

TOURISM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Learning to Enterprise Goiás Project

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ABSTRACT

The project Aprender para Empreender Goiás (Learning to Enterprise Goiás) was jointly created by the Tourism course students and the teacher advisor in February 2017, aiming to attend the Entrepreneurship course. The duration of the project is one semester. This research sought to use the project as an analytical instrument for the fifth period students who are in the Technology in Tourism Management Course of the Universidade Estadual de Goiás (State University of Goiás), Campus Cora Coralina, in Goiás. During the practical observation of the project, it was possible to promote the understanding between academics and businesspersons of the tourism sector in order to enable exchanges of knowledge and experiences. As a methodological resource, the participant observation made it possible to carry out the research and the data collection presented here, and it occurred during the project stages between February and March of this year. In order to understand the relationship between tourism and entrepreneurship, the fundamental authors were Chiavenato (2012); Dolabela (1999); Carneiro (2010), among others.

Keywords: Goiás. Tourism. Entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Chiavenato (2012) the term "entrepreneur" – from the French language - means the one who takes risks and starts something entirely new. It refers to visionary people who create new businesses from opportunities not yet identified by others. They are individuals with the courage to take risks and take on the market by making their dreams come true. Dolabela (1999: 31) asserts that entrepreneurship is:

[...] comes from people's habits, practices and values. There are families who are more entrepreneurial than others, as well as cities, regions, and countries. In fact, one learns to be an entrepreneur by living with other entrepreneurs [...] the entrepreneur learns in an atmosphere of emotion and is able to assimilate the experience of others.

Entrepreneurship can be understood as a cultural phenomenon guided by the practices and habits of entrepreneurs who function as inspiration and influence for other individuals who seek to make their dream of innovation real. Filion (1991) confirms this idea by stating that most large-scale entrepreneurs were strongly influenced by previous generations who successfully undertook new businesses.

The Tourism course from the State University of Goiás/ Câmpus Cora Coralina stands for the need and support of the general interest in arousing, encouraging, developing and strengthening the entrepreneurial spirit in the organizations and people that contribute to the country's socio-economic development. For Chiavenato (2012, p.3), the entrepreneur:

[...] provides the energy that moves the whole economy, leverages changes and transformations, produces new ideas, dynamics, creates jobs and boosts talent and skills. Moreover, he is the one who sniffs out, locates and quickly seizes the chance opportunities that appear at random and without warning, before other adventurers do.

In this way, the Entrepreneurship subject of the Tourism Course from the Cora Coralina Campus sought to bring the student closer to the reality and practice lived in the city of Goiás through an action called "Learning to Enterprise Goiás", which brought to the University the presence of micro and small-scale businessmen who have had the boldness and attitude in gastronomy to have made a living out of their own business.

The city of Goiás was the state capital for more than two hundred years. Only in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s did the city have its first monument preservation orders. Carneiro (2010: 54) states that "[...] in 1950, some isolated real estate began to be listed by the Historical Patrimony, and in the 70's, the architectonic set of Goiás received a preservation order, and so the center of the city became a National Historic and Artistic Patrimony"

The Portal of the city of Goiás (2017) affirms that tourism has increased since Goiás received the title of World Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 2001. Counting on a considerably greater flow of tourists and visitors into the city of Goiás, a Cultural and Gastronomic Tourism itinerary arises. According to the Tourism Observatory, the tourist focus set in greater numbers in the house of poetess Cora Coralina, which was transformed into a museum after her death in 1985.

Faced with the increase in tourist flow, many businessmen with entrepreneurial vision detected new opportunities. New businesses were started in several segments, focusing on gastronomy, tourism in natural areas and local handicrafts. Carneiro (2010, p.55) points out that "People go out in search of nature, where they find natural environments, the green, the mountains, the rivers, the waterfalls [...] They seek not only nature but other cities, mainly from the interior, fleeing from urban centers and attracted by the exotic [...]"

By realizing the region's tourist potential, the action "Learn to Enterprise Goiás" emerged. Setting the theme, the students found motivation to learn from practice with micro and small-scale businesspersons in the city who had entrepreneurship as a basis for managing business activities directed to the local community and to tourism.

The "Learning to Enterprise" occurred in March at the State University of Goiás, Campus Cora Coralina, when businesspersons from the gastronomy sector who stand out for making a difference in the economy of the region were invited to a meeting.

