

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AS KEY FACTORS IN SHORT-STAY VISITS: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS IN PUEBLA

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**Abstract** -- The research analyzed the relationship between infrastructure and tourist attractions and the short stay of tourists in the city of Puebla, Mexico. A causal hypothesis was proposed suggesting a positive relationship between the independent variables (infrastructure and attractions) and the dependent variable (length of stay). Using a quantitative, correlational, and descriptive methodology, deductive, analytical, and synthetic methods were employed. The results, obtained using Pearson's correlation coefficient, indicate that infrastructure has a moderate (0.42) and positive relationship, while tourist attractions have a high and positive (0.78) relationship with short stays. The research reaffirms that the city of Puebla, due to its cultural and historical tourism, continues to be a short-stay destination. Documentary and field analyses were used to construct an explanatory model of the relationship between the variables studied.

**Keywords** -- Tourist infrastructure, tourist attractions, city of Puebla, short stays.

**Abstract** -- This study examines the relationship between tourism infrastructure, tourist attractions, and the duration of visitor stays in Puebla, Mexico. We propose a causal hypothesis positing a positive association between the independent variables (infrastructure and attractions) and the dependent variable (length of stay). Employing a quantitative, correlational, and descriptive methodology, the research integrates deductive, analytical, and synthetic approaches. Pearson's correlation coefficient reveals a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.42$ ) between infrastructure and short stays and a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.78$ ) between tourist attractions and short stays. These findings confirm Puebla's status as a short-stay destination, driven by its cultural and historical tourism. Documentary and field analyses support the development of an explanatory model for the relationships among the studied variables.

**Key words:** Tourist infrastructure, tourist attractions, city of Puebla, short stay.

## INTRODUCTION

The duration of a trip is defined as the time travelers spend at a destination outside their usual environment, generally measured in days or nights spent overnight. In this sense, tourists are considered to be those who stay at least one night and up to one year, depending on the activities carried out at the destination (UN Tourism, 2023). This indicator is fundamental in the analysis of tourist behavior, as it provides information on the level of consumption, the generation of income, and the economic impact of the visit on each destination.

Since the 1970s, short trips have become a significant type of vacation within global tourism markets, surpassing long trips in frequency (Sharma, 2010). Various authors, such as Murphy, Pritchard, and Smith (2000), point out that this phenomenon is a response to modern lifestyles, characterized by stress and lack of time, which drives travelers to take short trips to nearby destinations in order to rest, relax, or disconnect from their routine. According to Smith (1994), short trips are unique in that they take place throughout the year, making them an essential component of contemporary tourism and a factor that has transformed traditional travel patterns.

Although the average length of stay is a reliable indicator of tourism performance, a reduction in this figure may reflect economic problems, as visitors tend to spend less, limit their interaction with local offerings, and fail to fully experience the cultural heritage of the destination. This phenomenon is clearly observed in the city of Puebla, a place with a vast historical, cultural, and architectural wealth, which despite its heritage relevance and its development as a modern city, continues to be considered a short-stay destination.

In 2024, the city recorded an average of 1.88 nights per tourist (State Information System, 2024), highlighting the need to analyze the factors that influence this behavior.

In 2024, the city recorded an average of 1.88 nights per tourist (State Information System, 2024), which highlights the need to analyze the factors that influence this behavior. The limited diversification of its tourist offer, focused mainly on cultural, historical, and religious tourism, as well as its proximity to Mexico City and competition with nearby destinations such as the Magical Towns of Cholula and Atlixco, contribute to visitors' perception that the main attractions can be seen in a few days.

Given this situation, the following research question arises: is there a significant relationship between infrastructure and tourist attractions and tourists' decision to stay for a short period in the city of Puebla? In this regard, the general objective is to analyze the relationship between infrastructure and tourist attractions and the length of visitors' stays in the city, while the specific objectives are to identify the factors that influence short stays, evaluate tourists' perceptions of infrastructure and the diversity of offerings, and propose strategies that contribute to increasing the average length of visits. This study seeks to understand the causes that determine the short stay of visitors in the city of Puebla, with the aim of generating useful information for the formulation of tourism policies and strategies that promote longer stays. In a global context where travel patterns have been transformed by globalization and digitalization, it is essential that destinations adapt their offerings to new trends in short-stay tourism, offering diversified, sustainable, and attractive experiences. Based on the results, it is hoped that actions will be proposed to strengthen the tourism infrastructure and expand the range of activities on offer, with the aim of consolidating Puebla as a comprehensive destination that encourages tourists to stay longer and explore its cultural, historical, and heritage wealth in depth.

