



The Intersection of Pedagogy and Management in Tourism: A Proposal for a FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM ROUTES EDUCATIONAL IN AGENCIES AND OPERATORS

THE INTERSECTION OF PEDAGOGY AND MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM: A PROPOSAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL TOURISM ITINERARIES IN AGENCIES AND OPERATORS

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SUMMARY

Contemporary tourism transcends mere leisure activity, presenting a latent potential for holistic human development. However, the tourism agency and operation sector frequently neglects the pedagogical dimension, focusing on management, logistics, and marketing processes that standardize the experience at the expense of learning. This article investigates the intersection between Pedagogy, with an emphasis on educational tourism, and Agency Management, proposing a theoretical-practical *framework* for the development of educational tourism itineraries. The methodology is based on a qualitative literature review, analyzing the foundations of experiential learning (Dewey) and critical pedagogy (Freire) in contrast to theories of tourism service management (Beni; Krippendorf). It is argued that the fusion of these two areas of training—the manager-pedagogue—is essential to create tourism products that are simultaneously commercially viable and educationally transformative. The study concludes that implementing a structured *framework* not only enhances the quality of the tourism product but also redefines the role of the travel agency as an active promoter of knowledge, responding to a growing demand for purposeful and meaningful travel.

Keywords: Educational Tourism. Tourism Agency Management. Itinerary Design.
Experiential Learning. Pedagogy in Tourism.



ABSTRACT

Contemporary tourism transcends mere leisure activity, presenting a latent potential for integral human formation. However, the tourism agency and operations sector often neglects the pedagogical dimension, focusing on management, logistics, and commercialization processes that standardize the experience at the expense of learning. This article investigates the intersection between Pedagogy, with an emphasis on educational tourism, and Agency Management, proposing a theoretical-practical framework for the development of educational tourism itineraries. The methodology is based on a qualitative bibliographic review, analyzing the foundations of experiential learning (Dewey) and critical pedagogy (Freire) in contrast to theories of tourism service management (Beni; Krippendorf). It is argued that the fusion of these two training areas—the manager-pedagogue—is essential for creating tourism products that are both commercially viable and educationally transformative. The study concludes that the implementation of a structured framework not only qualifies the tourism product but also redefines the role of the travel agency as an active promoter of knowledge, responding to a growing demand for travel with purpose and meaning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of tourism, in its deepest essence, is intrinsically educational, as it exposes the individual to diversity, the unknown, and the Other, displacing them from their usual comfort zone. However, the massification of the travel industry, driven by management models focused on operational efficiency and profit maximization, often stifles this transformative potential. Mass tourism, as criticized by Krippendorf (1989), tends to reduce complex destinations to mere settings for quick consumption, where the traveler becomes a passive spectator of a staged reality, rather than an active participant in a process of discovery.

This gap between the learning potential of travel and the reality of commercial offerings is the central problem that this article aims to investigate, exploring how the management of agencies and tour operators can be restructured. The absence of pedagogical intent in itinerary design is a missed opportunity, not only for the traveler but also for the sustainability of the sector itself, which faces an increasingly critical consumer eager for experiences that add meaning, and not just ephemeral entertainment, to their leisure journey.

This research is justified by the growing demand for purposeful travel, a segment that moves away from consumer tourism and closer to experiential and transformative tourism. In this context, "pedagogical tourism" or "educational tourism" emerges as a high-demand niche.



Added value. However, simply labeling a tour itinerary as "educational" does not guarantee its effectiveness. Specific training in Pedagogy, with an emphasis on educational tourism, offers the theoretical tools to structure a trip not as a set of visits, but as an experiential curriculum. This article argues that integrating this pedagogical competence with training in Tourism Management is key to overcoming the dichotomy between education and commercial viability, a challenge that most traditional agencies fail to address due to a lack of specific technical knowledge on how to merge these two seemingly distinct and sometimes conflicting universes in their primary objectives.

