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INFLUENCE OF TOURIST COMMUNICATION ABOUT CUBA ON TRAVEL INTENTIONALITY

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Destination promotion is a decisive factor in shaping tourists' intentions, especially when considering the principles of sustainable development and seeking to diversify tourism services. **Methodology:** This research analyzes how communication strategies focused on Cuba's sustainable values influence tourists' intentions to visit the country. The main objective is to evaluate how advertising content emphasizing sustainability influences potential tourists' perceptions and how it changes their intentions to travel to Cuba. Due to the quantitative research design and semi-experimental approach, surveys were conducted before and after participants viewed the destination's advertising spot. **Results:** The results highlight that communication strategies focused on sustainability and the authenticity of the Cuban experience positively impact travel intentions, especially among tourist sectors interested in ecotourism and responsible tourism. **Conclusions:** The study concludes that integrating sustainability and communication strategies can improve destination perceptions and increase visit intentions, in line with the global trend toward sustainability in the tourism industry.

Keywords: Tourism, communication, tourism promotion, Cuba, sustainability, consumer behavior, ecotourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism promotion is an important strategic communication process in destination management, the purpose of which is to influence tourists' intentions to visit a specific destination. Issues of sustainable development and environmental respect (Alonso-Muñoz et al., 2023) are becoming increasingly important; tourism destination promotion (Gil-Cruz, 2024) has begun to take these values into account, especially in regions where nature and culture play an important role (FJ Cristòfol et al., 2024). Cuba is considered to be a country with great potential to integrate the principles of sustainable development into its tourism offering, considering its rich biodiversity and cultural heritage (Rutty & Richardson, 2019)

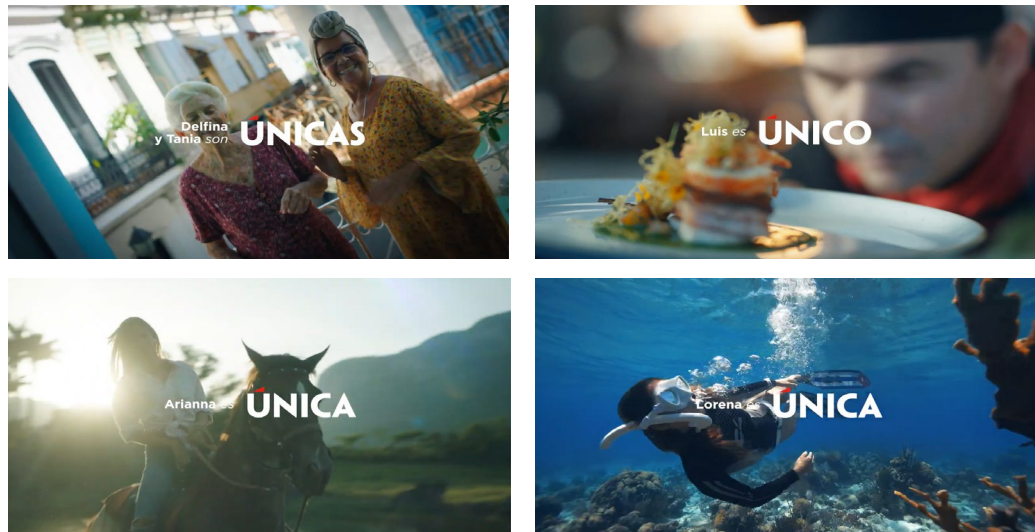
Sustainable development in tourism means not only the protection of natural resources, but also creating a balance between economic development, social integration, and environmental protection (UNWTO, 2017). In this context, to promote Cuba as a sustainable destination means, on the one hand, highlighting the country's natural and cultural resources, and on the other, emphasizing it as a safe setting for the development of responsible tourism practices that can attract tourists aware of the importance of these values. While there are studies that analyze the impact of advertising on travel intentions (Alghamdi & Abdulwahid, 2025), very few focus on how incorporating sustainability principles can change tourists' perceptions and increase their desire to travel to a specific destination (Wut et al., 2023)

The research focuses on analyzing the impact of advertising strategies in Cuba that emphasize sustainable development. To achieve this objective, a semi-experimental design was used in which potential tourists were shown a spot (Figure 1) highlighting the sustainable values of a given destination. This approach will measure changes in travel plans before and after viewing the spot, which will help understand how tourists perceive the destination based on the promoted sustainable characteristics. This will systematize useful information for tourism promoters who use sustainable development as a tool to make a difference in the global market.

Running approximately one and a half minutes, the spot bases its narrative structure on a sequence of scenes that appeal to identity values such as authenticity, natural and cultural diversity, music, and human warmth. Visually, it displays a high-quality aesthetic with aerial images, close-ups, and vibrant landscapes, with dynamic editing synchronized with the music. This combination of visual elements builds an emotional narrative that seeks to position Cuba as an authentic and multidimensional tourist destination, appealing to both the cultural and nature-adventure-oriented traveler's imagination.

