering that events constitute learning encounters of any nature (Olivera and Pérez, 2006), events are included in Knowledge Management (KM), and with greater emphasis those with the scientific-technical classification.

Based on these relationships and their impact on the management of scientific-technical events in Havana from the postulates of social studies of science and technology, the following scientific problem arises: What is the assessment from a socioeconomic perspective between knowledge management and scientific-technical event tourism in Havana?

Therefore, the General Objective is defined as: To assess the relationship between knowledge management and scientific-technical event tourism in Havana and the Specific Objectives are: To establish the theoretical conceptual foundations of the selected categories; and To identify the relationship between knowledge management and scientific-technical event tourism in Havana from a socioeconomic perspective.

## Methodology

It is considered a descriptive, applied and exploratory research. Firstly, because its objective is to record, analyze and describe the observable and general characteristics of the phenomena under investigation in order to classify them, establish relationships between the variables of knowledge management and socioeconomic approach and obtain information as a qualitative diagnosis. In addition, it is based on a methodological, communicational and documentary structure that, based on its epistemological and historical nature, studies and understands the complex and dynamic social reality. In the case of exploratory research, although scientific-technical events appear in the literature as the main source of knowledge management and there are Diploma Works of the tourism career that address the tangible and intangible benefits and research of these events; the authors have not found a study of this relationship, in terms of a socioeconomic vision between knowledge management and scientific-technical event tourism in Cuba.

For the analysis of the theoretical-conceptual foundations, theoretical methods were used that allowed to reveal the essential relationships of the research object and which participated in the stage of assimilation of facts, phenomena and processes for the construction of the research model and hypothesis: Bibliographic and documentary analysis, Historical-logical and Analysis and synthesis. In a second stage to determine the incidence of GC in scientific-technical event tourism, from a socioeconomic analysis fulfilling the general objective, methods and techniques were used such as: Induction-deduction, Interviews with specialists in the Organization of Scientific-Technical Events and Non-participatory observation or Unstructured observation in the events object of study.

## Results

1. Theoretical-conceptual analysis of knowledge management and scientific-technical event tourism

“Companies from all sectors and public bodies recognise the critical role that GC will play in their future success.” Knowledge is considered one of the intangible assets, with intellectual capital generating value and being reproduced through GC processes and therefore a source of quantitative and qualitative benefits.

However, GC cannot be assessed as an organizational individuality, since since the beginning of the 21st century, it is also assumed as a managerial approach for development at a territorial level, privileging a higher quality of citizen life: economic development, citizen security, quality of the health system, knowledge of the population, educational level, citizen awareness towards recycling or energy saving, environmental

quality, quality of public services, and other benefits. The deployment of GC in the organization can then be seen as an impact of its social responsibility.

The scientific-technical communication that emerges from the events of this classification is intertwined with GC, as it requires adequate information management, appropriate and intensive use of information technologies, innovative approaches to communication practice and correct and modern management of human resources. In this way, travel motivated by participation in events and tourism is linked to the development of GC itself.

Event tourism is “a type of business tourism that especially mobilizes opinion leaders in different branches of knowledge, science, technology, finance or commerce.” (Contreras, 2005).

Amezqueta and Linares (2006) identify event tourism under business tourism, which “is that whose fundamental interest is the academic and/or business exchange, which may or may not be lucrative. It is combined with viable attractions for rest in the company of a partner or family using the opportunity rationally... and that within this modality are Event and Incentive Tourism...”, supported by (Bigne, Andreu, & Font, 2000). Although at the Kuala Lumpur Summit, Malaysia, held in 2000, it was agreed to name it as the MICE Industry: Meetings, Incentives, Congresses and Exhibitions. This term is the most comprehensive since it includes incentive trips, business trips, conferences, and meetings, although Eulogio Rodríguez has stated that the terminology had been assumed since a meeting in Brazil.

It is important to establish differences and relationships between events and event tourism, since the former can exist even without the displacement of their participants. Within the typology of events, there are events held by the company behind closed doors, that is, directed at internal audiences, or at those who contribute to the success of the business through the structure of the value chain. Thus, suppliers, borrowers and distributors are invited to business parties and celebrations, but they do not become tourists, as they are based in the area.

For the purposes of this work, it is essential to specify two criteria for classifying events: according to theme and according to origin.

In terms of subject matter, there are scientific-technical events, which by origin can be of: Own Design: Those generated from the need for exchange between scientific-technical, trade, commercial and other associations in the country; or Captured Venues: The event derived from the recruitment process is called “Set of coordinated actions between associations, organizations and convention bureaus of a country to ensure that an international event that rotates its venue in each edition is held in the aspiring country.

