



**Local development based on the concept of Placemaking in Smart
Tourist Destinations so they may become participative**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was creating a Placemaking usage plan in a Smart Tourist Destination (DTI) in order to render it more participative and promote sustainable local development. The specific goal established was the creation of a participative DTI plan. The research locus is Benidorm, municipality located in the Valencian Community, in Spain, because the municipality was the only one certified as a DTI until the conclusion of the research. Methodologically, the research is classified as exploratory and descriptive and was carried out via a case study that involved a documental stage followed by on-site interviews and observation. The gap addressed involves the combination of two recent and innovative constructs: Smart Tourist Destinations (DTI) and Placemaking, contributing to scientific and academic development on the subject. The main results obtained while addressing innovative topics in a joint analysis (DTI and Placemaking) contribute to generate social impact by considering citizen participation in the process, from a perspective focused on the administration of DTI territories, which also brings environmental benefits. The most relevant contribution is the model proposed in this work, which may be applied to DTI, both in Spain and other similar countries of Latin America, given that they use similar methodologies.

KEYWORDS: Local development. Placemaking. Smart Tourist Destination.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1990, technology applied to cities has modified the quality of life of residents (Kuhlmann et al., 1999). Twenty years later, those technologies have adapted to tourist destinations, modifying tourist profiles as well (Wuang; Li; Li, 2013). The use of available technologies creates the Tourist 4.0 denomination (Buhalis; Amaranggana, 2014; Gretzel et al., 2015), seeing as the tourist is now totally connected and multichannel by means of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the Internet. One may consider that a new Era of Tourism is emerging, in which tourists gain much power of choice in their travels, since they now have the means to seek those destinations and purchase trips on their own, via the Internet (Santa Ana, 2019).

Nowadays, the tourist has more access to information, which grants them greater power of choice and purchase of travels, promoting changes in the sector, which raises the pressure on destinations to modernize themselves to adjust to new requirements (Ávila et al., 2015). That also occurs because we live in the society of knowledge and information (Castells, 2002), where organizations and individuals change their behavior, including Tourism, with tourists who, in addition to seeking information about their destinations, can share their experiences on the internet, both influencing and being influenced by comments from other tourists (Santa Ana, 2019).

Thus, Smart Tourist Destinations (DTI) may be taken as those with innovative spaces based on the territory and on a technological infrastructure focused on Tourism (Ávila, et al. 2015). Such location should be committed to the environment, with local/regional culture and the social and economic aspects involving them. Therefore, a model should be implemented in DTIs that use real time information, so they are able to make the best decisions and have the location offer excellent tourist experiences based on connectivity, continually improving the quality of the experiences offered.

Those memorable experiences occur in the touristic territory, built with the support from governments, businesses and the local community, where public spaces are considered strategic elements of the city since they are spaces made for and by the people, using the Placemaking concept created by Bernal, David ad Guilguet (2018). Placemaking is focused on public spaces and, to that end, it observes and listens to the people who live there in a way that residents’ needs and aspirations can be fulfilled with its methodology. In that sense, it is integrated to Tourism, given that Placemaking occurs in cities and regions and has a great potential to connect people and places, as well as residents and visitors, and may enable interesting events and activities associated to the local culture (Richards, 2015).

The spacial and territorial character of tourism justifies its development, which is brought about by visits from tourists to cities other than their own, in search of experiences (Font Aranda, 2021). The use of territory by tourism is validated by the of resident-tourist relationship, by the planning of the urban and territorial spaces, thus generating behaviors that prioritize spacial aspects. Spacial knowledge promotes a significant touristic experience that may contribute to the destination’s development, favoring the DTI Systemic Administration Model (Ivars Baidal et al., 2021).

Based on that context, the following question-problem was established for this research: How to build and administrate a participative DTI through Placemaking to stimulate local development?

The overall objective was to create a Placemaking usage plan for DTIs in order to become participative and promote local development. In turn, the specific objectives set forth were: a) Identify aspects that characterize Placemaking; b) Identify public space usage initiatives for tourism; c) Identify citizen participation actions at a location and how such participations can be associated to local development; d) Analyze possibilities and potential for Placemaking that contribute with the local development of a tourist destination; e) Create a participative DTI plan.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1 Smart Tourist Destinations

Tourism activities generate carbon emissions deriving from transportation and accommodations, among others. Seeking to minimize those environmental impacts, the United Nations (UN) launches the challenge of low-carbon travels in 2009 and, along with it, the term DTI, so better solutions be sought for carbon emissions at tourist destinations.