The overall objective of this work is to propose a theoretical and practical *framework* for the development and operation of educational tourism itineraries by agencies and tour operators. Specifically, we aim to: (1) Analyze the fundamentals of experiential pedagogy and its direct applicability in the design of tourist itineraries; (2) Map the challenges of agency management in the commercialization of intangible products with high added value, such as knowledge; (3) Structure the role of the hybrid professional, the "manager-pedagogue," as a central figure in content curation and in mediating the travel experience; and (4) Detail the stages of a management model that integrates pedagogical intentionality from product conception to post-trip evaluation, ensuring that learning objectives are achieved. This proposal aims to fill a gap in the tourism literature, which rarely addresses the practical operationalization of pedagogy on the agency *floor*.

Methodologically, this article constitutes a qualitative and exploratory bibliographic review, of a propositional nature. The research is based, on the one hand, on the pillars of the philosophy of education, notably on the concepts of "experience and education" by John Dewey (1938) and the "pedagogy of autonomy" by Paulo Freire (1996), which defend learning as an act of active construction of reality. On the other hand, it is anchored in classical theories of administration and management of tourism services, such as the structural analysis of Beni (2007) and the concepts of hospitality and customer service. The intersection of these fields will be used to construct an analytical model that, in the end, will result in the proposal of a management *framework*, demonstrating how pedagogical concepts can be translated into clear operational processes for agencies, moving away from abstraction and focusing on practical application.

The main thesis defended is that the future of competitiveness in the travel agency sector no longer lies solely in logistical efficiency or price, but in the ability to offer uniquely transformative experiences. Educational tourism, when structured with pedagogical rigor, ceases to be a niche for school excursions and becomes a powerful tool for continuing education for adults, interest groups, and individual travelers. Simultaneous training in Pedagogy and Tourism Management provides the academic basis for this proposal, allowing the travel agency to reposition itself in the market, not as a mere intermediary of services, but as a curator of knowledge and a facilitator of meaningful learning processes, humanizing tourism practice and reclaiming its emancipatory potential. What is being discussed is that...



The proposal represents a paradigm shift in how tourism products are conceived, managed, and delivered.

This article is structured in seven subsequent sections, in addition to this introduction and conclusion. The second section will delve into the fundamentals of experiential pedagogy applied to the context of tourism. The third section will discuss the traditional challenges of agency management in standardizing services and the difficulty of product innovation. The fourth section will conceptually define educational tourism, differentiating it from adjacent practices. The fifth and sixth sections will address the practical aspects of itinerary design, focusing on the role of the tour guide as a mediator and in content curation. The seventh section will formally present the proposed *framework*. Finally, the conclusion will synthesize the arguments, reiterating the viability of the fusion between management and pedagogy as a competitive and sustainable differentiator for the sector.

The relevance of this discussion intensifies in a post-pandemic scenario, where the search for meaningful travel and the appreciation of authentic and educational experiences have reached a new level. The contemporary traveler doesn't just want to "see"; they want to "understand." Travel agencies that fail to adapt to this demand for depth, remaining in a purely logistical management model, risk becoming obsolete. This work offers a path for tourism managers to use their technical training in hospitality and events as a platform to go further, applying pedagogical principles to radically transform the customer experience, building loyalty through intellect and emotion, and not just through price or convenience, inaugurating a new phase in the management of tourism services.

2. FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PEDAGOGY OF EXPERIENCE AND ITS APPLICATION IN TOURISM

The idea that travel educates is as old as the history of Western thought itself, from the "Grand Tour" of the European aristocracy to philosophical journeys. However, the formalization of this intuition into a structured pedagogical practice finds its most solid foundations in the work of John Dewey. For Dewey (1938), education is not a preparation for life; it is life itself. He proposes a radical break with the "banking" model of education—a term later popularized by Freire (1987)—where knowledge is passively deposited in the student. Dewey argues that real learning only occurs through "experience," a continuous process of interaction between the individual and the environment. This experience, to be educational, needs two qualities: continuity (an experience must modify future experiences) and interaction (the objective environment and the subjective conditions of the learner merge). Tourism, by definition, is one of the most powerful forms of interaction with new environments, offering a living laboratory for the direct application of these concepts.