The first guests were the business owners of Café and Bistro - Dedo de Prosa and Hostel Dedo de Prosa. These women were searching for a higher quality of life, and wanted to escape from the chaos of the big city. Their friends moved into the city of Goiás, where the idea of setting up a cafeteria came up, since there was demand in the city, and a failure in segments of this type. Soon after, the place turned into a Bistro. By observing a niche in the market for a more financially accessible means of lodging, they created the Hostel Dedo de Prosa, which already has a great rating on sites like booking.com, achieved by the offered service, comfort and fair price. Now, both the Hostel and the Café have become important to foster local tourism and are part of a Trade that has been updating itself more and more in search of success in the area.

The next guest was the owner and chef of the bar and restaurant Lago das Acácias. Alumin from the Tourism course of the State University of Goiás Campus Cora Coralina in 2012, after finishing the course, he succeeded in putting together the obtained information along with his experience and knowledge, starting his own bar and restaurant. Inspired by a beautiful sunset, the businessman thought of sharing it with more people, in a place where his customers could also enjoy meals.

The third entrepreneur explained about his experience abroad, when he immigrated to Europe in his youth, and earned a qualification as a gastronomist. There he lived for eleven years working in a large franchise of Italian restaurants. Upon returning to Brazil, he concentrated his knowledge on Brazilian dishes, opening his restaurant and pizzeria. The shortage of labor is a challenge for him, he finds it difficult to set up a team that meets his demands, but he still aims to overcome this. He also comments on the public policies deficiency, which is supposed to be directed at the tourist demand and only ends up frustrating the entrepreneurs.

Concluding the first stage of the project, we received the participation from the owner of the Spa and Club Santo Antônio. He and his wife inherited part of the farm from their parents and realized, by being there at that place, at the foot of the Serra Dourada, that this

was the opportunity to enjoy the natural resources by promoting ventures. Consequently, they founded the resort 20 years ago. Recently they realized the opportunity to expand the business with the Restaurant named “De Olho na Serra” and also the Farm called “Quinta Pousada Ecológica”.

Finally, the students drew up a report on each venture. The main result was the students' learning by the exchange of experiences that provided a greater vision of the gastronomic market and its ventures. In order to increase the assertiveness of the action, some suggestions will be proposed as a way to influence new ventures and obtain lasting results:

- It is proposed to the Tourism Management Course/ Campus Cora Coralina to become responsible for continuing with the "Learn to Enterprise Goiás" action, broadening the debate space and the possibility of experience exchanges between other branches of tourism (such as lodging, museums and handicrafts)
- It is suggested a link strengthening the Superior Tourism Management Course from the Campus Cora Coralina and the businessmen from the various branches of Tourism so that they are always available to receive the students in their establishments, both for technical visits and for a brief insertion into the working environment. In this way, students can learn how it works, the practice and dynamics of each business by expanding knowledge beyond theory;
- Encourage academics and teachers to promote a business generation in the community and region by means of the Incubators Program of the State University of Goiás (UEG), through the feasibility study and the market applicability of new tourist enterprises,
- To legitimize the action Learning to Enterprising Goiás, it is proposed to the students involved in the creation of the project an orientation directed to the participating entrepreneurs of the Business Plan applicability and the Benchmarking techniques. This kind of technique is a tool that is widely used as a management tool, in situations like comparing competing products and services and creating new ideas for their own business from the observation and information exchange.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the end of the first stage of the project it was possible to perceive different views of the segment, but with different service and public. Although all entrepreneurs deal with the gastronomic line, each one has its own way of presenting its product, causing an effect even more interesting on the project, that's because the forms of approach and marketing are differentiated and this is what makes the entrepreneurs see themselves as partners and not opponents.

By the Learning to Enterprise project it was possible to highlight the city's tourism potential and the capable professional's skills of meeting the needs of the market. The lack of skilled manpower causes a deficiency at the enterprises, because the vision of the entrepreneur itself is not enough for his business to reach success. All entrepreneurs have had course qualifications, and they expect the same from their employees, in order to develop more adequately the skills and competences necessary. The interviewed businesspersons can be considered entrepreneurs, because they left their comfort zone and went after their dreams, found a specialty and became references in the city of Goiás.

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