It requires systematic research work and the subsequent recruitment plan” (Collective of authors, 2000).

## 2. Impact of knowledge management on scientific and technical event tourism in Havana

The processes of internationalization and globalization, the dynamics of information, science and technology have led to events becoming international and being identified with tourism. Thus, as explained in the previous section, economic changes – both structural and circumstantial – have an impact on the dynamics of GC, forming an edge of the relationship between the economic vision, events and their displacement to them and GC itself.

Angulo (2009) points out, citing Salinas and Sánchez (1999), that with congresses the importance of dialogue is recognized and of course, implicitly, the necessary GC and information to share what is known and collectively validate new findings. All human groups require meetings, boards or assemblies for their functioning. The type of meeting, its frequency and its dynamics vary depending on the nature and objectives of each organization, however, the meeting is a necessary instrument in organizations and the group and the organization are fundamental because it is there where the educational fact, the learning, takes place. In turn, organizations are the educational space par excellence, one could say that they are the school of the organization.

The same author cites Ruiz (2007) when referring to the fact that, in an attempt to show the importance of academic and scientific meetings in the construction and socialization of knowledge and, fundamentally, in the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, exhaustive searches were carried out on the Internet and a scarce availability of information was observed, especially when, in contrast, there is abundant information referring to the journal as an instrument of communication of science. Despite its importance for the dissemination of knowledge, there is still little research in the field of academic meetings.

Cañete (2004) highlights that conferences are useful for exchanging ideas on the topic under discussion and learning about the different works that other researchers are carrying out. This exchange of ideas facilitates the development of knowledge, since if this meeting space did not exist, each researcher would be alone and the lack of communication between them would cause the loss of much important information.

It is also important to highlight that scientific and technical events constitute spaces and communication platforms for sectors interconnected through value chains. An example of this is the organization of associated exhibitions and the presence of productive branches, which reflect that even with the priority of satisfying communication needs,

events constitute business opportunities, and, in fact, economic contributions derived from their realization even if they are temporarily removed from the time of their realization in the economic branches of origin.

The processes of internationalization and globalization, the dynamics of information, science and technology have led to the identification of different actors in the management of event tourism according to the Glossary of Terms for Events and Related Events (2000): Organizing Committee, Event Generators, Professional Operators, Convention Bureau and Professional Congress Organizer (OPC).

The level of attraction of the event, based on its scientific quality, its own image based on the recognition of its past success and the participation of personalities and opinion leaders, would quantitatively guarantee a greater volume of participants and in terms of tourist arrivals to the destination, and qualitatively different from conventional tourism. Congress tourism justifies and supports a more cultured type of solitude, with greater spending capacity and more free time, which values very positively the opportunity to, in orbit of its vocation, dedication and preferences, participate in meetings of a national and international nature, which will tend to broaden the range of offers.

Interactions such as:

- The quality of a scientific-technical event depends largely on the capacity of the organizing entity to capture, generate, and disseminate knowledge, on the one hand, and on the professional skills of the Professional Event Organizer.
- Participants in scientific and technical events are largely potential consumers of tourist and non-tourist products and services, and therefore, an opportunity for income for these entities and the territory.
- The socio-cultural characteristics of event participants and the trend of event organization, are formed as a double path of sustainability; as a requirement of the client and as opportunities for the destination, since the success of a sustainable event tourism requires a balance between social equity, economic efficiency and environmental conservation in its management in which it involves all its actors and participants while the implementation of responsible and sustainable actions by the actors in the development of the events generates positive impacts for companies, communities and the destination (Sánchez, Olivera & Velastegui, 2023).

The relationship between GC and socioeconomic conditions in Cuba is made explicit in the words of Simeon (2001): “If we analyze the main characteristics and the managerial approach of GC, we can reach the conclusion that its application in our country is not only of vital importance, but that we have the best conditions to apply these techniques due to the very essence of the social regime in which we live. There are several

organizational structures in Cuba, factors that promote the application of GC techniques, based on the social and economic development of the country, highlighting among them the following: System of Science and Technological Innovation, Business Improvement, Improvement of scientific research units, technological innovation, specialized productions and services, Strategy for Computerization of Cuban Society and National Information Policy. The creation in Cuba of intelligent organizations, which are capable of processing information, creating knowledge from the processed information and using knowledge for decision making in an effective manner, in order to cooperate creatively with the development of the country.”

