

Analysis of a Brazilian **Tourist Destination** under the Focus of **Sustainability**

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Abstract | Tourism development in Brazil is a viable and economic alternative for job creation and revenue as long as the country can rely on human resources training and a business community integrated with the public sector to attract visitors through the quality of infrastructure and services. The aim of this study was the analysis of tourist flow in a given Brazilian city and the visitor's view on the quality of infrastructure and tourist attractions. An official data base was used and a survey with 172 tourists performed. The research revealed a fluctuation in the tourist flow - causing economic and social unsustainability - and a lack of quality in the overall services according to the tourist's opinion, such as safety, urban and beach cleanliness, tourist information, commercial centers and tours. Integration between government, private sector and agencies promoting tourism is the key to improve the quality of the overall services.

Keywords | Tourist Destinations, Tourism Sustainability, City of Florianópolis-Brazil.

Resumo | O desenvolvimento do turismo no Brasil é uma alternativa viável para a geração de empregos e renda, desde que o país possa contar com recursos humanos treinados e uma comunidade empresarial integrada ao sector público, a fim de atrair o visitante pela qualidade da estrutura turística e dos serviços oferecidos. O objectivo do estudo foi analisar o fluxo turístico de uma cidade brasileira, através de base de dados oficiais, e a percepção do visitante sobre a qualidade da infra-estrutura e dos atrativos turísticos desta localidade, através de um levantamento com 172 turistas. A pesquisa mostrou oscilação no fluxo turístico, o que causa insustentabilidade económica e social, e limitações de qualidade em segurança, limpeza urbana, informações turísticas, praias limpas, centros comerciais e passeios turísticos, na percepção do turista. Observou-se a necessidade de integração do poder público com empresas privadas e órgãos turísticos para melhorar o desempenho destes factores.

Palavras-chave | Destinações Turísticas, Sustentabilidade em Turismo, Florianópolis-Brasil.

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1. Introduction

Brazilian economy needs to have an annual growth between 3 and 4% in its GDP (Gross Domestic Product) if the quality of life is to improve. The tourism services sector represents a significant opportunity to help minimize this problem by the number of natural attractions the country has to offer and the amount of jobs that can be created without the need of huge investments. The promotion of tourism in Brazil, as in some countries, is a feasible path to sustainable development, insofar as it takes advantage of regional potentials, stimulates the creation of jobs and revenue, and contributes to the reduction of social inequalities (Rodrigues, 2000). However, in order to promote tourism, it is necessary to rely upon a skilled workforce and a business community integrated with the public sector and capable of managing business in a competent manner. Their collective goal should be to attract tourists by the quality of infrastructure and services offered by public and private sectors.

According to its characteristics, tourism can have several kinds of impacts: economic, social, cultural and environmental. For this reason, tourism companies must be aware of such impacts in order to minimize them. That means adopting concepts such as sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and quality management.

Tourism is an important activity for the state of Santa Catarina, located in the southern region of Brazil and one that has a strong tourist appeal due to its myriad of attractions. However, the state's tourist flow has been unsteady, as it can be observed on Table 1. According to data compiled by SANTUR (2004), there was a decrease of 16,3% on the number of visitors in 2002 compared to 2001. Nevertheless, in 2003 the number of visitors increased, indicating a recovery.

According to Lins (2000), the acknowledgement that there are several tourism destinations in the state of Santa Catarina suggests that the state has great tourist potential. These destinations can be

grouped as follows: a) coastal tour, made up by the main cities along the coast, such as Florianópolis, Balneário Camboriú and São Francisco do Sul; b) cultural-historical tour, formed by the cities colonized by different migrant communities, like Blumenau, Criciúma and Treze Tílias; c) snow tour, that is, the mountain area, including São Joaquim, Urubici, Lages and Bom Jardim da Serra; d) popular parties and festivals tour, in Blumenau, Brusque, Joinville and Itajaí; e) thermal waters tour, from which Santo Amaro da Imperatriz, Gravatal and Piratuba stand out; f) religious tour, formed by the cities of Brusque, Nova Trento and Angelina; g) rural and ecological tour, formed by Lages, Joinville and many others cities in the Itajaí Valley area; and, h) shopping tour, made up of places such as Brusque, Blumenau and Joinville, some of the more industrialized cities in the state.