Figure 1.

"Cuba única" advertising spot



Source: Cuban Ministry of Tourism (2023a).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuUcRH18GRc>

1.1. Tourism promotion and its impact on travel intentions

The promotion of tourist destinations has been the subject of research in recent decades. According to Crompton (1979), advertising is the most important tool for influencing tourists' perceptions and travel decision-making.

Destination promotion is based on creating an image of a place that motivates tourists to visit it; an attractive image (Gartner, 1994; Barrientos-Báez et al., 2022; Parra et al., 2024) that highlights a place's unique characteristics and motivate tourists to include that place in their travel plans. Social media and traditional media (Leung et al., 2013) are responsible for showing, inducing and creating the need for the experience. These Information sources handle cultural and psychological components for persuasion. "These latter factors affect both perception and cognition, which are two distinct elements of the image formation process" (Beerli & Martín, 2002, p. 6); this image, through perception, is informed and received; and through cognition, it is stored and organized in the brain space. Gunn's (1988) studies conceive image as a conformation process where the destination is constructed and reconstructed from the following stages: image storage; image transformation, from the previous one to the subsequent one; willingness to travel; travel; participating in activities at the destination; returning to one's everyday life environment and mutating the image conceived before traveling into a new image after the trip. The images of destinations in potential tourists (Stern & Krakover, 1993) they have been recreated through the wealth of information to which they are constantly exposed. For Pike and Ryan (2004), in addition to the destination image, perceptions of destination attributes such as climate, safety, security, and scope of operations are also necessary.

Visual content, such as photographs and videos, plays an important role in promoting tourist destinations, showcasing not only tourist attractions but also the values and

authenticity of a place (Li et al., 2023). Advertising campaigns influence the formation of tourists' intentions (Guo et al., 2024), as perceptions of a destination often influence their decisions.

Travel intention or travel decision is a multi-stage process (Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002; Lian & Yu, 2019) involving external and internal factors that govern frequency, time, and place. External factors (Crespo Jareño & Soria de Mesa, 2019) include culture, social strata, and the family with their roles and hierarchical levels. Internal factors (Kotler et al., 2000; Rivera et al., 2013; Serra, 2016; Crespo Jareño & Soria de Mesa, 2019) include attitudes, dogmas and ideas, motivations, learning, experience, appreciation, personality, as well as psychological, economic, and demographic dimensions.

The effectiveness of tourism promotion depends on the ability to establish emotional bonds (Barrientos-Báez, 2019; Caldevilla-Domínguez et al., 2019) with tourists. Soto Fajardo (2022) proposes this link between tourism and the consumer based on four typologies: ethnic (which enhances customs), environmental (selective in nature, creating unique experiences for tourists with the environment), recreational (characterized by mass tourism and leisure), and historical-cultural (related to the picturesque, heritage, and community values). An essential role in strengthening this bond and shaping the trip is played by agencies and those tourists who, loyal to the brand, share their experiences with other consumers. Furthermore, "they can share pleasant and unique experiences, which improves mental and emotional health and increases knowledge. Being accompanied by tour guides allows them to gain insight into the different places they visit" (Soto Fajardo, 2022, p. 7).

Effective campaigns not only inform but also inspire, appealing to visitors' desires, expectations, and values. Places that incorporate authentic stories and cultural experiences into their advertising messages (Can et al., 2025) achieve greater long-term effectiveness. This is especially important in the context of Cuba, where history, music, and nature have distinct characteristics that can be emphasized in marketing campaigns. For Moral-Moral (2021), "the adoption of neuromarketing techniques in the tourism sector can lead to a significant improvement in the experiences offered, as well as better use of the resources and skills available to tourism managers" (p. 431). But tourism promotion is more than a marketing tool. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world (Fernández-Paradas, 2021), where destinations compete for visitors' attention, it is important to differentiate themselves through effective advertising strategies, including both traditional advertising campaigns and the innovative use of digital platforms, to reach target audiences with personalized messages.

In Cuba, advertising spots emphasizing sustainable development and natural resources have been an effective tool for changing tourists' attitudes and increasing their desire to travel (Reimondo & Reis, 2019). This type of visual content allows potential tourists to experience a place virtually and build a positive self-image based on sustainable practices, natural landscapes, and the daily lives of local communities. The impact of visual content is amplified when published on digital platforms. Social media allows

tourists to interact with promotional messages, share experiences, and become ambassadors for a given destination.