The challenge of applying Dewey to managed tourism lies in the crucial distinction he makes between an "experience" and an "educational experience." A visit to a museum, for example, can be chaotic, confusing, and meaningless if the traveler lacks the context or guidance to process the information; it is an experience, but not necessarily an educational one.

For a visit to be educational, it needs to be mediated and structured. This is where training in Pedagogy becomes vital for the tourism manager. The design of an educational itinerary cannot be just a list of places; it must be a sequence of *problematizations*. The traveler should not go to a historical center merely to "see" the colonial architecture, but to be guided to *question* the social, economic, and power relations that that architecture represents, connecting the visible past to the lived present, in a clear exercise of continuity of experience.

Paulo Freire (1996), although focused on adult literacy, offers the second pillar of support for educational tourism: the pedagogy of autonomy and problematization. Freire argues that "teaching is not transferring knowledge, but creating the possibilities for its own production or construction." Applying this maxim to the management of tourist itineraries, the role of the tour guide, when imbued with a pedagogical function, ceases to be that of a mere transmitter of dates and facts (the "Wikipedia guide"). They become a mediator, a provocateur of questions. Instead of simply "pointing out" a monument, the pedagogical guide questions the group: "Why is this monument here? Who does it honor? And, more importantly, who does it *not* honor?" This approach transforms the passive visit into an act of critical reading of the world, aligning tourist practice with an objective of intellectual and social emancipation.

Implementing a Freirean pedagogy in commercial tourism requires managers to have the courage to break with the comfort of purely entertainment tourism. Entertainment seeks immediate gratification; education seeks transformation, and transformation can be uncomfortable. A pedagogical itinerary on the history of Brazil, for example, should include not only palaces and churches, but also places of memory related to slavery, slave markets, and areas of resistance. Traditional agency management, focused on avoiding conflict, might see this as a "risk" to leisure. Pedagogical management, however, understands that cognitive conflict and critical reflection are precisely the *objective* of the educational experience, generating added value that sun and beach tourism can never offer, building customer loyalty through the impact of reflection.

The pedagogy of experience also redefines travel evaluation. In a traditional management model, success is measured by immediate satisfaction metrics (KPIs providing *feedback* on the hotel, transportation, punctuality). In a pedagogical management model, these metrics are important but insufficient. Evaluation needs to measure *learning*. The manager-pedagogue should create mechanisms (such as travel journals, end-of-day discussion groups, or post-trip projects) that allow the traveler to articulate what they learned, how the trip changed their perspective, and how they will apply this knowledge. This shift in evaluative focus, from satisfaction to...



This transformation is the ultimate proof that the program fulfilled its educational purpose and was not merely a succession of well-managed leisure events.

Resistance to this approach in the travel agency sector often stems from the false dichotomy between "education" (seen as serious and tedious) and "tourism" (seen as light and fun). Training as a Tourism Technician, with an emphasis on events and hospitality, offers precisely the bridge to break this myth. The pedagogy of experience is not synonymous with a tiresome lecture; it is, par excellence, an active methodology (MORAN, 2017). Learning can and should be playful, based on games, observational challenges, and dynamic interactions with the local community. The tourism manager with pedagogical training is the ideal professional to *orchestrate* this experience, using hospitality techniques to create a safe and welcoming environment where critical learning can flourish in a pleasurable way.

Therefore, the foundations of Dewey's pedagogy of experience and Freire's critical pedagogy are not merely philosophical abstractions; they are practical guidelines for the design of innovative tourism products. They demand that agency management evolve. The manager ceases to be a "package seller" and becomes an "architect of learning journeys." They need to understand less about *check-in* and more about resumes, less about pure logistics and more about andragogy (the science of how adults learn). Technical training in tourism and management provides the "how to do it," but it is pedagogy that provides the "why to do it," justifying the value of the itinerary and creating true competitive differentiation in the saturated travel market.