In the city of Florianópolis, the state capital, tourism started to develop in a significant way around the 80s. The evolution of tourism activities in the city is related to the landscape and the natural ecosystems, such as beaches, lakes and hills. The city is amongst the most important tourist centers in the state, second only to Balneário Camboriú. It covers an area of 436km², most of it in an island of temperate climate (Island of Santa Catarina), with an average temperature between 20 and 30 degrees Celsius. However, the tourist flow for the city is not steady, following the same tendency as the state, and creating considerable economic and social problems in the community (SANTUR, 2004).

The city of Florianópolis hosts the state's government structure, and has an array of commerce and service companies, as well as cutting edge technology companies in the field of software development. The education sector is expanding, offering several undergraduate and graduate courses in tourism management and related areas, contributing to the development of a skilled workforce.

Even though the city of Florianópolis has a lot of natural attractions, these, alone, are not enough to

maintain a steady tourist flow. The development of any economic activity requires the existence of public and private companies that are capable of dealing efficiently in complex environments. For this to happen, these organizations need to rely on efficient research systems that can monitor the variations happening in the macro-environment, mainly those related to market and customers needs. In the tourism industry, it is important to know how the tourists perceive the infrastructure and attractions of any destination.

So, this study is based on the following considerations: a) Giving the number of tourists that visited the city and the income that they generated, what is the current condition of the tourism industry in the city of Florianópolis? b) What are the most important factors related to the tourism industry in the city of Florianópolis and how are those factors evaluated by the tourists?

With the problem in mind and considering the importance of the quality of the services as a special feature and a competitive factor in a tourist destination, a research was performed. Its purpose was to analyze the tourist flow to the city of Florianópolis in the last few years and the customer's view about the quality of the tourism systems available.

The study had the following aims, in a very specific way: a) Identify the actual tourist flow to the state of Santa Catarina and to the city of Florianópolis; b) Identify the level of importance given by different segments of tourists to factors that make up the infrastructure of the city and the tourist attractions; c) Find out the tourists view about the quality of those factors; and, d) Proposing infrastructure improvements based on the tourist evaluation in order to adapt the tourist infrastructure to its visitors' profile. In other words, delivering services according to the needs of the tourists.

This study has an introduction section about the stage of tourism development in the State of Santa Catarina and in the city of Florianópolis, followed by a discussion showing the relationship

between sustainability, social responsibility, quality management and sustainable tourism. Additionally, a set of statistical data about the variation of the tourist flow to the region is compared with nationwide data. And finally, the authors suggest ideas about how to better use existing tourism potentials, and what can be done to improve the tourism infrastructure in the city of Florianópolis, pointing out limitations of this study and offering proposals for future researches.

2. Theoretical background

Socio-economic development of a nation can be assessed by the efficiency of its ability in the production and supplying of high quality goods and services that, when shared, raises the welfare of its population. Countries that managed to solve their most serious problems are the ones who have a collection of competitive and profitable companies working in total integration with public and social organizations to better use available resources, creating jobs, providing training to workers, sharing profits and preserving the environment. It can be stated that a nation's generation of wealth is associated with the competitive force of its companies in different sectors of the economy (Porter, 1998).

This study is based on the concepts of sustainability, corporate social responsibility and quality management, all of them seen as crucial elements for the sustainable management of the tourism industry.

2.1. Sustainability

Worldwide discussion on sustainable development started in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in Stockholm, in 1972. According to Sachs (2002) such newfound

awareness produced ethical and epistemological consequences for the long run, and influenced the ideas on what kind of development countries really wanted. During the conference, two very distinct views were adopted. However, such extreme views were discarded by the time the conference was over, and a middle ground alternative emerged. The stimulation of economic growth in a socially receptive manner that should be implemented using methods preserving the environment was proposed, instead of favoring the predatory incorporation of nature to the GDP (Sachs, 2002).