Buhalis and Amaranggana (2014) believe that destinations increase their competitiveness level with the DTI concept and that ICTs enable cities to become more pleasant and accessible to residents and tourists.

The DTI concept reached Spain in 2012, when they redefined their Plan Nacional e Integral de Turismo - PNIT 2012-2015. At the time, the Department of Industry, Energy and Tourism, their public agents and private companies from the tourism sector prepared the PNIT

as an opportunity for economic restructuring (Soria López, 2012), after the real estate crisis of 2008 and 2009, when major revenue losses in tourism took place. They hence used the opportunity to connect with Tourist 4.0 (Santa Ana, 2019) and offer better experiences before, during and after the trips.

Spain’s objective was to strengthen itself as a brand of global tourist destination and economically recover tourism in the country. Therefore, PNIT 2012- 2015 (p. 37) affirms its vision for Spain: “El Destino España is guided towards generating relevant distinctions for the consumer, in which all cultural, natural, business and public service resources are placed at the service of the tourist”.

A DTI model to be implemented in Spain was hence ordered to the Sociedad Mercantil Estatal para la Gestión de la Innovación y las Tecnologías Turísticas - SEGITTUR by the Secretariat of State of Tourism. To that end, the Comité Técnico de Normalización 178 – CTN 178 and subcommittee 5 of DTIs were created as part of the CIs Committee by the Asociación Española de Normalización y Certificación - AENOR, responsible for creating technical standards for the European Community.

In 2012, SEGITTUR conceived DTI as being:

An innovative destination of a consolidated avant-garde technological structure that ensures sustainable development in the territory of tourism and facilitates the visitor’s interaction and integration with the environment and boosts the quality of their experience (SEGITTUR, 2012, p. 8).

Nonetheless, it was necessary to review the concept and include aspects associated with residents and accessibility (Soria López, 2012) and in 2013, SEGITTUR presents a new concept:

Smart Tourist Destination is an innovative space, accessible to all, consolidated on an avant-garde technological infrastructure that ensures the territory’s technological development, facilitates the visitor’s interaction and integration with the surroundings and increments the quality of their experience at the destination and the quality of life of residents (SEGITTUR, 2013, p. 224)

SEGITTUR’s Methodology is the same adopted by AENOR (Ávila, et al. 2015). That methodology deals with DTIs based on the analysis of destinations around five axes: Governance; Innovation; Technology; Sustainability; and Accessibility. Those axes promote an integrated view of the territory, including its administration areas and all actors that influence and participate in their development.

Also, there is a DTI reference model of the Valencian Community. In that model, DTI is divided into: governance (subdivided into sustainability); connectivity (subdivided into sensorization); and information system and innovation (INVAT-TUR, 2015). This model also shows how each of those objectives may be attained, with a strongly applied focus, and linked to technology.

If the models by Instituto Valenciano de Tecnologías Turísticas - INVAT-TUR and SEGITTUR are compared, it may be observed that in the INVAT-TUR model everything is subordinated to governance, which encompasses all other parts. Also, accessibility is

subordinated to sustainability. The SEGITTUR model, on the other hand, has five independent axis, whereas innovation and technology are transversal to governance, sustainability and accessibility.

The DTI Reference Model of the Valencian Community is greatly associated to technology and its application to tourism, thus, INVAT-TUR created the DTI Systemic Management Model in 2017. That model emerged based on the DTI self-diagnosis, according to INVAT-TUR with intent to create a key-element in the Smart Tourism planning process. The model became a pioneer tool, a starting point to detect improvements, identify strategies and actions for each destination in every dimension: strategic; instrumental; and applied (Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021). That holistic model converts a smart destination into three levels:

- a) Strategic-relational level: The smart destination is based on governance, planning, public-private collaboration and cooperation, management in administration to achieve sustainable tourism, an innovative environment and a tourist territory accessible to all;
- b) Instrumental level: The smart destination is based on digital connectivity, sensor and big data, infrastructures on which the information and intelligence systems depend. The interaction between the digital and physical worlds is facilitated by that system, a key aspect of Smart Tourism;
- c) Applied level: Smart destinations generate smart solutions for destination management and marketing, and provides better touristic experiences, attracting more visitors to the location and favoring development in a sustainable manner (INVAT-TUR, 2018).

To develop the destination, it is believed that the systemic model be associated to DTI model governance. According to Santos-Junior et al. (2019) governance is a key factor for DTI development, a very important aspect for the levels presented in the systemic model, especially the strategic-relational level, through public-private participation, and that of civil society and governments.