3. Challenges of Agency Management in Standardization and Innovation of PRODUCTS

The management of travel agencies operates under a fundamentally challenging paradigm: the administration of intangible services. Unlike a manufactured product, a trip is a promise, an experience that begins to be consumed at the moment of consultation and only concludes after the traveler's return. This intangible, perishable, and variable character (since the same trip can be perceived differently by different people) imposes a central dilemma on management: the pursuit of standardization. Standardization, in the classic management model, is the key to efficiency, cost reduction, and quality assurance. In tourism, however, excessive standardization risks "pasteurizing" the experience, transforming unique destinations into interchangeable *commodities*. The tourism manager is therefore forced to balance the need for efficient operational processes (reservations, ticketing, logistics) with the demand for authentic and personalized experiences, a balance that purely procedural management fails to achieve and that requires a humanistic sensitivity, often neglected by traditional technical training.

In response to this variability, the tourism industry has invested heavily in global distribution systems (GDS), such as Sabre, Amadeus, and Travelport, and in management systems.



Property Management Systems (PMS) and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). These tools, while essential for operations and administrative management, have paradoxically solidified the commoditization of the sector. When all agencies access the same inventory (flights, hotels, rentals) and use the same tools, the only differentiating variable visible to the consumer becomes price. Even with a strategic vision, agency managers often find themselves trapped in a "price war," where their primary function is reduced to that of a reservation system operator focused on dwindling margins. Product innovation (the design of unique itineraries) becomes a secondary luxury, as daily survival depends on transactional efficiency—a cycle that drains resources that could be allocated to research and development of higher value-added educational experiences.

Product innovation in tourism still faces a structural barrier: the ease of replication. A tour itinerary, however carefully researched and designed, is essentially an idea, a sequence of places and activities. Once launched on the market, a competitor can easily copy the itinerary, capitalizing on the innovator's intellectual investment and research without incurring the same development costs. This "leakage" of intellectual property discourages deep innovation. The traditional tourism manager, trained to focus on tangible assets and defensible processes, hesitates to invest in creating complex educational itineraries. True innovation, however, does not reside in the *itinerary* (the "what"), but in the *pedagogical mediation* (the "how"), an intangible service layer based on guide training and content curation, which is much more difficult to replicate and depends on management focused on human capital development, not just service logistics.

Traditional technical training in tourism and hospitality, with its emphasis on customer service and events, contributes to a management model focused on excellence in the "container," but often neglecting the "content." Agency managers are trained to guarantee the quality of hospitality: punctual *transfers*, quick *check-in*, comfortable seating at events, clean hotel rooms. These are undeniably crucial factors for customer satisfaction. However, in educational tourism, these are hygiene factors, not the main product. The main product is learning, *insight*, transformation. Traditional management fails by treating visits to museums or historical sites as a logistical item on the itinerary *checklist*, when in fact this should be the central activity, carefully designed and pedagogically mediated, requiring the manager to possess skills that go beyond simply organizing events or managing hotels.

Another significant challenge for pedagogical innovation within agencies is the training structure of the sales and customer service teams themselves. Travel consultants are, as a rule, exhaustively trained in reservation systems and sales techniques focused on immediate conversion. They are encouraged to sell the available "package," the standardized product that generates quick commissions, and not to engage the client in a deep dialogue to understand their learning needs. For educational tourism to thrive, the manager needs



Transform your team of "salespeople" into "pedagogical consultants," professionals capable of diagnosing the client's learning profile and recommending the most appropriate experience. This is a profound cultural shift, requiring management focused on continuous training (andragogy) and incentive systems that value the quality of the consultancy, not just the volume of sales.

Contemporary operating systems, such as CRM and automation tools, which are crucial for managing large volumes of clients, can also impose barriers to the personalization required by educational tourism. An effective educational itinerary is fluid; it must be able to adapt *in real time* to the interests and learning pace of the group. An educational guide may need to alter the route based on an unexpected question or a local event. Management systems, however, thrive on predictability and standardization.

The rigidity of a pre-programmed *voucher* or a property management system (PMS) that does not allow flexibility in the itinerary can stifle the learning experience. The innovative manager must therefore find a balance between using technology for administrative efficiency and ensuring human flexibility in pedagogical execution, ensuring that the system serves the pedagogy, and not the other way around.