In this sense, integrating digital strategies with engaging and relevant visual content is crucial (Parra-López et al., 2020) to position Cuba as a sustainable and authentic tourist destination. Global trends show a shift toward more ethical and transparent promotion, where destinations highlight not only their attractions but also their efforts to ensure sustainable practices (Garanti et al., 2024).

This perspective not only improves awareness of a particular location but also helps build a relationship of trust with tourists, who increasingly appreciate the social and environmental responsibility of the places they visit (Schönherr, 2023).

1.2. Behavioral intention models and their application in tourism

Consumer behavior in the field of tourism can be analyzed using intention models. The one proposed by Ajzen (1991) stands out in this regard. This model suggests that travel intention may be influenced by psychological factors such as the tourist's attitude toward the destination, social perceptions of traveling to that destination, and barriers or facilitating factors such as accessibility or cost.

Álvarez Afonso's (2022) theory proposes that tourist behavior is defined by the following variables: habit (Limayem, 2007); expectation of outcome or performance, expectation of effort, facilitating conditions, price-value, hedonic motivation, and behavioral intentions (Venkatesh et al., 2012); as well as social influence (Tan et al., 2014).

Thus, Limayem's (2007) theory states that, for tourists, habit is the automation of processes and behaviors as a result of learning and experiences, for example, the use of applications and maps. On the other hand, Venkatesh et al. (2012) systematize as an expectation of the result or performance the level of benefit provided to the consumer with technologies, platforms, media, applications, among others, which contributes to the success of the development of their activities such as (San Martín & Herrero, 2012) purchase of tickets, trips and individual or guided tours. The studies of Venkatesh et al. (2012) define effort expectation as the degree of disposition, skill and dexterity of the consumer for the use of technology; a technology that must be efficient, optimal, simple, easy and intuitive. They also explain that the conditions facilitators are the knowledge that tourists or consumers in general have about the resources and support tools for designing, planning, and implementing a trip. Finally, regarding the price-value variable, they emphasize that it is of vital importance for tourist behavior, since it becomes "an influential factor in the intention to use applications or digital platforms during trips" (Álvarez Afonso, 2022, p. 14).

The contributions of Venkatesh et al. (2012) provide a framework for interpreting hedonic motivation as related to enjoyment, delight, taste, and pleasure; meanwhile, behavioral intentions relate it to personal will, that energy and character of the individual that allows them to personalize the trip based on their previous experiences. Finally, Tan et al. (2014) defines social influence as the way a client can influence the

design, planning, and meaning of another person's recreation; these can be family members, friends, coworkers, or others.

One aspect that influences behavior (Simó, 2002) is that related to emotions. Emotions, resulting from the tourist satisfaction project (Gronroos, 2000), are conditioned by experience and participation. To the extent that tourists participate in the production (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000) in the experience design process, the greater the degree of satisfaction. Just as satisfaction exists, so does dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction (Athanasopoulos et al., 2001; Szymanski & Henard, 2001) results in complaints, negative word-of-mouth communication, and requests for cancellation/modification. Therefore, emotions are characterized as positive and negative; everything depends on the consumer's expectations and experiences after each experience. Concepts of loyalty and willingness to pay and consumption emerge (Russell, 1980; Simó, 2002): the greater the satisfaction after consumption, the greater the loyalty to the service, the possibility of payment and the frequency of use.

The above suggests that cognitive control also plays an important role in behavior. Factors such as cost, availability, and accessibility to information can be both barriers and facilitators when making travel decisions. To overcome these barriers, destinations must ensure that their advertising messages are not only persuasive but also informative, highlighting attractive and accessible options for tourists interested in a sustainable experience.

Behavioral intention models thus advocate for a civilized tourism that practices "behaviors aligned with laws, regulations, and ethics during the process of tourism activities" (Liu et al., 2020, p. 2). This type of tourism is linked to sustainability (Mamirkulova et al., 2020), which, when put into practice, could defend ideas such as "if tourists avoid behaviors such as taking photographs in prohibited places, damaging cultural heritage, or disturbing other tourists, better tourism can be developed for all involved" (Neme-Chaves et al., 2023, p. 6).

Applying these behavioral concepts to sustainable tourism shows that tourists' attitudes toward sustainable practices can influence their intention to travel to a destination that promotes those values. If tourists see that a destination has implemented sustainable development principles (Boley & Green, 2015), their attitudes toward that destination will be more positive, increasing the likelihood that they will want to visit it. In this sense, advertising campaigns that emphasize a destination's sustainable aspects can change tourists' attitudes and thus influence their travel intentions and behavior patterns.

Tourists who view Cuba as a sustainable development destination are more likely to consider it to be an acceptable option. This awareness is reinforced by advertising campaigns that emphasize the importance of protecting ecosystems and respecting local communities (García et al., 2025). Furthermore, attitudes toward sustainable development, combined with social pressure for responsible travel, can significantly increase tourists' desire to choose destinations that reflect their values (Passafaro, 2019).