The concept of sustainable development came into view by the end of the 70s and in the beginning of the 80s, when the traditional view regarding the degradation of environmental resources started to change. Since then, the issue has been viewed under the perspective of the effects it could have on the balance of the ecosystems and the sustainability of life on the planet, and no longer based only on what it could do to a nation's economic development.

The concept of sustainable development adopted in this study corresponds to the one that states "today's needs should not compromise the ability for future generations to meet their needs" (Nosso Futuro Comum, 1988). According to Souza (2000), nowadays, this definition is considered to be more in tune with a market economy and is largely adopted by international agencies.

There are different views on the concept of sustainable development. However, it seems legitimate to say that this study proposes another kind of development: endogenous, self-sufficient, and oriented according to actual needs, in harmony with nature and open to institutional changes. Sachs (2002) himself believes that the approach based on the harmonization of social, environmental and economic objectives hasn't been altered since Stockholm (1972) to Rio de Janeiro (2002), and it has the makings of a viable and necessary proposal for today's world in spite of its complexity.

Sachs concept of sustainable development (1992, 2002) comprises eight sustainable

dimensions: 1) economic, achieved through an efficient management and allocation of public and private resources; 2) social, characterized by a fairer share of wealth, raising the standard of living of the poorest as a consequence; 3) spatial or territorial, consisting of better territorial distribution of economic activities and of human settlements, aiming at the achievement of a balanced territorial occupancy between rural and urban areas; 4) cultural, involving the search of specific solutions to problems affecting the region, the ecosystem and the culture, taking into account the endogenous roots of the modernization processes and integrated systems; 5) ecological, reached through limitation of the consumption of easily exhaustible resources and products, and reduction in the generation of residues and pollution; 6) environmental, aiming at respecting and enhancing the capacity of the natural ecosystem to self-development; 7) nationwide policies, with local, regional and national policies directed towards sustainable development and the preservation of nature; and 8) international policies and the cooperation of all countries with preservation actions to promote the continuity of life on the planet.

When sustainable management is at stake, the companies that practice it follow the dimensions suggested by Sachs (1992, 2002), establishing appropriate relationship with the stakeholders and meeting Carroll's criteria for social responsibility (1979, 1991).

Amongst all sectors of an economy, the tertiary (services and administration) is the one that can contribute the most to a sustainable development, because the act of consuming is related to services and not to the manufacturing and consumption of goods. And in this sector, tourism stands out. The development of tourism activities can cause positive and negative impacts, such as: economic and population growth, environmental degradation, increase in the tourist flow, increase in the number of private companies in an area – profit oriented or not –, amongst others. Tourism related companies

are responsible for social transformation of their surroundings by increasing the value of local culture, helping improve the Human Development Index (HDI), creating jobs and revenue, and respecting the environment, among others.

Due to their economic representativeness and capabilities in gathering resources and in developing technology, private companies that are profit oriented, and its managers, are important agents in social transformation. Therefore, any discussion that refers to the transformation of society needs to analyze the role of these organizations; they have considerable freedom, resources, power and international reach (Logan *et al.*, 1997). And for those reasons, concepts such as business ethics in the context of quality promotion, consumer's rights and international standards in dealing with the environment are crucial.

Authors such as Blair (1998) point out that the growth and diversity of large corporations have been forcing the supremacy of a concept in which the companies are the main generators of wealth in society, something that can be extended beyond the maximization of profit, the creation of jobs and the improvement of the infrastructure for research, development and communications. The definition of wealth itself is enlarged to incorporate intangible values such as the preservation of the environment, sustainable development, worker's dignity and consumer's rights (Alves, 2001). These values, universally recognized, take for granted the existence of interested parts – the stakeholders – such as consumers associations, unions, class associations, non-governmental organizations and local community.

2.2. Social responsibility

Carroll (1979, 1991) argues that an organization has economic, legal, ethical and discretionary obligations and responsibilities that must be met. The stakeholder theory has contributed to the

spreading of that idea as it states that corporate social performance is determined by the degree of success that an organization has in fulfilling the demands of many types of people, such as customers, suppliers, investors and shareholders, employees, government and the community.