## **METHODS**

In terms of the methodological design used to approach this research, a quantitative-correlational and descriptive approach was taken, with a non-experimental design, as the independent variable was not manipulated. The methods used were deductive, i.e., from the general to the specific; analytical, considering the whole and then the parts; and synthetic, for a simplified explanation of these. The research techniques applied were surveys and face-to-face interviews using the snowball method, with five student interviewers from the Administration program at the Benemérita

simplified explanation of these. The research techniques applied were surveys and face-to-face interviews using the snowball method, with five student interviewers from the Business Administration program at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), who received five hours of training beforehand to survey 77 tourists each.

The survey was conducted between Sunday, March 24 and Saturday, March 30, 2024, during Holy Week, an important date due to the influx of tourists visiting the city of Puebla. The measurement instrument was a questionnaire consisting of nine descriptive sociodemographic questions to determine the tourist profile, as well as 26 items with Likert scale response options (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (2) disagree, and (1) strongly disagree) to determine the correlation of the study variables. For the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficient statistical measure was used, obtaining a value of 0.82 with a good interpretation, as well as content validity by the judgment of three expert research professors in the area of tourism at BUAP. The population was 278,311 visitors in March 2024 (Government of the State of Puebla, 2024) and the sample size obtained was 385 tourists using the formula where: the confidence level is 95%, the margin of error is 5%, and the probability is 50% in favor and 50% against (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Calculate sample size.

$$n = \frac{N * Z^2 * p * q}{e^2 * (N - 1) + Z^2 * p * q}$$

- n** = Tamaño de muestra buscado
- N** = Tamaño de la Población o Universo
- Z** = Parámetro estadístico que depende el Nivel de Confianza (NC)
- e** = Error de estimación máximo aceptado
- p** = Probabilidad de que ocurra el evento estudiado (éxito)
- q** = (1 - p) = Probabilidad de que no ocurra el evento estudiado

**Source:** (QuestionPro, 2024).

The subjects of the study were selected using a non-probabilistic snowball sampling method, whereby tourists who were part of the statistical study sample were selected

, choosing the first participants and then inviting or recommending other tourists to participate. The units of analysis used were hotels, restaurants, and tourist attractions in the city.

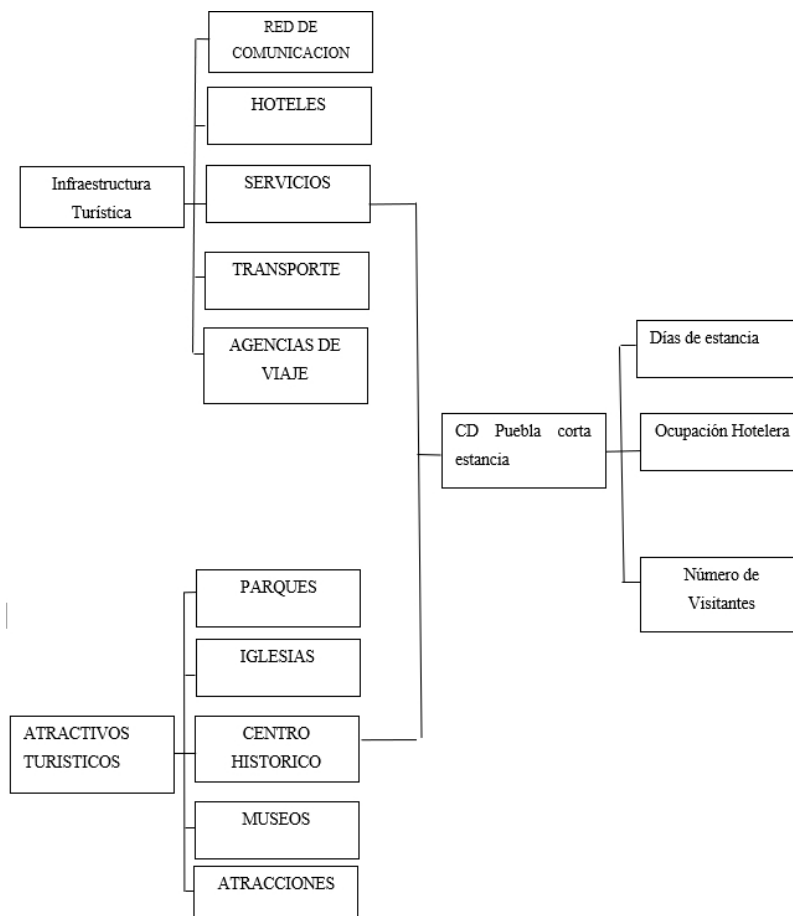
The tests and techniques used in the data analysis were Pearson's correlation coefficient, coefficient of determination, Cronbach's alpha, and the statistical software used was SPSS and Excel.