1.3. Sustainability in tourism

Sustainability is not only a desirable characteristic but also a decisive factor for many travelers when choosing a vacation destination. Thus, more than 70% of tourists worldwide believe it is important that the places they visit adopt responsible practices (UNWTO, 2023). In this regard, Suárez Barros (2024) points out that "the theory of sustainability in tourism emphasizes the importance of adopting practices that respect ecological limits and promote the efficient use of resources" (p. 8474). This trend is changing promotional strategies, which must now focus on highlighting how these places contribute to environmental protection and the well-being of local communities.

The development of sustainable tourism (Stone et al., 2021) has, among its objectives, the safeguarding of tangible and intangible resources for the enjoyment of future generations, and among its challenges is "the management of heritage and tourism through the promotion of local development, meeting the needs of tourists, and strengthening self-sufficiency" (Campos-Quezada & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024, p. 596).

Sustainability in tourism is a concept that has gained increasing importance in recent decades, especially as concerns about the environmental impact of mass tourism have grown. Sustainable tourism (UNWTO, 2017) is defined as tourism that considers the economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism activities, not only seeking economic benefit but also respecting the environment and local communities.

The concept of community-based tourism is emerging, a form of sustainable tourism (Goodwin, 2002), whose objectives are to minimize environmental impact, promote a sense of equity, and preserve the cultural values of the locality. Community members are generally the protagonists of the activities and their benefits (García-García et al., 2023), and it takes place in a defined space (Yanes et al., 2019) designed to meet collective needs. "This type of initiative is characterized by the active participation of its members, who manage small or medium-scale tourism projects" (Fernández Rodríguez et al., 2024, p. 550). Among its identifying characteristics (Manyara & Jones, 2007; Choi & Murray, 2010; Fernández Rodríguez et al., 2024) it is possible to find the role played by the community itself in the offer it provides to tourists, the way it integrates its culture and the link that can be established between environmental conservation and economic and sociocultural growth. Some of its challenges and opportunities (Denman, 2006; Ustate et al., 2024) include achieving a link between tourists and the community, the creation and development of community tasks and the development of community-based tourism awareness-raising and education on environmental and sociocultural aspects, and the conservation of both tangible and intangible spaces that are the foundation of this type of tourism, which is increasingly both at a local and a global level.

Sustainable development is not just an optional strategy, but an urgent necessity in the global tourism landscape. Tourist destinations where sustainable development has become a fundamental element of their identity not only meet the current needs of consumers but also implement international policies (Guo et al., 2019).

Likewise, Cuba promotes its destination based on sustainability and ecotourism, emphasizing its natural beauty and its commitment to environmental protection and

the "conservation of biodiversity, focusing its interest on territorial issues, the functional diversity of ecosystems, the implementation of economic instruments for nature conservation, and the impact of mining activities in protected areas" (Matta & Sierra, 2024, p. 169). This trend is driven by the growing tourist demand for travel options that minimize environmental impact, which highlights the importance of incorporating these aspects into the promotion strategies of destination countries.

With regard to Cuba, sustainable development has evolved from an additional aspect to a central pillar of the tourism marketing strategy. The promotion of activities such as ecotourism, organic agriculture, and marine conservation programs not only addresses the needs of tourists but also strengthens its position as a leader in tourism.

However, for sustainability to become a fundamental aspect of tourism planning, a comprehensive approach is required. This approach must encompass all facets of tourism, from the planning of tourism products to their promotion. This includes not only emphasizing the values of sustainable development in advertising messages but also ensuring that the experiences being provided are consistent with these principles. This holistic approach is key to gaining the trust of tourists and strengthening the destination's reputation in the long term.

Moreover, sustainability messaging campaigns must be robust and backed by specific actions to avoid the risk of greenwashing. Today's tourists are more critical and knowledgeable, so they look for concrete evidence that a destination lives up to the values it promotes. According to Hall (2005), sustainable tourists seek destinations that engage in responsible activities, whose experiences respect the environment and preserve the values of local communities. Incorporating these principles into advertising campaigns can influence and determine tourists' decisions, especially those interested in ecotourism. Ecotourism (Buckley, 2012) is a form of tourism based on the principles of sustainable development that aims to protect and safeguard ecosystems, while allowing tourists to enjoy nature. Therefore, promoting Cuba as an ecotourism destination has become an integral part of the strategy to attract sustainable tourism, as established in the National Tourism Development Plan and the State Policy for Sustainable Tourism, which prioritize environmental conservation and the rational use of natural resources in the sector (MINTUR, 2023b).