Amongst all stakeholders, government and community are the key actors with whom the company has a relationship. The government determines and supervises the execution of laws, environmental protection regulations, amongst others. The community includes the physical and natural environment, the quality of life that the inhabitants have and also the local government. Other special interest groups, such as political committees, consumer's rights agencies, trade unions, are also part of that interested community. Socially responsible organizations take into account the effects of their actions on all these groups and are always monitoring their satisfaction level.

When Carroll (1979, 1991) created a model to analyze the social performance of organizations, he suggested that the company's social responsibility could be subdivided in four criteria: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary. All of them in intimate relationship. In this model, graphically represented by a pyramid, the responsibilities are arranged from the base to the top, according to their magnitude, representing several levels of obligation that a company has to maintain with its stakeholders.

The first criterion of social responsibility for an organization is economic responsibility, which lies on the base of the pyramid. Accordingly a company must be profitable by producing goods and services that society wants in an economically efficient way, maximizing profit to owners and shareholders in the process. In order to keep the company economically viable, suppliers and employees should be paid fairly and treated respectfully; consumers should be treated honestly; use of natural resources should be rational; the environment should be dealt with sustainable principles in mind and, finally, the company should respect the quality of life

of the community that “hosts” the organization. Any lapse or failure in the relationship with those actors may generate lack of trust, which leads to the breach of contracts, work complaints, lawsuits, a hard line approach on the part of government agencies, resulting in expenses such as fines and compensations claims, reducing economic results for the shareholders and enabling creation of more rigid laws for the control of organizations. When a tourism company raises its prices without any fair justification, driving tourists out of town, it is not fulfilling its economic responsibility. High prices reduce the occupancy rate, causing losses for the shareholders, generate unemployment and reducing economic activity in the area, contributing to the spread of poverty in the country.

The second criterion is legal responsibility, which determines that companies must reach their economic goals in accordance with the law, so that they can avoid additional costs, such as fines, and other kinds of punishment. This criterion includes respecting consumer’s rights, working conditions legislation, environmental laws and children protection regulations, amongst others. When a hotel company connects its sewerage system to the pluvial water drainage network, polluting beaches and water springs and disrespecting environmental laws, it is acting irresponsibly. In addition to becoming subject to financial losses due to fines and other legal sanctions, this organization has contributed to driving tourists out of the resort, as customers wouldn’t subject themselves to a holiday in polluted places.

The third criterion is ethical responsibility, which means doing what is right and avoiding any kind of doubtful courses of action, related to behaviors that are not necessarily mediated by laws. They may not be directly related to the economic interests of the company, but they protect the organization from damaging its public image. Examples of this criterion are the existence of ethics codes in companies, of policies for hiring minorities, and rational use of water and electric power.

The fourth criterion is discretionary responsibility, contributing with the community and improving its quality of life. This criterion also has to do with social programs developed or supported by a company in order to reduce social inequalities. In this sense, tourism companies should finance projects that contribute to the local community’s sustainable development.

Natural attractions of a tourist destination alone are not enough to sustain a constant flow of visitors. It is necessary that government agencies provide an appropriate tourist infrastructure and that private companies offer good quality services, according to the needs of different segments of tourists.

2.3. Quality management

Quality has been one of the most studied aspects of marketing services in the last decades. Since the beginning of the 80s, several studies in that area were conducted overseas, but only in recent years academic researches became more intense (Grönroos, 1984; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1991, 1994; Bolton and Drew 1991a, b; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Ballantyne *et al.*, 1994).

In Brazil, many studies about the quality of services in companies of different sectors were conducted. However, there aren’t many studies available on the assessment of the quality of tourist services, such as the one by Carvalho (2001) about the perception of lack of security as an obstacle for the development of tourism in Brazil, or the one by Lickfeld (2000) regarding the revitalization of the hotel industry focusing on quality service, and the one by Farias and Santos (2000), which focuses on third age customer satisfaction with hotel services.

Quality of services influences the behavior of the individual customer (Zeithaml, 1988) and, therefore, constitutes a strategic tool that changes the market share of a company (Garvin, 1987; Keiser, 1988). One way to manage the quality of services is to perceive it from a customers’ perspective.