On the other hand, the theoretical causal model proposed for this research is determined by tourist attractions and their indicators: churches and convents, historic centers, museums, and recreational areas such as parks and attractions, as well as tourist infrastructure and its indicators: hotels and restaurants, accessibility, internal transportation, and tourist services. The proposed model and construct refer to previous studies that demonstrated that tourist attractions and services at the tourist destination motivate and facilitate the tourist's stay and permanence (Economic Development Cooperation Program, 2014). In addition, established cultural attractions such as urban centers equipped with infrastructure are authentic centers for the redistribution of tourists to peripheral cultural attractions (Rene & Peralta, 2016).

The proposed model, which includes the independent variables of tourist attractions and tourist infrastructure, is presented below in Figure 2:

**Figure 2.** Model of infrastructure and tourist attractions.

<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Dimension</b>
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**Source:** Own elaboration (2024).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the processing of the information collected, the results are obtained in two ways:

First, the quantitative-correlational analysis using Pearson's coefficient and, second, the descriptive presentation of the variables that identified the consumer profile.

Table 1 below shows the quantitative-correlational results, presenting the objectives and working hypotheses, the quantitative values of Pearson's coefficient, and the coefficient of determination, which will subsequently be interpreted and validated.

**Table 1.** Interpretation of results.

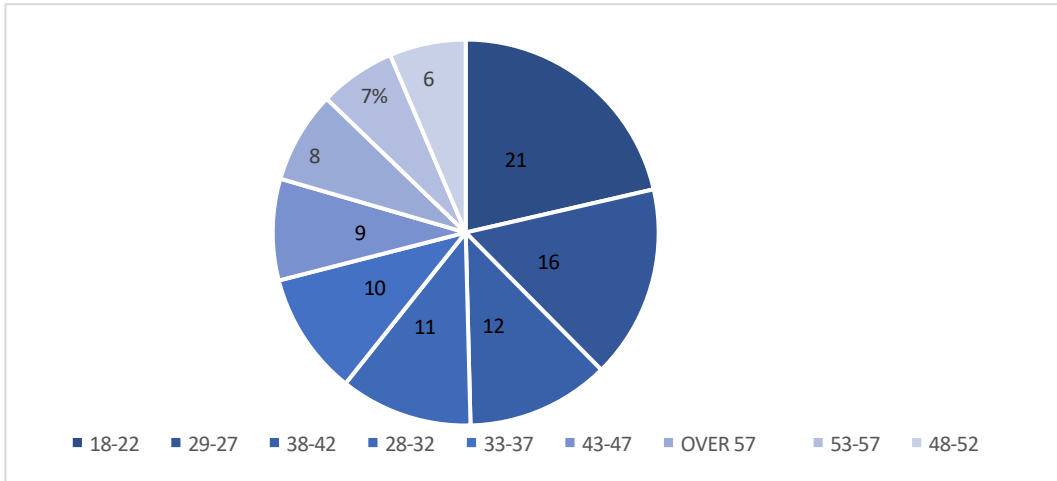
Objectives and hypotheses	Results	Comments
<p>O1: Determine the relationship between tourism infrastructure and the CD of Puebla as short-stay tourism.</p> <p>H1: Tourism infrastructure has a direct and positive relationship with short-stay tourism in the CD of Puebla.</p>	<p>Pearson's coefficient equal to 0.42 and the coefficient of determination equal to 0.1764</p>	<p>Tourism infrastructure explains 42% of the variation in Puebla's CD as short-stay tourism. The correlation between the variables is moderately positive and, therefore, H1 is accepted, demonstrating a causal relationship in which tourism infrastructure has a direct and positive impact on Puebla's CD as short-stay tourism.</p>
<p>O2: Determine the relationship between tourist attractions and Puebla's CD as short-stay tourism.</p> <p>H2: Tourist attractions have a direct and positive relationship with short-stay tourism in the CD of Puebla.</p>	<p>Pearson's coefficient equal to 0.78 and coefficient of determination equal to 0.6084</p>	<p>Tourist attractions explain 78% of the variation in the organization focused on Puebla as a short-stay tourist destination. The correlation is highly positive and, therefore, H2 is accepted, demonstrating a causal relationship in which tourist attractions have a direct causal relationship</p> <p>direct relationship and</p>

		positive relationship for short-stay tourism in the CD of Puebla.
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**Source:** Own elaboration (2024)