In 2022, INVAT-TUR created a document that aimed to review the ‘smart’ concept associated to tourism; analyze the relation between territorial intelligence and smart tourism; observe current DTI model proposals; redimension the smart tourist ecosystem; present progress on DTI; strengthen DTI in the Valencian Community; adapt the DTI-CV model to new challenges and reflect on DTI and the future scenario of tourism. Lastly, they proposed new dimensions for the DTI-CV model that were: Accessibility, Intelligence and on-line Marketing (Agramunt; Martínez; Sánchez, 2022).

One of the topics addressed in INVAT-TUR’s research (Agramunt; Martínez; Sánchez, 2022) was Territorial Intelligence, with aim to raise queries to citizens and more direct participation from the civil society in projects and their execution. Incrementally, three smart principles were presented: participation of all actors in the development (especially locals); a global focus on the situations that balance economic, social and environmental considerations; and the collaboration/association between actors. That enables to obtain, organize and reformulate data and information to be converted into a source of collective knowledge and intelligence, which facilitates the participation of territorial actors. It collaborates with

decision-making, giving the place a new territorial culture with interaction and innovation to design solutions and a valuable proposal. A sense of belonging is observed here, translated by the term regionality.

Thus, territorial innovation is perceived in its relation with social innovation, associative collaboration between urban actors, community development and citizen participation. Local actors are the key element for the smart concept.

2.2 Placemaking

Placemaking inspires people to create public spaces that reflects them (PPS, 2021), strengthening the connection between residents and the spaces where they live. It refers to a collaborative process in which the shared value is maximized by means of public space patterns. It not only promotes design in public spaces, but boosts creativity in developing collective spaces, in a way to use the place’s physical and cultural identity.

According to the Project for Public Spaces - PPS (2021), for a location to be successful it needs to combine four qualities: Accessibility; Active/Good Image; Comfort; and Be Sociable. Those qualities gave origin to the Placemaking Diagram, a tool that helps people in assessing if a public space is good or bad. The PPS model enables to observe if a public space is successful and, to that end, the following attributes are evaluated:

1. Accessible: People from all ages and physical conditions (including those with major mobility difficulties) are able to arrive to the space and move within it;
2. Active: Offers different activities and ways for people to use the space;
3. Comfortable: The space has spots to sit down, a pleasant view and other attributes that render it more appealing;
4. Sociable: A place where people find friends or even make new friends. (PPS, 2015, p.19)

Based on the PPS Model, this research evaluated the free public spaces using the Placemaking concept. The next item details the methodological aspects adopted in this research.

3 METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

As to the approach, this research is classified as qualitative for involving an in-depth investigation about a phenomenon, generating new information, as proclaimed by Gerhardt (2009). It is also classified as having an exploratory and descriptive nature. Exploratory because it enabled the approximation with a phenomenon considered to be new (Gil, 2019), since the Participative DTI is virtually unexplored in literature. It has a descriptive character because it enabled to describe a certain phenomenon, providing a new vision of the problem (Gil, 2019), in that case a Participative DTI associated to Placemaking.

It is a unique case study (Yin, 2001) because it is a revealing case, where there was the opportunity of observing and analyzing the phenomenon using several sources of evidences, namely: documents, interviews, observation and following social media. Its purpose is to clarify ideas (Gil, 2019), and it was possible to explore a problem by building a detailed understanding from the examination of a case (Creswell, 2014).

For data collection, three road maps based on the PPS Placemaking methodology: one to collect documental data; another for on-site and social media observation; and a third road map to carry out the interviews.

Thus, the research was done in two stages. The first stage sought, in addition to bibliographic survey, documents on the local phenomenon, by searching information on the internet based on the Placemaking road map. Also, other documents were obtained during the visit to the research locus, in the same period the observation was made. Concurrently, information was raised from the official social media of the municipality. Still in the data collection stage, on-site interviews were carried out with tourists and residents. The second stage of the research consisted in creating a Participative DTI Plan, by crossing the data collected during the first stage of the research, which will be addressed further on.

Regarding Benidorm’s official social media publications (Instagram and Twitter) we clarify that they were followed between the period of November 2021 and October 2022. The most relevant official social media per type of publication and number of followers were considered for the study, in a way to enable answering the specific objectives.

Social media analysis was restricted to reporting how often the images of locations in the historical center of Benidorm appeared in order to identify which locations had somehow caught the attention of those who posted them. Comments or interactions of followers with the posts were not analyzed, since a software program to assist in such analysis was not found, so the analysis was performed manually, by counting how many times a certain location appeared, both in the feed and the stories of those media.