For Cuba, this is an opportunity to strengthen its positioning through advertising strategies that combine authenticity, transparency, and sustainability. Thus, sustainable development issues are increasingly being incorporated into tourism development strategies. Cuba is known for its ecological and cultural diversity, and tourism authorities promote the development of ecotourism as an alternative for tourists traveling with the intention of having authentic and responsible experiences.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this study is quantitative with a quasi-experimental approach. It aims to evaluate the impact of Cuba's communication strategies on the travel intentions of potential tourists. The quasi-experimental method is justified by the impossibility of conducting a fully controlled experiment, as participants have certain predispositions and prior knowledge about the destination. Therefore, pre- and post-studies were conducted to measure changes in travel plans before and after exposure to communication materials.

The study was carried out in Madrid, Spain, during the second half of 2024. The research sample consisted of 54 potential tourists, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation of diverse demographic segments. Although the sample size is limited, it is methodologically appropriate for exploratory studies, whose purpose is not statistical generalization but the identification of preliminary trends to guide future research with larger samples (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hair et al., 2019).

The questionnaire used for data collection included closed-ended and Likert-scale questions about prior knowledge of Cuba, tourist attractions, and travel intentions after viewing the promotional video. Additionally, the study examined attitudes toward sustainable development and ecotourism to determine possible correlations between these variables and travel intentions. Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the statistical software SPSS V.28, allowing comparison of responses before and after the promotional video. Cross-tabulation and correlation analyses were applied to identify associations between attitudes toward sustainability and travel intentions.

3. RESULTS

The results reveal a strong predominance of the 25–34 age group, which represents 55.6% of the respondents, establishing itself as the most significant segment of the study (Table 1). This group, together with the 18–24 age group, which constitutes 14.8%, accounts for 70.4% of the participants, demonstrating a clear preponderance of young adults in the sample. This demographic profile could influence results related to technological preferences and communication channels, particularly the use of social media. Regarding gender, women make up 63% of the sample, compared to 37% for men.

Table 1.

Composition of the participants in the survey

	2. Sexo		Total
	Femenino	Masculino	
1. Edad: 18 - 24 años	5,6%	9,3%	14,8%
25 - 34 años	37,0%	18,5%	55,6%
35 - 44 años	7,4%	1,9%	9,3%
45 - 54 años	3,7%	0,0%	3,7%
55 años o más	9,3%	7,4%	16,7%
Total	63,0%	37,0%	100,0%

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data obtained from the survey.

Some 79.6% of participants correctly place Cuba in the geographic zone of the Caribbean. Although this data shows a high level of knowledge about its location, the remaining 20.4% could not locate it. This is a decisive element in the perception and selection of tourist destinations, especially among those market segments less familiar with its geographical context.

Of the total respondents, only 24.1% have visited Cuba. This indicator makes it possible to obtain precise results on perception in the second part of the survey, as well as their overall view of the destination, after viewing the proposed communication campaign video. Havana and Varadero are the most identified destinations. In the survey, 25.9% of participants selected Havana as their preferred destination, while 11.1% recognized the resort of Varadero. This indicates a high level of familiarity with these places. Other cities like Trinidad and Camagüey were identified less frequently; although some regional destinations are recognized, the most iconic ones are the most identified as Cuban tourist destinations. It is important to note that some participants included destinations outside of Cuba, such as Punta Cana and Cancún, indicating a clear confusion among nearby tourist spots.

The results indicated that 34% of participants associated the island with sun and beach tourism, while 19% associated it with cultural tourism. Ecological or nature tourism and gastronomic tourism also stand out, but to a lesser extent, at 13% and 9%, respectively. However, there is also a small percentage (3%) of people who do not know or are unsure about what type of tourism to associate with the country.

Regarding general knowledge about Cuba as a tourist destination, the results show that 38.9% of respondents have low knowledge, while 31.5% have medium knowledge. Only 13% of participants say they have a high level of knowledge, and 16.7% indicate they have a very high level of knowledge. The data suggests that although 70.4% of respondents have limited knowledge of Cuba as a tourist destination, a relevant proportion possesses a moderate or high level of knowledge. However, it also indicates that there is still room to improve familiarity among potential tourists.

Cuba's beaches are seen as the main attraction by half of the respondents, with 50% of responses in favor (Table 2). This highlights the prominence of sun and beach

tourism in the participants' perception, which aligns with Cuba's international image as a high-demand Caribbean destination. In second place, history is mentioned by 20.4% of participants, reflecting an appreciation for the rich cultural and historical heritage, closely followed by culture, which stands out with 14.8%. Both aspects show interest in the cultural and patrimonial value that Cuba offers to travelers looking for experiences beyond beaches. On the other hand, nature (9.3%) and hospitality (5.6%) are mentioned less frequently; they are positive factors, but they are not perceived as the most outstanding aspects of Cuba from the participants' perspective. These results imply that tourism in Cuba may be strongly linked to its coastal offerings, but there is also interest in historical and cultural aspects. This suggests an opportunity to enhance the promotion of these elements within tourism marketing strategies.