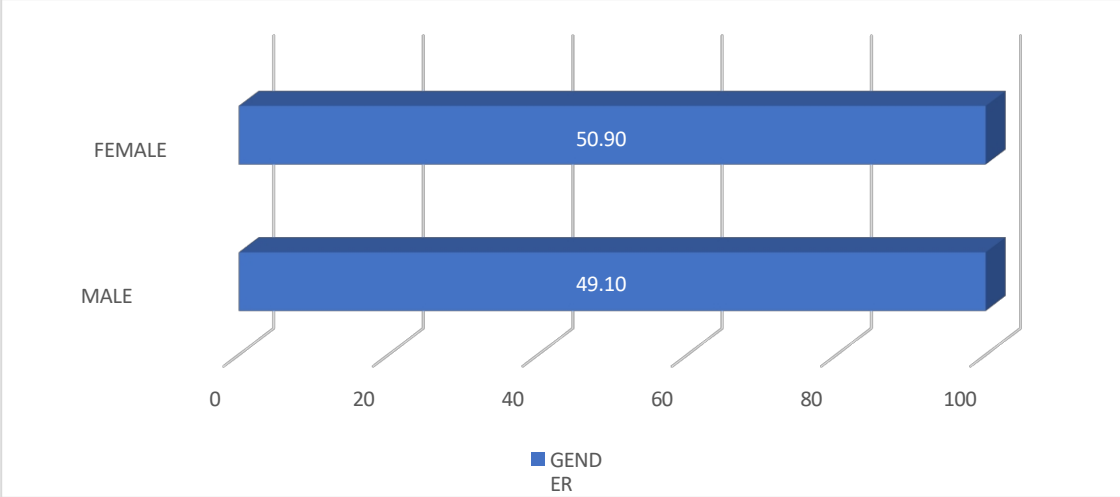
This study analyzes demographic data to provide a deeper understanding of the results obtained. The demographic variables examined include age, gender, reasons for visiting, place of origin, frequency of visits, educational level, travel companions, and type of accommodation, which characterize the profile of tourists visiting Puebla. These variables are presented in Figures 1 to 9, providing a detailed representation of the demographic profile of visitors.

**Graph 1.** Age range.



The predominant age range visiting the city of Puebla is between 18 and 22 years old, followed by 27 to 29 years old, while the age range that visits the least is between 53 and 57 years old (Graph 1).

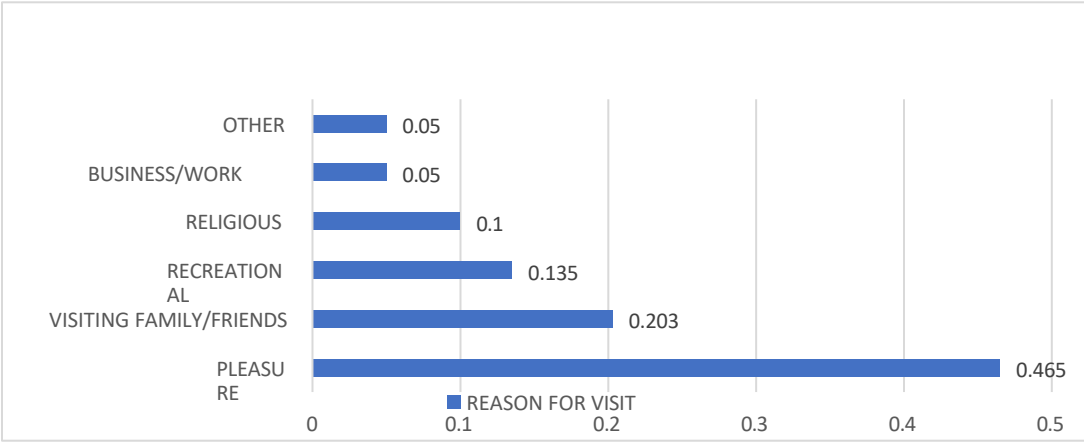
**Graph 2. Gender.**



**Source:** Own elaboration.

In terms of gender, the majority are female (50.9%), while males represent a lower percentage (49.1%) (Graph 2).