Services can be managed by the analysis of the relationship between the importance given by the customers to a certain element of the service and the company's performance when offering that particular service. The analysis "importance-performance" is used by organizations to assess several components of the service package and identifying necessary changes to factors that customers consider very important, but are perceived as lacking (Kotler, 2000).

Tertiary sector has demonstrated great potential helping organizations build a sustainable competitive advantage. Several factors play a role in the achievement of those advantages, such as the improvement of quality and productivity of services delivered as well as adapting the supply so that customer's needs are met.

Analysis "importance-performance" can be a valuable tool used to identify factors that tourists consider important when they choose to go to a particular destination and to identify their views on the performance of those factors in an area visited. This technique is a must for any program that seeks to adapt quality to the supply of tourists according to visitor's needs.

3. Methodology

This research was carried out in two stages: a) an exploratory study and b) a descriptive study. The exploratory study was done by collecting published data about tourist flow, revenue generated, and reasons for taking a trip, average daily expenses and hotel occupancy rate. Data were collected by documents; research institutes sites and government agencies.

A descriptive study was done by means of a quantitative survey whose sample comprised 172 tourists of both sexes visiting the city of Florianópolis. In order to define the size of the sample, the average samples used in similar studies served as reference, a number between 150 and 200 individuals (Holbrook,

1998; Westbrook, 1978; Spreng *et al.*, 1996). The criteria for selecting the participants were two: the simple fact that the person was a tourist and the agreement in answering questionnaires.

In this stage of the research the tourist's views about the importance and performance of factors related to the structure of the city, such as signs, traffic, public transportation, security, urban cleanliness and tourist information were the focus. The following tourist attractions were also assessed: beach cleanliness, commercial centers, city tours, historical places, convention centers and night life. The analysis "importance-performance" is used to verify what factors tourists consider relevant when visiting a destination that they assess as below average compared to the importance already attributed.

4. Results

The results of this research will be presented in two parts: a) tourist flow and b) tourists satisfaction.

4.1. Tourist flow

During the period between 1994 and 2003, we observed that the international tourist flow continued to increase in spite of terrorist attacks and isolated economic crisis. Tourist arrivals worldwide jumped from 550 million in 1994 to 694 million in 2003, as seen on Figure 1 (EMBRATUR, 2005).

In Brazil, in 1994 alone tourist arrival reached a total of 1.9 million tourists. That number continued to increase up to the year 2000 when Brazil was host to 5.3 million tourists. However, from that year on tourist arrival began to decline, and in 2003 only 4.1 million tourists came to visit Brazil (EMBRATUR, 2005).

Observing Figures 1 and 2 one can conclude that despite following the trend of international growth in tourism, Brazil has faced a decline in tourist arrival from 2001 onwards, whereas the activity continued

to grow worldwide. It is wise to note that despite its growth in the last ten years, participation of Brazil in international tourism was less than 1% in 2002 (that is, 0,53%), according to WTO – World Tourism Organization (EMBRATUR, 2005).

In the period between 1994 and 2003 foreign tourist average spending per capita rose from US\$ 60.53 to US\$ 88.00. In this period, visitors' average length of stay decreased from 13.9 to 13.6 days (EMBRATUR, 2005).

As for the participation of Brazil in international tourism, in Figure 3 we can observe that there was a significant growth in the sector between 1993

and 1998; from 1998 to 2000 the situation became steady; from 2000 onwards, there was a decline, and the 0,53% mark was reached in 2002. Those data revealed a need to promote Brazil as a tourist destination, an initiative that must be taken both by government agencies and private companies.

As far as the State of Santa Catarina is concerned, SANTUR – Santa Catarina Turismo S/A –, the agency responsible for compiling the statistics for the sector (2004), reveals that there was a strong fluctuation in the tourist flow. From a total of 2.7 million tourists in 2001, only 2.1 million visited the state in 2002, while in 2004, this amounts to 2.9 million, as seen in Table 1.