Finally, the challenge of marketing a product as complex as educational tourism is substantial. Traditional tourism marketing is visual, focused on the aesthetics of the destination (beaches, monuments) and the promise of leisure and relaxation. Selling "learning" or "critical transformation" is selling a second-order intangible, a benefit that is difficult to capture in a photograph or a short *slogan*. The agency manager needs to develop content marketing strategies, using narratives, testimonials of transformation, and building the intellectual authority (of the guide and the agency) to communicate the value of the educational experience. This difficulty in "tangibilizing the intangible" in a scalable way causes many agencies to retreat to the comfort zone of standardized products, missing the opportunity to lead a rapidly expanding market and to fulfill a deeper social function.

4. CONCEPTUALIZATION AND DELIMITATION OF EDUCATIONAL (OR PEDAGOGICAL) TOURISM

Educational tourism, also referred to in the literature as pedagogical tourism, is frequently misinterpreted, being generically reduced to "school excursions" or graduation trips. This restrictive view ignores the depth and complexity of the concept, limiting its market potential and formative impact. In reality, pedagogical tourism, grounded in specific academic training, is a tourism modality defined by its *intentionality*. Unlike conventional leisure tourism, where learning is an accidental and fortuitous byproduct of the trip, educational tourism is structured with clear, explicit, and measurable learning objectives. It uses geographical displacement and cultural immersion as central tools of a planned experiential curriculum, aiming at the construction of...



of knowledge, the development of skills (cognitive, social and emotional) and the transformation of the traveler's perspective, whether they are a student, an adult in continuing education or a specific interest group.

To academically define Educational Tourism, it is essential to differentiate it from its bordering concepts. "Cultural Tourism," for example, focuses on visiting heritage sites, museums, and artistic events; the traveler is a consumer of culture. "Experiential Tourism" focuses on active participation in local activities (a cooking class, a harvest), aiming for authenticity. Educational Tourism absorbs elements of both, but adds a structural layer: *pedagogical mediation*. It is not enough to "visit" the heritage site (Cultural Tourism) or "do" the activity (Experiential Tourism); there needs to be a facilitated process of critical reflection on the meaning of that visit or activity. Therefore, a tour can only be classified as educational if there is a prior instructional design, defined learning objectives, and a methodology of active mediation during its execution.

The theoretical foundation of this modality rests on the intersection between Pedagogy and Tourism Management. From the Pedagogical perspective, it utilizes active methodologies, where the traveler is the protagonist of their learning, not a spectator. The trip is the "laboratory" where theories (seen before or during the journey) are tested, observed, and problematized in practice, echoing Dewey's (1938) principles on learning through experience. From the Tourism Management perspective, it demands impeccable logistics, not only for comfort (hotel management, transportation), but also to support the pedagogical act; the itinerary must be managed in a way that optimizes time and resources for the learning *focus*, preventing logistical fatigue (a delayed flight, a disorganized *transfer*) from hindering cognitive capacity and the group's willingness to learn.

The scope of Educational Tourism goes far beyond the school environment. While the emphasis on "pedagogical tourism" naturally refers to field study trips (where students apply concepts of geography, history, or biology in the field), its broader application extends to andragogy (adult education). This includes thematic itineraries (e.g., "The Wine Route from the perspective of chemistry and agronomy"), language immersion trips (where language learning is culturally contextualized, and not restricted to the classroom), structured volunteer programs (which require critical reflection on social impact), and even corporate incentive trips designed to develop *soft skills* and leadership through experiential challenges, significantly expanding the potential market for specialized agencies.

One of the biggest misconceptions in agency management is confusing "thematic itinerary" with "educational itinerary." An itinerary about World War II that only takes the traveler to beaches, museums, and memorials is thematic. An *educational* itinerary on the same theme uses these locations as "texts" to be read critically; the guide-mediator will provoke discussions about propaganda, ethics, decision-making, and the contemporary repercussions of the conflict. The management of



This type of trip requires a professional with dual expertise: that of a Tourism Manager, to negotiate with suppliers, ensure safety and logistics, and that of an Educator, to design the narrative and learning arc of the trip, ensuring that the final result is a deeper understanding, and not just a collection of photographs in famous locations.