Table 2.

Cross-analysis of "Standout aspects" and "General knowledge"

		Aspectos de Cuba que destacan como atractivo turístico					
		Playas	Cultura	Historia	Naturaleza	Hospitalidad	Total
Conocimiento general sobre Cuba como destino turístico	Bajo	18,5%	1,9%	11,1%	5,6%	1,9%	38,9%
	Medio	20,4%	7,4%	3,7%	0,0%	0,0%	31,5%
	Alto	3,7%	0,0%	5,6%	1,9%	1,9%	13,0%
	Muy alto	7,4%	5,6%	0,0%	1,9%	1,9%	16,7%
	Total	50,0%	14,8%	20,4%	9,3%	5,6%	100,0%

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data obtained from the survey.

The main source of information about Cuba is friends and family, with 18.5% of responses. Other common sources are also observed, such as social media, mentioned by 14.8% of participants, and documentaries or films, cited by 15.6%. Additionally, travel agencies and websites were also selected, though to a lesser extent, at 5.6% and 3.7%, respectively. It is important to highlight that 7.4% of respondents indicated they have no information on this topic, reflecting a possible lack of knowledge or interest in seeking information about Cuba.

The type of promotional material considered to be most effective for inspiring a trip to Cuba is mostly social media posts, with 33.3% of respondents choosing this option, where digital and visual content plays a central role in motivation. Advertising spots are also highly valued, selected by 18.5% of participants. Additionally, 9.3% of respondents considered advertising spots combined with social media posts effective, reinforcing the importance of visual and accessible media. Other materials mentioned include blog or travel magazine articles and television advertisements, though with less relevance, totaling 11%, suggesting the need for a strong digital marketing strategy to promote Cuba as a tourist destination. Furthermore, 72.2% of participants believe that tourism promotion has a significant influence on their decision to visit a destination; in contrast, 14.8% think it has no impact on their decision, and 13% are unsure, underscoring the fundamental role of marketing and promotion strategies in attracting tourists, especially in the context of destinations like Cuba.

The most valued aspect considered to be fundamental for a sustainable destination is the benefit to local communities, with 35.2% of responses, predominantly from the 25–34 age group (42.1% within this criterion). This segment also leads in the valuation

of cultural heritage conservation, which represents 33.3%. On the other hand, 24.1% of respondents prioritized environmental protection, with greater representation from the 25–34 age group (61.5%) and those 55 or older (23.1%). Meanwhile, energy and resource efficiency were selected by only 7.4% of the total amount of participants, with an even distribution among younger segments. In third position, with a percentage of 24.1%, a preference was expressed for environmental protection. Finally, energy and resource efficiency is considered to be the least relevant aspect at 7.4%, with a clear inclination of younger generations toward a diversity of sustainable criteria, while older participants tend to focus on specific aspects such as community benefit and environmental protection. This finding has relevant implications for designing communication and promotion strategies that address the sustainable priorities of each age group, promoting a comprehensive approach to sustainable tourism development.

The analysis of the importance attributed to sustainability (Table 3) when choosing a tourist destination shows diverse patterns based on age group. In general terms, 31.5% of participants consider sustainability to be "important," followed by 25.9% who rate it as "moderately important," and 14.8% who identify it as "very important." These three levels of positive valuation represent 72.2% of total responses, underscoring a majority inclination toward the relevance of sustainability in travel decisions.

Table 3.

Cross-analysis of "Importance of sustainability" and "Age of participants"

	Importancia de la sostenibilidad al elegir un destino turístico					
	No es importante	Poco importante	Moderadamente importante	Importante	Muy importante	Total
1. Edad: 18 - 24 años	1,9%	3,7%	1,9%	5,6%	1,9%	14,8%
25 - 34 años	46,3%	14,8%	11,1%	16,7%	9,3%	55,6%
35 - 44 años	1,9%	0,0%	3,7%	3,7%	0,0%	9,3%
45 - 54 años	0,0%	1,9%	0,0%	1,9%	0,0%	3,7%
55 años o más	0,0%	0,0%	9,3%	3,7%	3,7%	16,7%
Total	7,4%	20,4%	25,9%	31,5%	14,8%	100,0%

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data obtained from the survey.