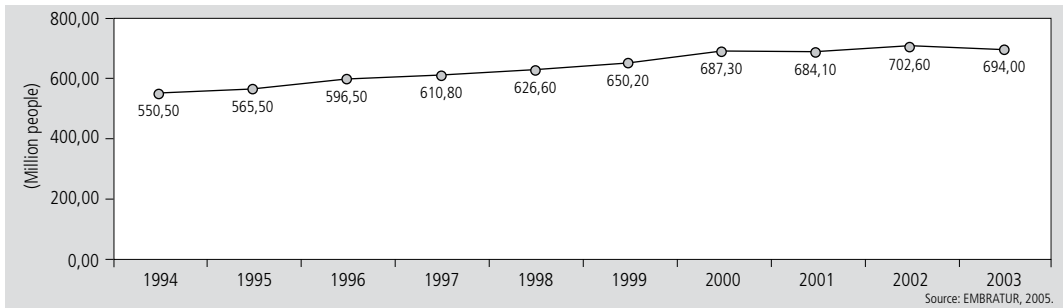


Figure 1 | Tourist arrival worldwide.

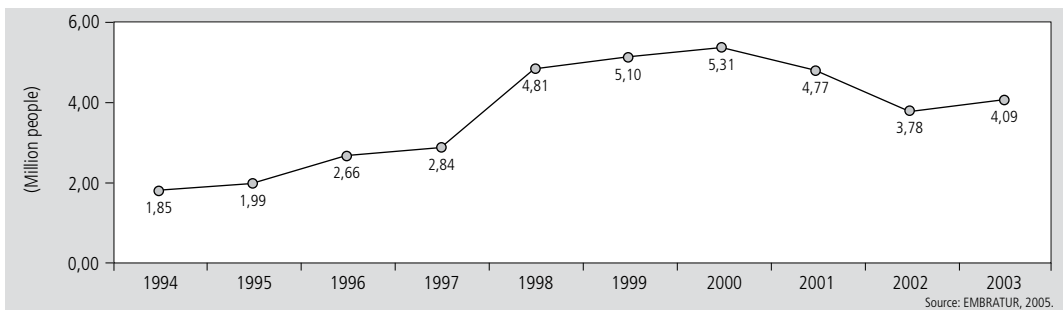


Figure 2 | Tourist arrival in Brazil.

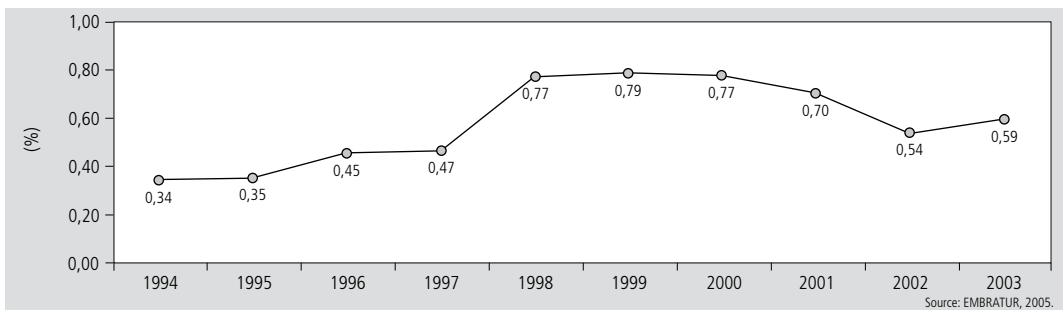


Figure 3 | Participation of Brazil in the world tourism industry (%).

Table 1 | Estimated tourist flow to the state of Santa Catarina

Origin	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Brazilians	1 993 630	2 255 860	2 194 522	2 001 034	2 114 133	2 712 139
Foreigners	292 905	464 994	568 663	158 511	198 712	246 914
Total	2 286 535	2 720 854	2 763 185	2 159 545	2 312 845	2 959 053

Source: SANTUR (2004)

This fluctuation is probably related to the economic crisis in Argentina, one of the main sources of tourists to the state.

The total revenue was reduced from US\$ 477.5 million to US\$ 242.1 million during the period studied. This decrease happened because of the reduction of foreign tourists from 568 600 to 198 700 in the same period. Besides these factors, it should also be observed that foreign tourist average spending per capita/daily fell from US\$ 28 to US\$ 14, while the Brazilian tourist reduced its spending from US\$ 14 to US\$ 10. Occupancy rate in hotels decreased from 76% to 54% in the same period. As a consequence, there was a decrease in economic activity, job supply and revenue.