The definition of Educational Tourism also involves its operational structure, which is inherently more complex. A traditional leisure package can be dynamically assembled by an algorithm, combining flight and hotel. An educational package is handcrafted, even when operated on a large scale. It requires an "Instructional Design" (ID) phase, where the manager-educator defines the target audience, learning objectives, key experiences that will serve as pedagogical anchors, and forms of evaluation. This operational complexity makes it a product that is difficult to replicate (as discussed in the previous item), protecting the innovative agency from commoditization and justifying higher profit margins, aligned with its high added value and its capacity for personal and intellectual transformation of the client.

Therefore, Educational Tourism, as academically defined, is a modality that demands highly specialized agency management. The manager must possess a holistic vision that integrates logistics (Tourism Technician), hospitality (Hotel Management), and human mediation (Tour Guide), but, above all, must subordinate all these competencies to a clear pedagogical intent. It is pedagogy that acts as the "guiding thread" that ties all services together, transforming a set of tourist activities into a cohesive, meaningful, and unique learning experience. Without this explicit pedagogical intent, the trip, however interesting it may be, remains in the realm of cultural leisure, failing to reach the potential of tourism as a tool for formal and informal education.

5. The Tour Guide as a Pedagogical Mediator in the Context of Agency Management

The role of the tour guide is often treated by tour operator management as a logistical-operational resource: the professional responsible for ensuring the itinerary is followed, managing the group's time, resolving emergencies, and providing basic information about the attractions. This view, while functional, drastically underutilizes the potential of this professional, reducing them to a "shepherd" of groups or a "transmitter" of facts. In the context of Educational Tourism, the guide transcends this function. They cease to be an informant and become a *pedagogical mediator*, perhaps the most critical element for the success of the learning experience. Academic training in Pedagogy applied to agency management allows the manager to redesign the *job description* and training of this professional, focusing on facilitation skills, not just information.

Pedagogical mediation, based on Freire (1996), is an act of "unveiling reality" through dialogue. The guide-transmitter points to the Parthenon and says: "This is the Parthenon, built



Built in 447 BC, it was dedicated to the goddess Athena. The guide-mediator, in turn, uses the monument as a starting point for discussion: "Why do you think the Athenians invested so much effort and wealth to build this temple? What message did they want to convey to their rivals? How does this architecture (order, symmetry) reflect what they thought about themselves and the universe?" The agency manager with a pedagogical background understands that the value of the itinerary is not in "seeing the Parthenon," but in *processing* the meaning of the Parthenon. This process requires a guide trained in active methodologies, capable of asking open-ended questions and managing group discussions, instead of reciting a memorized script.

Official training as a Tourist Guide accredited by EMBRATUR, with qualifications for national and international itineraries, provides the technical and ethical foundation for this role. The accreditation guarantees technical knowledge of history, geography, and legislation, which are prerequisites for mediation. However, the pedagogical *framework* proposed in this article requires an additional layer of competence: didactics. The agency manager must, therefore, invest in the continuous training of their guides, not only in "content" (more historical facts), but also in "method" (how to transform facts into questions, how to manage the learning pace of a heterogeneous group, how to use *storytelling* techniques to emotionally engage travelers). This is a direct function of human resource management, essential for delivering the educational tourism product.

Managing the customer experience in an educational itinerary becomes exponentially more complex. The agency manager needs to give autonomy to the guide-mediator. Unlike a standardized itinerary, where the guide must rigidly adhere to the schedule (*pick-up* at 9:00 am, museum at 9:30 am, lunch at 12:00 pm), the educational itinerary requires flexibility. If a discussion at the museum deepens and the group demonstrates high engagement, the guide-mediator should have the decision-making power, conferred by management, to extend that activity, even if it means adjusting the rest of the schedule. This "managed flexibility" is a nightmare for traditional operational management, but it is the essence of student-centered (traveler-centered) learning, requiring a relationship of absolute trust between the manager (in the office) and the educator (in the field).

In this model, the tour guide also acts as the main formative assessment agent.

Traditional management collects *feedback* at the end of the trip through satisfaction surveys (focused on the hotel, the bus, and the guide). The tour guide, on the other hand, conducts evaluations *during the trip*.