### 2.1 Context: Havana

Havana, as the capital, is not only an urban center, but also, by its very nature, the political, economic, academic and scientific heart of the Republic; which, together with its tourism development, which provides it with a diverse range of hotels, has allowed it to host, in the last five years, nearly 70% of the international events planned in the country (Events Calendar, Convention Bureau, MINTUR).

Beyond the presence of the actors in the city, the concentration of venues in the capital, the leadership of the Convention Center as a venue, and the presence of the most important hotels and theaters in the country (Hotel Nacional, Habana Libre, Meliá Cohiba and Teatro Karl Marx) also have an impact on the above proportions.

Cuban authors such as Maure (2007), Ayala (2007) and Nodal (2008) consider that tourism associated with events generates benefits such as: jobs, contributes to the growth of territorial development by promoting business and commercial exchange, promotes the exchange of knowledge in various areas of human activity, favors the elevation of the professional and service level in accordance with the demands of these clients and produces higher income than conventional tourism, as demonstrated by Sánchez (2019) and Simón (2020), based on multiple cases in Havana.

From a quantitative point of view, it is relevant to establish that the branches on which the most relevant results of the country's social economic project are focused, Health and Education, group the largest number of events, as well as the events of greatest volume, showing an explicit relationship between the intellectual capital of these sectors, the GC in them and the development of events.

The aforementioned research focuses on four events in these sectors, held at the Convention Centre, and through empirical methods, identifies the link between the holding of the event and the GC of the actors involved, in terms of knowledge and skills, exchange capacity, human capital and associative capacity.

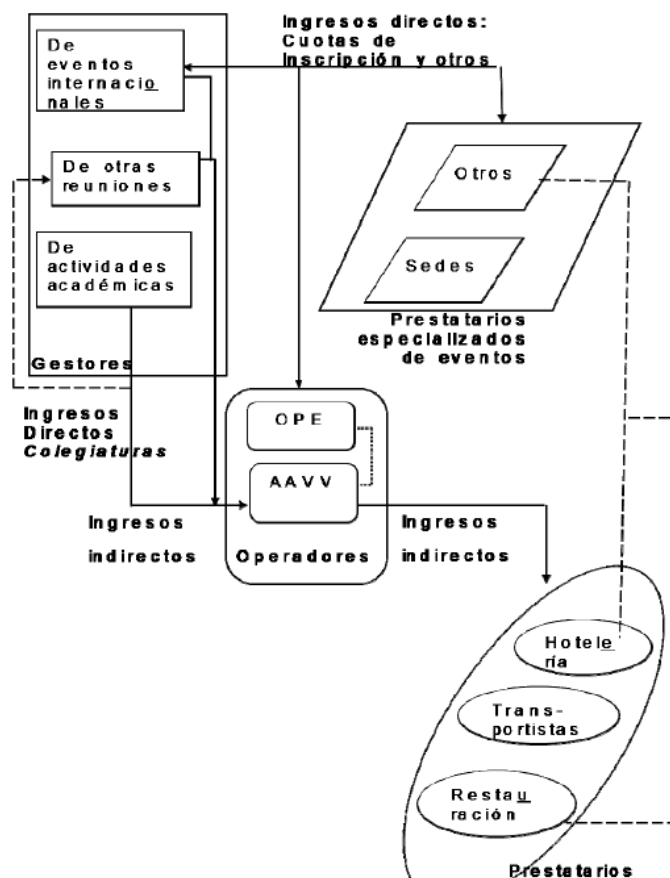


From an economic point of view, it is clear that the average stay of event attendees in Havana brings to the destination three times more income per tourist day than conventional tourism (Sánchez, 2019), while a trend of elongation of the production chain appears in the Capital.

An approach to the contribution of events to each of the aforementioned actors was first developed by Guerra (2011) based on the activity of Cubatur Eventos (Figure 1) and secondly updated by Sánchez (2019) based on the analysis of the comprehensive benefits of the International Pedagogy Congress (Figures 2 and 3) and later validated by Simón (2020) and Rodríguez (2020) at the International University Congress, Blanco (2021) at the International Convention on Environment and Development, which laid the foundations for the design of an Information System for the management of scientific-technical events in the Havana destination by González (2022).