On the other hand, among the documents found and analyzed were: documents on the Strategy of Integrated Sustainable Urban Development - EDUSI, DTI Benidorm, Citizen Participation and Benidorm Tourism. A total of 29 documents were analyzed, whereas 1(one) from EDUSI, 17 related to DTI Benidorm, 8 (eight) related to Citizen Participation and 3 (three) linked to Tourism in Benidorm.

Data collection relied on on-site immersions, as suggested by Gil (2019). In that case, in the city of Benidorm, Spain, more specifically in its Historic Center, in the period of November 2021 to January 2022, in search of documents not obtained via internet and to initiate field observation; and between March and June 2022, when the observation was completed and the interviews carried out, recorded with the due permission from the interviewees.

Interviewee selection was done by the sampling type referred to as Snowball (Biernarcki; Waldrf, 1981), a non-probabilistic manner of obtaining a sample, used when there is some difficulty in accessing groups. The number of interviewees was determined by the

similarity of the answers, seeking a pattern, in a way that the sample was exhausted upon verifying repetition in the answers obtained. 18 people were interviewed, among which 5 (five) residents, 4 (four) people with a second residence in Benidorm and 9 (nine) tourists.

The research participants were classified into three categories: Residents, Tourists and People with a second residence at the location. The understanding of People with a second residence in Benidorm are namely those that reside in the town during a period of the year and, in another location in another period of the year, either in that country (Spain) or another country.

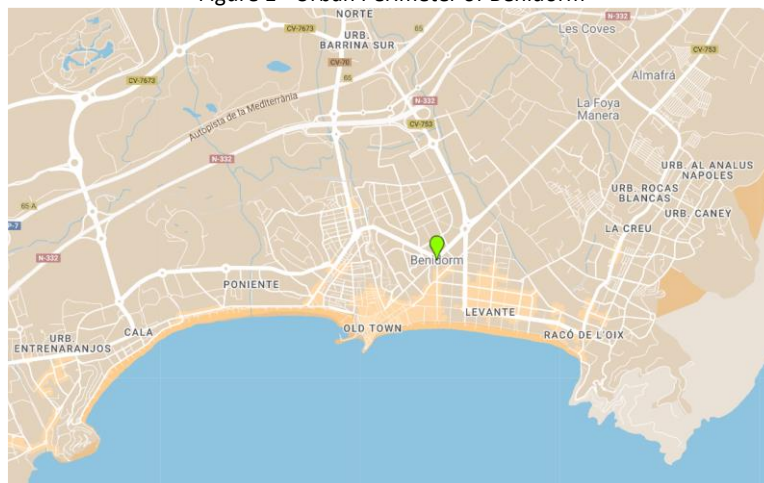
According to Yin (2001), to analyze the data of a case study, it is necessary to initially dispose of varied information and from multiple sources of evidence, thus being representative and bringing credibility to the process. Then one should categorize, expose the data and present their explanations, bringing a meaning. Yin (2001) and Gil (2019) agree that this is best way to analyze data in a case study. This research followed that method.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Characterization of the research locus

Benidorm is a Spanish municipality located in Alicante, in the Valencian Community. It was one of the first destinations to implement the DTI methodology and the first to obtain a DTI certificate. It has approximately 70,470 residents (Femenia-Serra; Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021) and since 1960 it has been considered an important national and international tourist center. It is the fourth Spanish destination in annual hotel stays, which results in a successful tourist destination, with a high dependency on the Spanish and British markets Femenia-Serra; Ivars-Baidal et al., 2021) This research focuses on the urban perimeter of Benidorm (Figure 1).