In this sense, when analyzing the data on the willingness to choose a tourist destination based on its commitment to sustainability, a generally positive attitude is observed among respondents; some 37% are willing to choose a destination for its sustainable approach, while 13% are very willing. Furthermore, 35.2% remain neutral, suggesting that, although they are not firmly committed, they do not reject the idea. On the other hand, 14.8% are somewhat unwilling, and 3.7% would not be willing at all to consider sustainability as a determining factor. It is evident that sustainability is a factor of growing relevance in traveler preferences, especially among younger and older generations. However, the existence of differences in valuation according to age range suggests the need for differentiated strategies to raise awareness and promote sustainable practices among the less interested segments.

Culture and history stand out as the main travel motive for 40.7% of participants, highlighting the importance of cultural experiences and historical knowledge in tourists' decisions; travelers value the opportunity to explore the heritage, traditions, and identity of tourist destinations, which reinforces the relevance of cultural tourism. On the other hand, rest and relaxation, with 29.6% of responses, is another main reason for choosing a tourist destination, reflecting the growing demand for wellness experiences, where tourists seek to escape daily stress and enjoy moments of peace and tranquility. Adventure and nature/ecotourism motives are mentioned by 14.8% of respondents in both cases. Although these aspects do not dominate the travel decision, they remain relevant for a significant portion of travelers, showing a trend towards seeking active experiences in contact with nature. These results suggest that tourist destinations should adapt their marketing strategies to highlight their cultural and wellness attributes, without neglecting offerings oriented towards nature and adventure.

The spot has a positive impact on the perception of Cuba as a destination (Table 4). It was possible to find that 88.7% of respondents rated Cuba as an appealing or highly appealing destination. This finding highlights the ability of visual materials in shaping perceptions of tourist destinations. In this regard, visual imagery plays a fundamental role in travel destination decision-making, especially in the context of sustainable tourism, in which elements of the tourism offering, such as natural beauty and cultural experiences, are key aspects.

Cuban culture is widely regarded as the nation's most appealing attribute.. In this regard, 39.6% of responses highlights the value and richness of Cuban culture for tourists. Elements such as music, dance, art, and traditions that are present in the video do not go unnoticed by participants. Beaches, as a natural attraction of the destination, stand out with 26.4%. Meanwhile, 22.6% of respondents mentioned nature while, in smaller proportions, adventure and history were mentioned with 9.4% and 1.9%, respectively.

Table 4.

Cross-analysis for "The most attractive aspects" and "Impact."

		Qué te pareció más atractivo					
		Playas	Cultura	Naturaleza	Historia	Aventura	Total
Qué tan atractivo te pareció el destino Cuba	Nada atractivo	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
	Atractivo	7,5%	22,6%	7,5%	0,0%	7,5%	45,3%
	Muy atractivo	15,1%	15,1%	11,3%	1,9%	0,0%	43,4%
	Extremadamente atractivo	3,8%	1,9%	3,8%	0,0%	1,9%	11,3%
	Total	26,4%	39,6%	22,6%	1,9%	9,4%	100,0%

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data obtained from the survey.

The results reflect a moderate effectiveness of visual promotion in positively influencing the image of Cuba as a destination, although it also shows that not all potential tourists are equally influenced by this type of promotional material (Table 5). The 51.9% of respondents indicated that the video improved their perception of Cuba as a tourist destination. In contrast, the remaining 48.1% reported that the spot did not change their perception. The interpretation of the results shows a varied

distribution of responses, suggesting that the spot had a moderate impact on the perception of Cuba as a destination among those being surveyed. While the spot managed to spark significant interest in one part of the sample—where 24.1% indicated a high (20.4%) or very high (3.7%) likelihood of visiting Cuba within the next two years—it cannot be considered as a decisive factor for all respondents. The majority, 38.9%, remained neutral or undecided, reflecting a diverse response to the promotional material.

Table 5.

Cross-analysis of “Change in perception” and “Travel probability”

		Probabilidad de visitar Cuba en los próximos dos años					
		Muy baja	Baja	Media	Alta	Muy alta	Total
Cambio de percepción	No cambió mi percepción	11,1%	11,1%	18,5%	7,4%	0,0%	48,1%
	Sí, mejoró mi percepción	7,4%	7,4%	20,4%	13,0%	3,7%	51,9%
	Total	18,5%	18,5%	38,9%	20,4%	3,7%	100,0%

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on data obtained from the survey

Regarding the question about recommending a visit to Cuba after viewing the video, the results show a clear positive trend in the responses of the participants. The 63% of participants stated that they would recommend other people visiting Cuba. This figure indicates a high level of approval of the video and its ability to generate a positive response in terms of tourist interest. However, 35.2% of respondents were neutral or uncertain about making a recommendation, evidencing the presence of doubts or external factors affecting the decision to recommend the destination, such as a lack of complete information, logistical concerns, or personal restrictions.