**Figure 1**

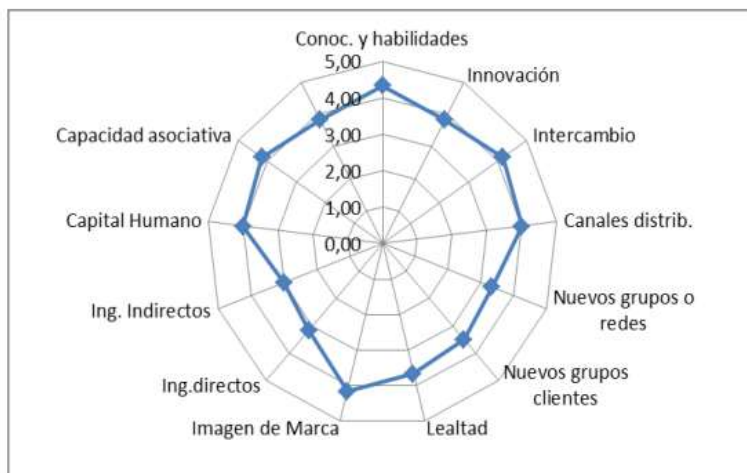
Graphical Representation of the Economic Impact of Event Activity



Source: Guerra (2011)

**Figure 2**

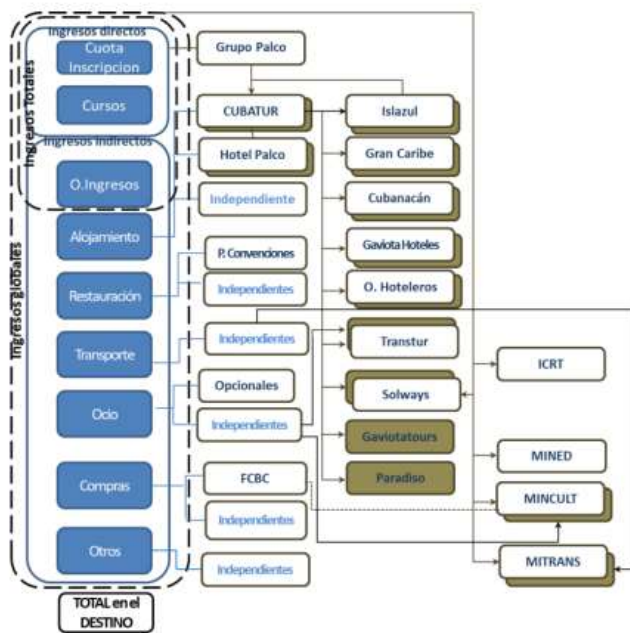
Quantification model by indicator of the intangible benefits of the Pedagogy Congress 2019



Source: Sanchez (2019)

**Figure 3**

Distribution of income among the different actors in the management of the 2019 Pedagogy Congress by participant.



Source: Sanchez (2019)

The cases studied correspond to events of own design. The venues selected, however, have not been studied in depth, although a decrease in the number of venues in the country is observed, which has caused a deterioration in Havana's position as an event destination in Latin America and the world according to the ICCA ranking.

The following factors determine this behavior:

- Increased intensity of competition, through the implementation of aggressive strategies for destinations on all continents, even those already positioned in Europe and North America.
- Disappearance of the Convention Bureau as a coordinating element of activity in Cuba in 2011, with the Ministry of Tourism not fully assuming its functions.
- Insufficient financial resources to pay the corresponding fee to the International Scientific Associations, a condition for obtaining the headquarters; as well as the lack of coordinated actions for management, for the same reason.

## Discussion

Thus, some opportunities and limitations become evident from the results of this research:

- Knowledge management is a topic of invaluable wealth because of what it represents as a driving factor in social, economic and technological advances both for event tourism management and for any entity.
- The development of GC in Cuba has been supported by the postulates of its social economic project, specifically in the branches of Health and Education, which carry out the largest volume events.
- Scientific and technical event tourism is geared towards sustainability in a general sense, and provides destinations with higher income than conventional tourism.
- The country's economic and financial situation is favoured, given the above conclusion, but it limits the acquisition of seats and the development of aggressive campaigns.

## Conclusions

- The dynamics of science and technology, as well as changes in the global economic environment – internationalization – and the process of globalization determine the need for the rapid dissemination of knowledge.
- GC is an organizational management approach, the implementation of which produces positive effects for the company and the territory and its results can be seen as a competitive advantage.
- The relationship between GC and Scientific Technical Events, and therefore the movement to them, is bidirectional, since the first from its organizers enables the

attraction of a greater volume of tourists with qualities different from the conventional ones, while the realization of the second positively influences the GC of the event actors.

### **Conflict of interest**

There is no conflict of interest in relation to the submitted article.

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