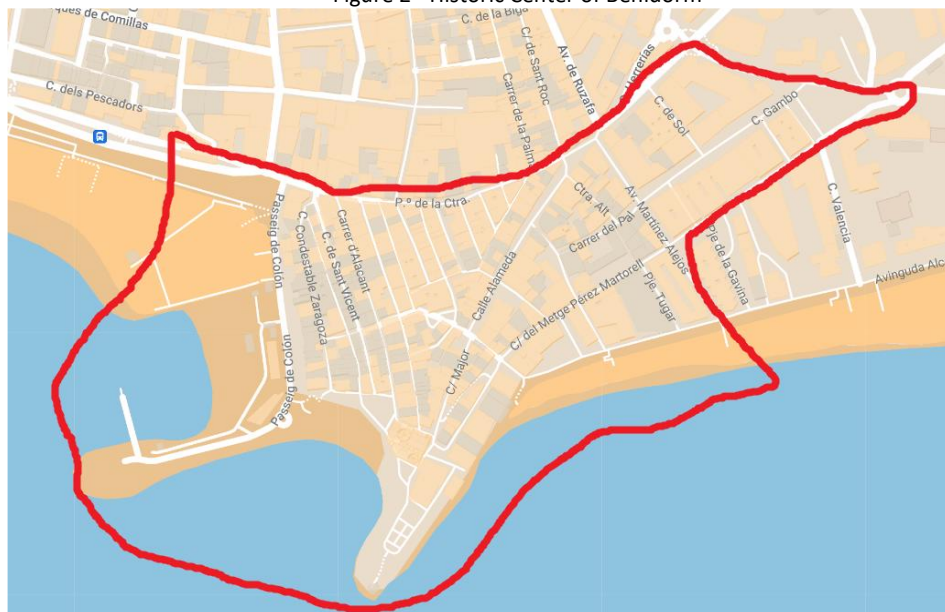
Figure 1 - Urban Perimeter of Benidorm



Source: from Google maps (2022).

More specifically, the Historic Center or casco antiguo of Benidorm was analyzed, the research locus, its outline presented in Figure 2. It is delimited, from left to right, clockwise, by the following streets: Parque de Elche, Paseo de la Carretera, via Emílio Ortuño, Calle Puente reaching the Plaza Triangular at the end of the upper right of the marking on the figure below, down through Calle Gambo, Avenida Martinez Alejos, arriving at Avenida Alcoi, which borders Playa de Levante, circulating Balcón del Mediterrâneo and closing with Passeig de Colón until Parque de Elche.

Figure 2 - Historic Center of Benidorm



Source: from Google maps (2022).

In turn, seeking to provide the reader with a better understanding, the aerial image of Benidorm is presented in Figure 3 viewed from the ocean to the city, and in it we may observe that the Historic Center has a different format compared to the more recent area. At the Historic Center, located right in the middle of the city, the buildings are lower and its streets are narrower.

Figure 3 - Aerial view from the ocean of the Historic Center of Benidorm



Source: Instagram mybenidorm (2022).

Having made the considerations as to the methodological aspects, we move to present the research results in the following item.

4.2 Results and discussion, per specific objective

Next the results obtained are presented and discussed, with the perspective of fulfilling each of the specific objectives.

a) Identify aspects that characterize Placemaking in the Historic Center of Benidorm.

In order to answer this specific objective “a”, the following items were detailed, according to the analysis of data proposed by Yin (2001) and Gil (2019): blocks of items analyzed by Placemaking - Accesses and connections; Comfort and image; Usage and activities; and Sociability. The data that proves the observations about the analytical categories are: data from observation, interviews, analysis of documents and social media; how the Historic Center of Benidorm stands in regard to Placemaking, underscoring favorable and unfavorable points per category, presented under the perspective of meanings. The credibility of the information results from confronting the observations with the speeches of interviewees, social media images and official documents.

By analyzing the meanings of **objective “a”**, we may note that:

In Accesses and Connections: the spaces may be viewed at a distance. That space is activated by events. In general, people can easily walk through the space, since it is practically exclusive for pedestrians and connects two important parts of the city, with the access to Balcón’s viewpoint as the single unfavorable point. That confirms the concepts established by PPS (2021) that they strengthen the connection of the space with the people that use it, which is a meeting and living point and, according to Bernal, David and Guilguet (2018), it creates accessibility to all, whereas those accesses support the local economy.

In Comfort and Image: the space is clean, safe, well lit, welcoming and causes a great impression on everyone. It is visited by people of all ages, genders and nationalities. There is space to sit down and contemplate. The only unfavorable aspect is that ethnic representativeness was not observed, since few people of Black and Asian groups were seen using the space. Nonetheless, it is thus confirmed that the concepts established by PPS (2021) enable the feeling of belonging, creation and sharing of the place and, according to Bernal, David and Guilguet (2018), it promotes well-being, convenience, health and socialization.

In Uses and Activities: the space is broadly used by people, seeing as there are many types of different establishments. The presence of youth and elderly is observed in the location, seeking entertainment, shopping and/or restaurants, among others Also, to walk, have a seat, contemplate, party, practice sports, dine, have drinks, with the only unfavorable point of the noise caused by the activities, but which is tolerated by the residents of Benidorm, given that most of them make a living directly or indirectly from tourism. The concepts established by PPS (2021) are confirmed, since those uses and activities enable creation, sharing and connection with the place that, according to Bernal, David e Guilguet (2018) promote community life and help develop the local economy.