The process. He "reads" the group: are the travelers confused? Bored? Engaged? He facilitates "discussion circles" at the end of each day, encouraging the group to articulate what they learned, what surprised them, and what connections they made. This information is vital, not only for the group, but also as a qualitative report for the agency manager, who can use this immediate *feedback* to improve the design of future itineraries, creating a cycle of continuous improvement based on real learning, and not just logistical satisfaction.

Training as a Tourism Technician with an emphasis on customer service complements this vision. Pedagogical mediation can be intellectually challenging and, at times, emotionally uncomfortable, especially when addressing sensitive historical topics. Competence in "hospitality" and "customer service" allows the guide-mediator to create a "psychologically safe environment" where travelers feel comfortable expressing doubts, disagreeing respectfully, and showing vulnerability in the learning process. The guide-pedagogue is not an authoritarian teacher, but a host of knowledge. They welcome the traveler (hospitality) and, within this space of comfort, provoke reflection (pedagogy), ensuring that the experience is both pleasant and profoundly transformative.

Therefore, the management of agencies focused on educational tourism must reposition the tour guide as its main intellectual and pedagogical asset, and not merely as a logistical executor. The manager, informed by pedagogy, becomes a "manager of pedagogical talents," responsible for recruiting, training, and empowering these professionals. The success of the educational itinerary will not be measured by the precision of the clock, but by the quality of the dialogue established between the traveler, the destination, and the mediator. Investing in the pedagogical training of the guide is the only way for the agency to truly deliver on the promise of a trip that teaches one to "read the world," as Freire proposed.

6. The Role of Management in Content Curation and in the Design of the Pedagogical Script

Developing a high-impact educational tourism product requires a fundamental shift in the travel agency's *back office*. The manager's role transcends negotiating with suppliers (hotels, airlines) and assembling logistical itineraries; it evolves into that of a "Content Curator" and "Learning Experience Architect." This is perhaps the most direct application of a degree in Pedagogy to agency management. Just as a teacher plans a school curriculum, the manager-pedagogue must plan the "travel curriculum," defining not only *where to go*, but *why to go* and *what to learn* in each location. This curation process is what differentiates the product from a simple compilation of tourist attractions, transforming it into a cohesive and intentional learning narrative.

The first step in the pedagogical design of a learning plan is the clear definition of learning objectives. Traditional management focuses on "deliverables": "visit the Louvre, climb the Eiffel Tower".

The pedagogical management focuses on "competencies": "At the end of this trip, the traveler should be able to critically analyze the role of art in the representation of political power (Louvre) and understand the impact of technological revolutions on urban architecture (Eiffel Tower)." These objectives, which must be formulated by the pedagogical manager, will guide all subsequent decisions, from the choice of support material sent before the trip to the questions the guide-mediator will ask during the visit. This pedagogical clarity is the foundation that sustains the viability of the product and justifies its added value to the client.



The "Content Curation" process is an intellectually intensive task. The agency manager cannot rely solely on tourist brochures or superficial information available online. They must conduct in-depth research or hire specialists (historians, biologists, art critics) to develop the educational material that will accompany the trip. This material—which may include prior readings, videos, *podcasts*, or structured travel diaries—

It serves to "prepare the traveler's gaze." As Freire (1987) argues, reading the world precedes reading the word; in tourism, prior reading (the word) qualifies the reading of the destination (the world). The agency that invests in this content curation positions itself as an intellectual authority, and not as a mere reseller of services.

Training as a Tourism Technician with an emphasis on event promotion offers a valuable contribution to itinerary design. Experiential learning is not purely intellectual; it is sensory and emotional. The manager-pedagogue must design the "choreography" of the trip, similar to the production of an event. This involves thinking about the "narrative arc" of the itinerary: what is the starting point? What is the climax of the learning? How are the activities sequenced to progressively build knowledge? For example, instead of visiting a museum on the first day (which can be tiring), the itinerary could begin with a sensory immersion activity (a local market, an observation walk) and only then, in the following days, connect this lived experience to the theoretical concepts presented in the museum, respecting the pace of human learning.