In 2003, while Brazilian tourists generated revenue of US\$ 206.6 million for the state, foreign tourists contributed with just US\$ 35.4 million (SANTUR, 2004).

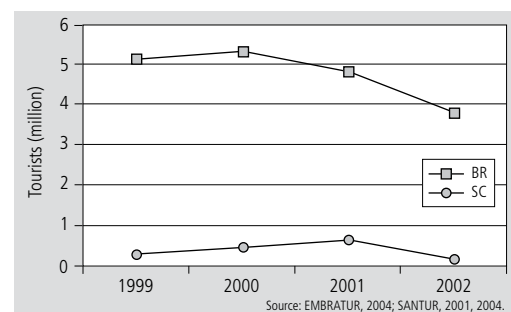
In Figure 4 we can see that foreign tourist flow to the country began to decrease in 2000. Nevertheless, in the State of Santa Catarina such phenomenon was only verified in 2001.

It is relevant to bear in mind that the majority (85,3%) of people who visited the state of Santa Catarina in 2003 did so as tourists. Natural attractions were the primary reason for their visits (63,1%). Other reasons were: seeing relatives and friends (26%) cultural-historical attractions (7,6%), popular parties and festivals (0,4%), events (1,7%)

and health reasons (1,3%). Only 14,7% made the trip on business (SANTUR, 2004).

When analyzing overall tourist flow to the city of Florianópolis, the same declining trend was verified from 2001 onwards (see Table 2). Since Argentina was one of the main sources of tourists for the city, it is presumed that the economic crisis in that country accounts for the phenomenon.

According to data collected by Santur (2004), two main reasons that made visitors come to the city of Florianópolis in 2003 were: tourism, 91%, and business, 8,8%. The main tourism related reasons for coming were: natural attractions (71,6%); seeing relatives and friends (18,5%); cultural-historical attractions (6,2%); and events (3,0%). Tourism in the city is seasonal. Most tourists come to the city during the summer, more specifically between December and February, mainly because of the natural attractions, such as a total of 100 beaches on the island.

**Figure 4** | Estimated foreign tourist flow to Brazil and to the state of Santa Catarina.**Table 2** | Estimated tourist flow to the city of Florianópolis

Origin	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Brazilians	335 132	319 901	295 464	233 425	492 114
Foreigners	171 109	232 987	75 163	74 769	89 328
Total	506 241	552 888	370 627	308 194	581 442

Source: SANTUR (2004)

4.2. Tourist satisfaction

Besides documented research, a survey with different kinds of tourists who visited the city of Florianópolis was performed in order to verify their views about the quality of the infrastructure and tourist attractions. The sample had the following characteristics (see Table 3).

Regarding the infrastructure of the city, security, urban cleanliness and tourist information were the most important factors according to the interviewees' evaluation, as seen in Table 4. Although evaluation was satisfactory, the quality of such factors is still below

average in comparison with the importance attributed to them. Accordingly, they present more significant differences (with $p < 0.05$), indicating the need for the government to adopt measures in order to adjust the offer of services to the tourist's expectations.

Evaluation of the tourist attractions indicated a need to have cleaner beaches, more commercial centers and better options of city tours. That signals the need for the government, its agencies and business community to join forces and adopt necessary measures and take full advantage of this business opportunity, as they are important to the tourists (see Table 5).