In Sociability: the Historic Center of Benidorm is a space for all, whether in groups, alone, with families, friends or as couples. It was observed that people attend it frequently, in a joyful manner, with the only negative point being the lack of other ethnicities. PPS (2021) concepts are also confirmed in that they inspire people to use the space and feel that they belong there, which, according to Bernal, David and Guilguet (2018), promotes community life, socialization and health.

b) Identify actions of Historic Center of Benidorm public space usage for tourism.

The analytical categories used to fulfill the specific object objective “b” are: parties and events promoted in the Historic Center of Benidorm and the use of the public space in those parties and events. In order to ascertain meaning, we present the analysis of how those parties and events have stirred the Historic Center. The credibility of the information derives from confronting the observation with the images of social media and official information disclosed about parties and events.

Parties and events take place at the Historic Center of Benidorm, throughout the year. They have religious, historical, musical and sporting backgrounds and, seeing as part of the events’ course is held within the Historic Center, people gather there, having it occupied

and leveraging the uses and activities in the spot. The spaces most occupied by these parties and events coincide with the most used spaces in the center, leveraging commerce in those streets and having those spaces more visited and contemplated.

Analyzing the meanings of the theoretical referential according to specific objective “b”, we observe that those parties and events that take place over the year in the Historic Center of Benidorm attract people, leading the location to be occupied and leveraging its usage and activities. A fact that corroborates with Font Aranda’s (2021) statement about the bond in tourism occurring through spacial and territorial means and that the tourist consumes the experience, promoting local development.

Since the spaces most occupied by these parties and events coincide with the most used spaces of the city’s center, there is a greater possibility of being and contemplating. It is confirmed that, according to the PPS (2021), the spaces are created collectively, using the location’s physical and cultural identity, becoming a meeting and living point that, when activated by parties and events, promotes local development.

- c) Identifying actions of citizen participation in Benidorm and how they relate with local development.

The analytical categories used to fulfill specific objective “c” are: EDUSI process, analyzing the entire EDUSI documentation; citizen participation of Benidorm, analyzing the entire citizen participation and DTI documentation; tourism, analyzing its entire documentation. In that analysis, citizen participation term searches were made in order to identify how the citizen participation processes by EDUSI are going in the city, as well as by DTI. This item presents a diagnosis of how the citizen participation processes and strategies for Benidorm collaborate towards a participative DTI. The credibility of the information results from confronting the observations with social media images and official document analysis.

It was verified that EDUSI brings a greater possibility of citizen participation in the municipality’s strategy, uses the already practiced model of citizen participation for the city’s activities, has the potential of extending such citizen participation to DTI, which is the current Tourism strategy in the city. We note that the successful practices of the municipality generate facilities for the creation of a participative DTI Plan, given that the population has been stimulated to participate in public administration and the practice has been valuable for the municipality. Thus, that entire construction of tools in the municipality corroborates the success of the Participative DTI Plan.

By analyzing the meanings of objective “c” and comparing them with the theoretical referential, EDUSI brings a greater possibility of citizen participation in the municipality’s strategy, makes use of the already practiced model of citizen participation for the city’s activities and has the potential of extending such citizen participation to DTI, which is the current Tourism strategy in the city. Ávila *et al.* (2015) state that the practice ensures the territory’s sustainable development, facilitates interaction and integration of the visitor with the surroundings, enhancing their experience and favoring the resident’s quality of life. The

successful practices of the municipality citizens’ participation generate facilities for the creation of a participative DTI plan, seeing as the population has been stimulated to participate in the public administration, which corroborates the success of a Participative DTI Plan and tends to collaborate with local development, given it originates from a collective construction of the territory, promoted endogenously by the resident, generating job and income opportunities, based on the generation of memorable experiences for everyone.

- d) Analyze potential *Placemaking* possibilities that contribute with the local development of a tourist destination.

The analytical categories to answer specific objective “d” are: *placemaking*, by means of its concepts presented in the theoretical referential; EDUSI; parties and events; and citizen participation. The data is presented synthesizing concepts that have already been addressed previously. The credibility of the information results from confronting the observations with the comments from interviewees, social media images and official documents.