The analysis of the perception of Cuba as a tourist destination, after viewing the spot, reveals a diversity of opinions. The 11.1% of respondents expressed a "very positive" perception, indicating that the visual promotion managed to capture their attention and generate a high level of interest in the destination. This data highlights the potential of the spot to attract specific segments of tourists who are highly receptive to visual stimuli. However, 16.7% expressed a "neutral" opinion, suggesting that this group did not experience a significant impact after viewing the video. This result could reflect that some key elements of the promotion strategy were not sufficiently persuasive to modify or reinforce their previous perception. While most respondents evaluated Cuba positively as a tourist destination after the spot, the presence of neutral and negative opinions indicates that the communication campaign could benefit from adjustments to enhance its reach and impact on a broader and more diverse audience.

Although the spot successfully sparked a positive perception of Cuba as a destination, the results indicate that sustainability was not a fully highlighted aspect in the promotion, as 50% of respondents were unsure if the spot adequately reflected this aspect. However, 29.6% perceived that the spot did include sustainable aspects, hence the importance of clearly integrating the sustainability focus in future communication campaigns. Given that sustainability is a criterion of growing relevance among tourists, improving the visibility of sustainable practices could have an additional positive impact

on travel intention, especially among those travelers more conscious of environmental challenges.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the impact of prior knowledge on travel intention reveals that the level of knowledge about a destination considerably influences potential tourists' decision to visit it. In the case of Cuba, the data shows that both general knowledge and specific knowledge of aspects related to its culture, nature, and tourist offerings play a key role in travel intentionality. A limitation of the study lies in the absence of detailed information on the participants' country of origin, climate context, and socioeconomic level; factors that can influence the perception and valuation of tourist destinations, especially regarding travel motivation, sensitivity to the tropical climate, and tourist consumption preferences.

Tourists with limited or no knowledge show a significant modification in their willingness to travel, especially when promotional messages offer clear and attractive information about the destination's cultural richness, natural diversity, and sustainability. The relationship between prior knowledge and change in intention is complex and varies depending on the type of tourism and the individual's perception of the destination.

The results demonstrate that a large majority of respondents consider Cuba an attractive or very attractive tourist destination after viewing the promotional video, reflecting that the visual promotion has had a positive impact on their perception; the visual and emotional elements presented in the spot managed to capture the attention of potential tourists. The high rate of positive perception is an indicator that digital marketing strategies, focused on attractive images and captivating visual content, are effective in arousing traveler interest.

However, the spot was not equally persuasive for all segments of the sample; although the visual material had a positive impact, it was not decisive for all participants. The presence of prior factors such as personal experiences, limited knowledge of the destination, or a lack of an emotional connection with the promotion could be related. This heterogeneity in responses highlights the importance of a more segmented approach in communication campaigns, one that considers the diverse motivations and perceptions of potential tourists, particularly in the younger segments and those with greater prior knowledge about the destination. There is still room to improve the effectiveness of campaigns, especially in terms of clear communication about sustainability and leveraging digital platforms to reach a wider audience.

An additional factor is knowledge about Cuba's social and political situation, which is a barrier or a point of interest for many potential tourists. Those with positive or neutral

references about Cuba's social and political situation show a greater willingness to travel, while participants with negative references showed greater resistance to changing their travel intention, even after exposure to communication materials.

Respondents with a positive or very positive opinion are more likely to consider Cuba as a tourist destination in the next two years. However, the probability of a visit is not always high; a positive perception alone does not guarantee an immediate conversion into tourists. Those with a neutral or negative opinion are less likely to visit Cuba, hence the importance of improving the general perception of the destination among these tourists. A negative opinion has a greater impact on tourists; their probability of visiting is lower compared to those with a positive opinion. Therefore, promotion campaigns should focus on changing this negative perception to improve it; refining the quality and emotional elements of the content could help increase it.

Cultural, emotional, and psychological factors emerge as fundamental components in travel intention, complementing more traditional rational aspects. This finding highlights the importance of a holistic marketing strategy that integrates emotional and cultural techniques into communication campaigns to connect more deeply with tourists, generating a positive response and increasing the probability of choosing the tourist destination. The ability to offer an authentic experience, supported by unique cultural and emotional values, should be the central axis of communication strategies, with a particular focus on those tourists seeking culturally and personally enriching experiences.

As future lines of research, expanding the sample, both in size and geographic diversity, is being proposed. Likewise, to contextualize the effects of promotional communication, the development of comparative studies between different tourist destinations is suggested, including the analysis of cultural, economic, and climate variables, advanced segmentation by tourist profile, and discourse analysis applied to advertising content. These new lines of research can contribute significantly to the consolidation of a comprehensive, strategic, and sustainable approach to tourist communication.

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