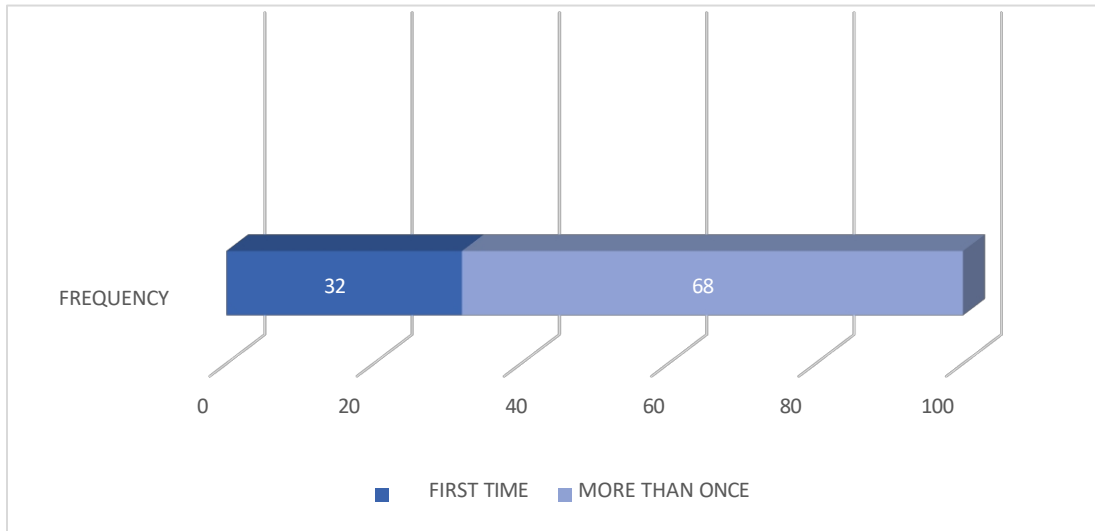
**Graph 3. Reason for visit.**



**Source:** Own elaboration.

In terms of the reason for visiting, it was found that most tourists travel for pleasure and/or to visit family/friends, with business or work being the least frequent reason (Figure 3).

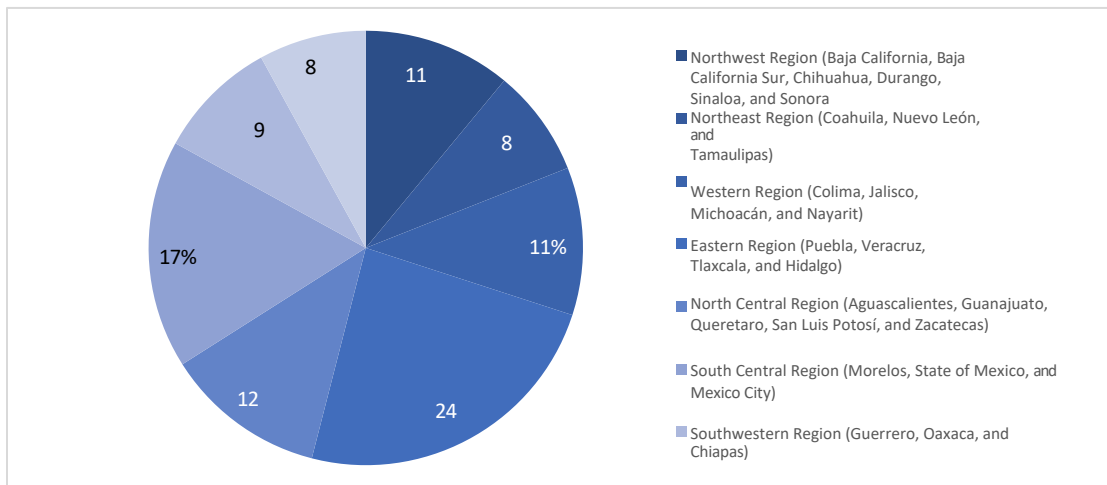
**Graph 4.** Frequency of visits.



**Source:** Own elaboration.

Regarding the frequency of visits, most tourists had previously visited the city of Puebla, while only 32% were visiting the city for the first time. (Graph 4).