Strategic Placemaking is able to establish government guidelines through EDUSI in Benidorm to favor the Systemic DTI Model at the strategic levels Creative Placemaking uses the possibilities of the location identified in the answers to objective “a” and the parties and events identified in the answers to objective “b” generate possibilities for local development, since they activate those locations for a better offer of establishments and, in result, employment, generating income for the population. In that sense, Tactical Placemaking crowns the strategies with citizen participation in the entire process, strengthened in Benidorm by the answers identified in objective “c”. Hence, Placemaking brings strategies through EDUSI, favoring the DTI Systemic Model at strategic level, economically developing the locality, generating jobs and income with citizen participation in the entire process, promoting local development.

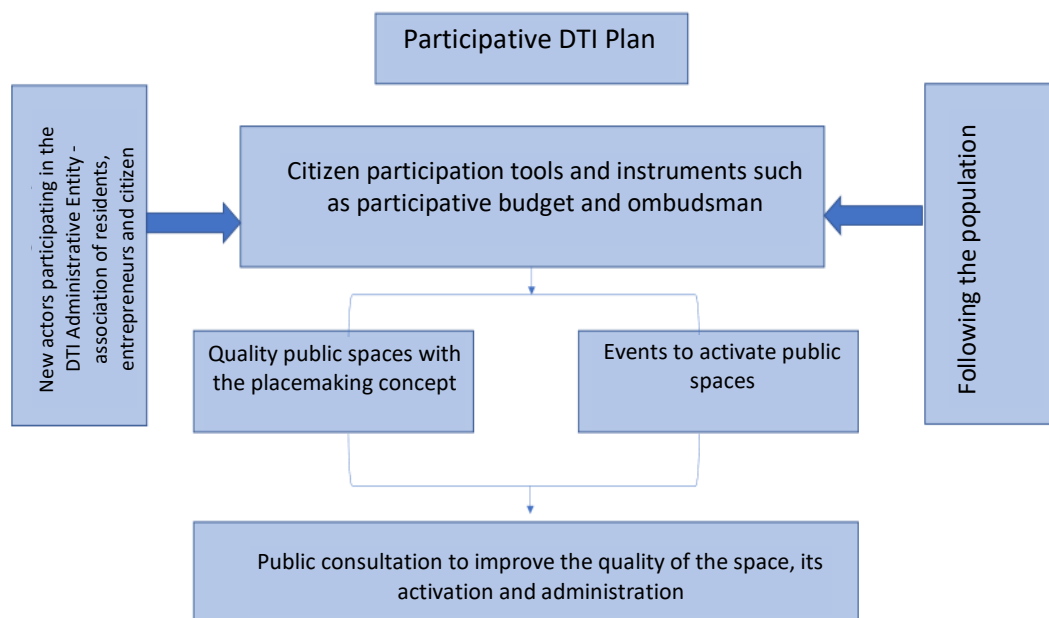
- e) Create a participative DTI plan.

The analytical categories to fulfill specific objective “e” are: draft a chart that synthesizes the results obtained in the research and enables offering new potentialities for local development to administrators, based on the proposal of a Participative DTI; the meaning of this stage is part of the main result, which is the construction of a participative DTI plan for Benidor and which may be applied to other destinations. The credibility of the information results from confronting the observations with the data obtained in the answers from interviewees and the official documents analyzed.

The possibilities of Strategic Placemaking, through the Systemic DTI Administration Model; Creative Placemaking, via the activation of the location with parties and events promoting environmental, social and economic development; and Tactical Placemaking, which is the bottom up with citizen participation in the other processes, also promoting environmental, social and economic development.

This analysis collaborates with DTI, which aims to improve tourist experiences, the resident’s quality of life and local development. In order for the entire DTI process to be more participative, a Participative DTI Plan was prepared, presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Participative DTI Plan



Source: prepared by the authors, 2023.

The DTI Administrative Entity relies on departments that represent the DTI axes. In order to obtain citizen participation, the participation of associations’ representatives (class or neighborhood), local entrepreneurs and citizens are all necessary.

For a better understanding of this Participative DTI Plan (Figure 4), we present below a synthesis of the stages for construction and administration (Chart 1).

Chart 1 - Stages for construction and management of a Participative DTI Plan

Stages	Orientations	Indicators
Stage 1	In order to have citizen participation, a survey should be carried out with residents, tourists and entrepreneurs, based on the DTI and Placemaking concepts. The approach and explanation to these people about the research’s intention and objective should be done in advance. Lastly, the research data should be tabulated for analysis and presentation to the population. This research should occur before the launch of the Participative Budget.	Records of the disclosures about DTI, number of people that answered the questionnaires and their results.
Stage 2	After the virtual presentation of results to the population through the website https://benidorm.governalia.es/ , which refers to the municipality’s citizens participation in general issues, the opening of candidacies of class and neighborhood association members, residents and entrepreneurs to participate in the Administrative Entity should be announced through that same website. That candidacy should be carried out along with the launch of the Participative Budget, given that a public call to send proposals for the municipality occurs simultaneously. The representatives of associations,	Number of candidates and number of people who voted in those representatives.