Table 3 | Sample characterization

Sex	Male: 51,16%	Female: 48,84%	–
Age (years)	From 20 to 29: 36,05%	From 30 to 49: 44,77%	From 50 to, or over: 18,60%
Education	Primary school: 1,74%	High school: 56,98%	Graduate: 41,28%
Family income*	Up to R\$ 2.000: 54,60%	R\$ 2.001 to 4.000: 40,70%	More than R\$ 4.000: 2,3%
Reason for the trip	Leisure: 62,79%	Business/congress: 33,72%	Unavailable: 3,49%

* Unavailable: 2,33%

Table 4 | Importance attributed and evaluation of infrastructure in the city of Florianópolis

Services/factors	Importance			Evaluation		
	Average	Standard deviation	Medium	Average	Standard deviation	Medium
Infrastructure of the city						
A1. Traffic signs	4.31	0.63	4.00	4.42	0.56	4.00
A2. Traffic	4.33	0.62	4.00	4.28	0.66	4.00
A3. Urban transportation	4.26	0.69	4.00	4.23	0.75	4.00
A4. Security	4.76	0.43	5.00	4.35	0.58	4.00
A5. Urban cleanliness	4.69	0.48	5.00	4.43	0.56	4.00
A6. Tourist information	4.72	0.49	5.00	4.42	0.63	4.00

■ Descriptive level of Student's t-test, to the significance level $\alpha = 5\%$ – Importance > Evaluation.

□ Descriptive level of Student's t-test, to the significance level $\alpha = 5\%$ – Evaluation > Importance.

Table 5 | Importance attributed and evaluation of tourist attractions

Services/factors	Importance			Evaluation		
	Average	Standard deviation	Medium	Average	Standard deviation	Medium
Tourist attractions						
D1. Clean beaches	4.75	0.43	5.00	4.23	0.50	4.00
D2. Commercial centers	4.40	0.75	5.00	4.09	0.63	4.00
D3. City tours	4.39	0.61	4.00	4.17	0.59	4.00
D4. Historical places	4.06	0.71	4.00	4.14	0.62	4.00
D5. Convention centers	3.87	0.82	4.00	4.00	0.70	4.00
D6. Night life	3.99	0.80	4.00	4.02	0.72	4.00

■ Descriptive level of Student's t-test, to the significance level $\alpha = 5\%$ – Importance > Evaluation.

□ Descriptive level of Student's t-test, to the significance level $\alpha = 5\%$ – Evaluation > Importance.

5. Final considerations

The results of the research about tourist flow to the city of Florianópolis revealed that in recent years tourism has experienced fluctuations which led to economic and social unsustainability in the sector.

Due to the seasonality verified both in the state of Santa Catarina and in the city of Florianópolis, unemployment has become an issue during the low season. Associated to that, a reduction in human resources investment has also been verified when the tourist activity in the city is reduced. For that reason, a joint effort by government agencies and the private sector is suggested. The purpose of such alliance would be to take advantage of the state's potential in promoting other kinds of tourism during the whole year, as mentioned by Lins (2000), such as: business tourism, events (fairs, congresses), regional, religious and popular parties and festivals, sporting contests, ecotourism, cultural-historical tourism, amongst others.

The "importance-performance" evaluation of the infrastructure and tourist attractions shows that the quality of the overall product under a tourist's view, encompassing safety, urban and beach cleanliness, tourist information, commercial centers and city tours is below average. That reveals the need to adopt measures related to political, economic and environmental sustainability of the tourism industry.

However, it is convenient to point out that the solution for such problems demands integration between government, agencies in charge of promoting tourism in the region and the private sector.

The arrival of foreign companies with more experience in tourism management and customer relations makes it necessary that Brazilian companies start applying modern management strategies to their enterprises, combining corporate social responsibility and sustainable quality management. Furthermore, the fact that a great portion of the Brazilian workforce is low skilled, including the ones in the service sector, requires the strengthening

of partnership between trade organizations, labor unions and agencies that provide training and support to companies, like Sebrae and Senac, in order to improve quality of services delivered by the sector.

Considering that the scope of this study was limited to the city of Florianópolis, the results presented should not be extended to other regions. Moreover, similar studies should be periodically performed in the city of Florianópolis so that the tourist flow as well as the changes in customer expectations regarding infrastructure and tourist attractions could be monitored. Finally, further researches in other regions are needed so that comparative data could be done.

The results of this study can serve as basis for government actions, since tourism is a matter of public interest because of its importance in the creation of jobs and revenue. In other countries, governments have undertaken actions to promote and support tourism companies and they have obtained significant results for the sustainability in the sector. In order to achieve this in Brazil, the government should take advantage of management strategies developed by universities and research institutes.

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