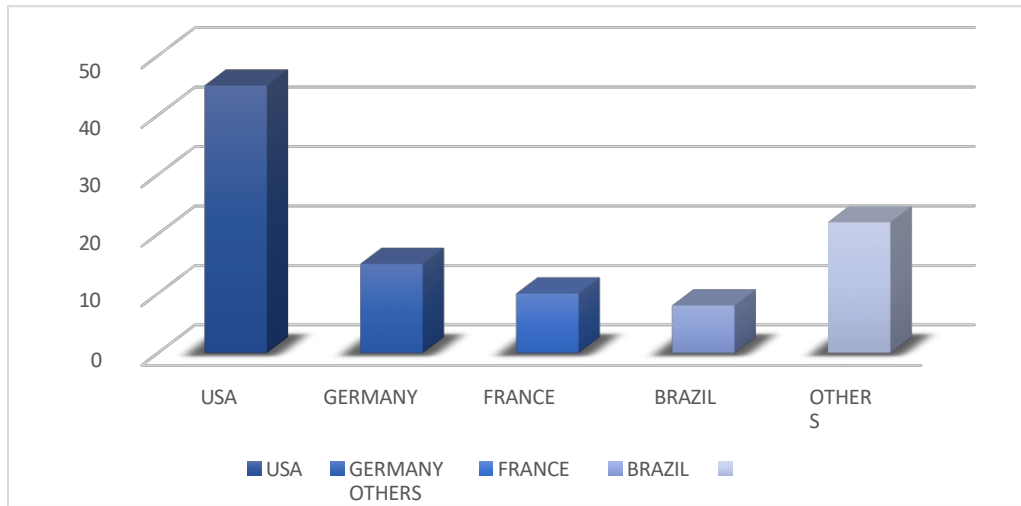
**Graph 5.** Domestic tourists.



**Source:** Own elaboration.

Domestic tourists mainly come from the eastern region of the country, which includes states such as Puebla, Veracruz, Tlaxcala, and Hidalgo (Figure 5).

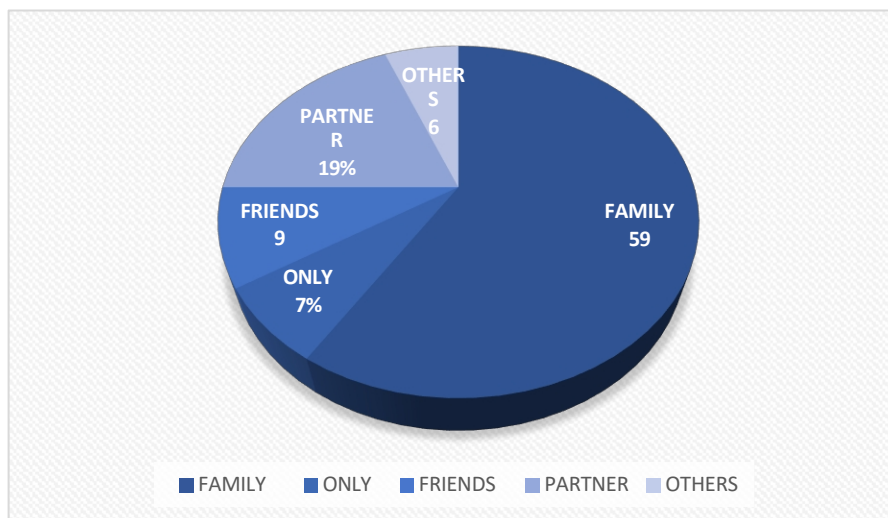
**Graph 6. International Tourists.**



**Source:** Own elaboration.

When it comes to international visitors, the vast majority come from the United States, while the country that sends the fewest visitors to Puebla is Brazil (Figure 6).

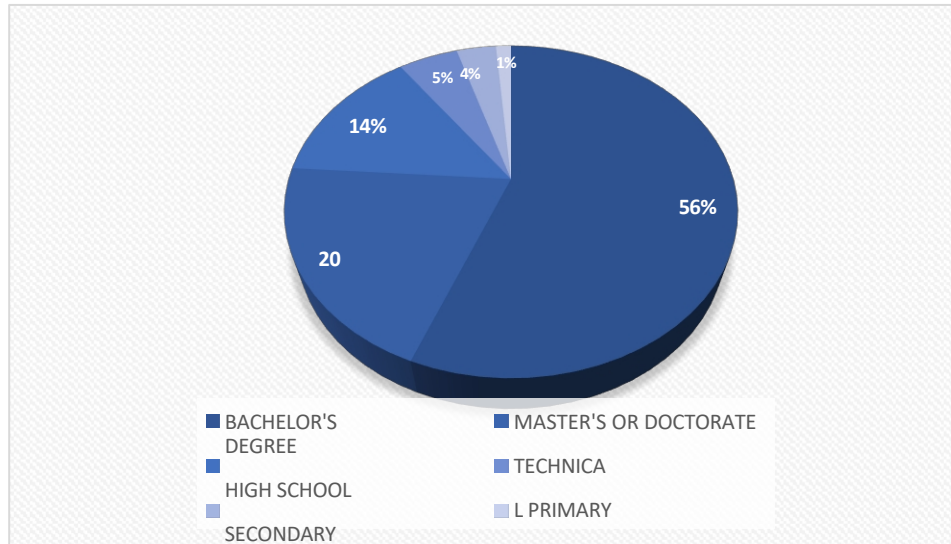
**Graph 7. Who they travel with.**



**Source:** Own elaboration.

As for tourists visiting Puebla, the vast majority tend to do so with their family or partner, and a small percentage travel alone (Figure 7).