	residents and entrepreneurs are subordinated to the DTI Implementation Coordination that is part of the Administrative Entity. To define a strategy, there are three positions launched, along with another three to follow the actions and another three to control the actions. In all positions there should be a representative of residents, another of entrepreneurs and another of association representatives.	
Stage 3	Upon being elected, those people should review the results of the questionnaires answered by residents, entrepreneurs and tourists and, along with the Implementation Coordination, should suggest strategic actions involving Quality Public Spaces and Events activating those spaces. The other members of the Administrative Entity participate in detailing those strategies, considering their specialties per axis. By the end of the process, every Administrative Entity votes on those proposals, which are then presented to the entire population through the same citizen participation website. Those most voted are included in the Participative Budget.	Number of actions proposed for the public space involving events. The relation between those actions with the five DTI axes is also evaluated.
Stage 4	The people elected to follow the actions planned by the representatives of the citizen and Administrative Entity work by following the performance of activities throughout the year. Meanwhile, those who have been elected to control the actions follow the processes to ensure that what was planned is executed. If a change of course is needed, the essence of the activity and actions should not lose the initially established focus. In parallel, the citizen that is being represented by all those fixed and temporary members of the Administrative Entity may follow the actions that are being carried out and their results via the citizen participation website.	The actions planned are confronted with the actions executed and their results.
Stage 5	By the end of the year, those actions and their results are presented to the entire population in the same citizen participation website. Then a new cycle begins for the following year.	Disclosure to the population, with collection and analysis of the comments received.

Source: prepared by the authors, 2023.

In that sense, a plan model was created to favor citizens ‘participation in all stages of the process. According to Ávila et al. (2015), that enables a greater interaction and integration of the tourist with the territory, generating more and better experiences for the tourist and quality of life for the resident, given he will be part of the decision and execution process, and will involve, as suggested by Soria López (2012) and Santa Ana (2012), the moments before, during and after the trip. In that sense, the resident will participate in the decisions as to the activities and events to be carried out and in the activation of the spaces, parties and events. To that end, there will be prior disclosure, during the period when the tourist is at the destination, and continue with the post-event, publishing them on social media, in a way to encourage other tourists to travel to Benidorm.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research presented herein arose from the identification of a gap revealed as to citizen participation, which in 2022 started to present itself as a new concern of destinations

and the DTI models, but still without practical results. The overall objective was to create a Placemaking usage plan in DTI in order to be participative and promote local development.

Based on the premise that tourism occurs in the territory, it should have special attention at the destinations so they are stirred by the creation of activities and events that promote the use of territory. Those events should reflect the local culture, its history and identity. However, we found that Benidorm establishes the objective of serving everyone with everything, leaving their culture, history and identity in the background while offering events directed to tourist interests and not as a reflection of their culture.

On the other hand, Benidorm is able to activate their spaces with events so their utilization generates employment and income opportunities and, consequently, local development. By proposing a form of Participative DTI so residents, tourists, people with a second residence, or entrepreneurs as well, contribute towards its formation, culture and identity, this research intends that those contexts be inserted in the creation of events and in the use of touristic territory, in a way to better translate the local culture and promote development, enabling a better quality of life to residents and better experiences to tourists.

This research advances in science by treating innovative topics in a joint manner, namely DTI and Placemaking, generating progress to DTI studies focused on greater social participation. For the market and for society, they contribute by enabling the generation of an economic impact, since it was shown how a Touristic Territory can be better administrated in a participative mode of DTI, in a way to stimulate local development. We intend that the contributions of this research may generate a social impact, since it considers citizen participation to strengthen the Touristic Territory and build a participative DTI, with aim to create employment and income opportunities.

Thus, it allows to reflect about how it is built and its potential to generate distinguished experiences for tourists, for the administration of the territory in DTI, through a perspective of the environmental and cultural aspects of the destination.

Based on the model proposed in this Participative DTI study, we expect to contribute to the inclusion of new standards currently used in Spain, whereas the application of such model is possible in Spain. Since the Latin American models are based on the Spain model, there is a potential for using this model in Latin America as well, including Brazil, and it could also be expanded to other destinations throughout the world.

As a limitation of this research, we may recognize the fact that the model proposed has not yet been implemented and tested, which is suggested for further research on the same subject.

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