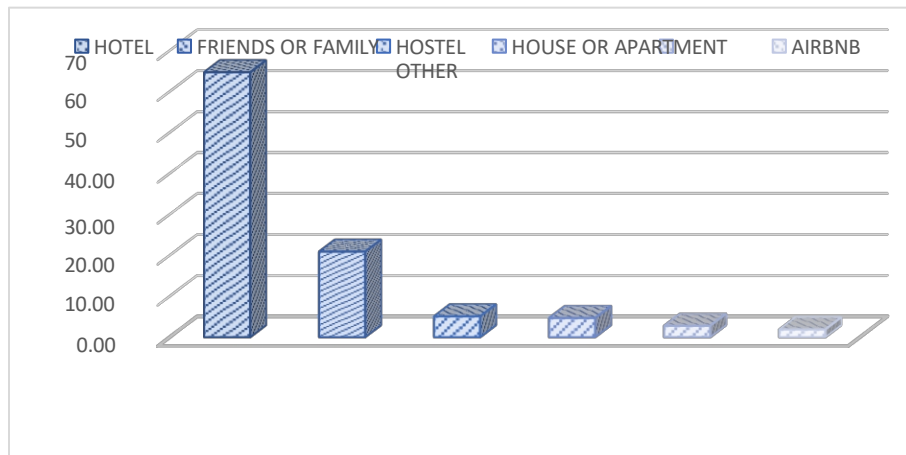
**Graph 8.** Level of education.



**Source:** Own elaboration.

Most tourists who visit Puebla have a bachelor's degree, followed by a master's or doctorate, while a minority have only completed primary school (Figure 8).

**Graph 9.** Type of accommodation.



**Source:** Own elaboration.

Tourists mainly stay in commercial hotels or with family/friends, and to a lesser extent through digital platforms such as AIRBNB (Graph 9).

## DISCUSSIONS

The results of this research are highly relevant for the academic community, professionals, companies, and service providers in the tourism sector, as they contribute to understanding the structure of knowledge related to tourism infrastructure and attractions, as well as their impact on short stays at a destination. In particular, this study contributes new knowledge to the academic literature on the factors that determine short stays at a tourist destination, given that there are few previous bibliometric studies that analyze the infrastructure and tourist attractions of short stays.

As for the objective of determining whether tourist infrastructure and attractions are related to short stays by tourists in the city of Puebla, it is noted that this is achieved by finding a positive relationship. The causal hypothesis proposed is that "tourist infrastructure and attractions have a positive and direct relationship with short stays by tourists in the city of Puebla."

On the other hand, the research shows that the academic study of short-stay tourism in the city of Puebla is due to various factors, such as tourists' desire for a quick and meaningful experience, as they can find both colonial and modern contexts due to its rich history and its ability to fuse the old with the contemporary.

The city was founded in 1531 and has a historic center full of colonial architecture and a large number of buildings from the viceregal era, such as churches, convents, museums, and mansions that bear witness to the colonial era, which earned it the title of "World Heritage City" by UNESCO on December 11, 1987.

On the other hand, the city has grown and modernized over the years and has experienced significant expansion in the southern area with the construction of new neighborhoods, subdivisions, shopping centers, hotels, restaurants, businesses, and universities (López, 1997).

In the city of Puebla, it is important to note that during the six-year period from 2010 to 2016, the state government carried out various projects that supported new tourist attractions to increase tourism in the city, such as: La Noria (Estrella de Puebla), Paseo del

Cable car, parks: Linear Park, Ecological Park, Children's Park, Paseo de los Gigantes Park, Metropolitan Ecopark, and the creation of new and remodeled museums (Sixth Report of the Puebla Government, 2017). Given this new face of tourism offered to visitors to the city, and according to average stay data, there was an increase and an average of 1.96 nights. However, in contrast to the current documented results, the last five years have seen a decline in length of stay, and currently in 2024, it stands at 1.88 nights, so it is still considered a city of passage (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Average length of stay of tourists in Puebla Capital.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Stay	1.96	1.94	1.92	1.82	1.73	1.75	1.81	1.88

**Source:** (Secretary of Tourism, Government of Puebla, 2024).

Likewise, the results agree with Chen and Tsai (2007), who point out that the image of the destination and evaluative factors influence tourists' behavioral intentions. In the case of short stays, it has been shown that a positive image of the destination and a favorable evaluation of previous experiences significantly influence tourists' decisions when choosing a destination for a short visit.

In this regard, the city of Puebla, according to Chang, Florio, and Erin (2017) in *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine, is positioned as an attractive short-stay destination thanks to its proximity to the country's capital and the advantage of avoiding the hustle and bustle of a megalopolis. However, this also limits the length of stay, as tourists do not feel the need to stay more than one night due to the proximity and ease of transportation.

This reinforces the positive and favorable image of the city of Puebla as a tourist destination, allowing visitors to enjoy attractive and memorable experiences during their short stay.

One of the most notable religious tourist attractions is La Capilla del Rosario (2021), a jewel of New Spanish Baroque architecture in Mexico, which stands out for its majestic decoration, crafted in gold, and impressive structure and design, which is why it was once considered the "eighth wonder of the world." Another point of interest is the Cathedral of Puebla (2024), located in the historic center of the city, its

Baroque architecture stands out for its two imposing towers, built between the 16th and 17th centuries during the episcopate of Juan de Palafox y Mendoza. In terms of historical tourism, the following stand out: the Forts of Loreto and Guadalupe (2024), built as military structures in 1815 and used to fight several battles, including the most important one on May 5, 1862. Finally, among the new leisure and entertainment attractions, the Estrella de Puebla (2023) stands out. This is a tourist Ferris wheel inaugurated in 2013 and considered the largest in the world in its category, surpassing the Rueda de la Fortuna in Aztlán Park in Mexico City and the Sky Wheel in Cancún.

Based on the results of the research, it is recommended to diversify the tourist attractions of the city of Puebla to enhance its potential as a destination, reducing dependence on historical, cultural, and religious tourism by promoting complementary experiences that enrich visitors' stays. It is also suggested that this study be replicated in other holiday periods and that the analyses be segmented according to different tourist profiles in order to deepen the understanding of their preferences and behaviors, thus strengthening tourism development strategies.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In this context, the city of Puebla, despite its historical and cultural wealth, continues to be considered a short-stay destination, with an average of 1.79 nights per tourist in 2024 (State Information System, 2024). Visitors typically stay between one and two nights in the city and, on the third night, travel to peripheral tourist destinations. This is largely due to the fact that the state has 12 Pueblos Mágicos (Magical Towns), ranking first nationally alongside the State of Mexico and Jalisco.

On the other hand, its proximity to Mexico City and other entities such as Tlaxcala, Oaxaca, and Veracruz facilitates the mobility of tourists, who prefer to distribute their stay among different destinations rather than concentrating solely on the capital of Puebla. Another factor influencing the short duration of visits is the perception that the city's main attractions can be seen in a few days, which reinforces the trend toward short stays.

Although Puebla has significant historical and cultural wealth, the lack of diversification in its tourist offer, compared to destinations that combine attractions

natural attractions, adventure, and nightlife, limits its ability to retain tourists for longer periods. As a result, the city remains a short-stay destination within the regional tourist circuit.

Finally, tourism in the city of Puebla continues to be characterized by its historical and cultural wealth, making it an attractive destination for those interested in colonial heritage and Baroque art. However, the lack of a more diversified offer of non-compact tourist attractions, including ecotourism, adventure, and nightlife, may limit the length of stay of visitors and cause them to prefer other destinations with more varied activities.

The perception of Puebla as an ideal destination for short breaks or weekend getaways, facilitated by its high accessibility, consolidates the trend towards short trips, which could significantly influence long-term sustainable tourism development.

### **FUTURE WORK**

It is proposed to develop a strategic plan for tourism diversification for the city of Puebla, with the aim of increasing the average length of stay of visitors and strengthening its position as a competitive destination. The work would seek to expand the tourism offer through experiences that integrate culture, ecotourism, gastronomy, religious tourism, adventure, and nightlife.

In addition, there are plans to create tourist circuits connecting the capital with its Pueblos Mágicos (Magical Towns) and natural attractions, promoting a sustainable and inclusive model that involves local communities and the private sector. This proposal would allow tourists to stay longer, diversify the local economy, and promote sustainable tourism development.

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**COLLABORATIVE WORK TABLE**

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Methodology	Maret Guadalupe Sánchez Carrillo, Ramón Sebastián Acle Mena.
Writing-Revision and editing	Jordy Axel Benítez Meléndez, Alfonso Abraham Nava Leal, Ramón Sebastián Acle Mena.
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Supervision	Vidal Armas Torres, Ramón Sebastián Acle Mena.