Managing the educational itinerary also involves a careful selection of suppliers who are aligned with the educational proposal. The manager will not choose a hotel solely based on price or location (traditional hotel management), but on its ability to *contribute* to the experience.

A historic hotel, a restaurant serving authentic local food (and explaining its origin), or a transportation provider that allows unscheduled stops for sightseeing are preferable. Negotiating with these suppliers changes: the manager is not just buying a "service," but an "educational partnership." The agency that builds this network of aligned suppliers creates a competitive barrier to entry, as its experience becomes unique and difficult for competitors operating on a commoditization basis to replicate.

The itinerary design should explicitly include moments for intellectual "digestion" and reflection. Traditional management, focused on logistical efficiency, tends to create "Fordist" itineraries, packed with activities from dawn to dusk, so that the client feels they "made the most" of their financial investment. Pedagogical management, however, understands that learning doesn't occur during the absorption of information, but during the *processing* of that information. Therefore, the educational itinerary should paradoxically include "structured free time"—designated moments for the traveler to write in their journal, discuss in small groups, or simply sit in a café and reflect on what they saw, allowing the experience to "decant" and transform into real knowledge.



It can be concluded that itinerary design in educational tourism is a highly complex management function, requiring the professional to possess the rare combination of skills of an administrator, an event technician, and an educator. The manager becomes the architect of a three-dimensional curriculum, where the destination is the classroom and the journey is the method. This process of curation and intentional design is the true "heart" of the educational tourism agency; it is its main intellectual asset and the guarantee that the delivered product will, in fact, be a transformative experience, and not just a well-organized leisure trip, thus responding to the demand for tourism with greater depth and meaning.

7. "MANAGER-PEDAGOGUE" **FRAMEWORK** : A PROPOSAL FOR INTEGRATING MANAGEMENT AND PEDAGOGY IN AGENCY

Overcoming the challenges of managing traditional agencies (Item 3) and effectively implementing meaningful educational tourism (Items 4, 5, and 6) requires more than goodwill or the hiring of charismatic guides. It demands a systemic restructuring of the agency's business model. Based on the intersection of academic training in Tourism Management, Pedagogy, and technical skills in guiding and events, an operational *framework* called "Manager-Pedagogue" is proposed here. This model aims to integrate pedagogical intentionality into all five phases of the tourism product lifecycle: Diagnosis, Design (Curatorship), Operation (Mediation), Evaluation, and Marketing. This framework *moves* pedagogy from the realm of ideas to the center of the administrative and strategic operation of the tourism company.

Phase 1: The Pedagogical-Managerial Diagnosis. This phase precedes the creation of the product. The manager-pedagogue doesn't just ask "Which destination is selling well?" (traditional management), but rather "What are the knowledge gaps or human development needs of my target audience that can be met through travel?". This approach, which combines management and pedagogy, uses market research tools to identify "learning needs" (and not just "travel desires"). The diagnosis defines the "Traveler Learning Profile" (TLP), which will inform not only the destination, but also the depth of the content, the level of intellectual challenge, and the tone of the mediation, ensuring that the product is designed for a specific audience with clear objectives.

Phase 2: Curriculum Design and Content Curation. This is the itinerary architecture phase, where agency management merges with the instructional design of pedagogy. The manager-pedagogue acts as a curator, selecting not only logistical providers (hotels, transportation), but mainly "learning objects" (locations, speakers, texts, experiences). Each day of the trip is planned as a "module" of a curriculum, with specific objectives that connect in a larger narrative arc. The *output* of this phase is not a simple itinerary, but a "Pedagogical Itinerary Plan" (PRP), a document that details the logistics, but also the key provocations, the questions to be asked, the active methodologies to be used (e.g., debates, *on-site* case studies) , and the pre-trip support material.



Phase 3: The Mediation-Focused Operation (The Pedagogical Guide). In this phase, the *framework* requires the professional in the field to be more than just a certified guide; they must be a "pedagogical guide." Agency management is responsible for training (or hiring) professionals who master group facilitation, active listening, and teaching skills. The operation is managed with "pedagogical flexibility": the manager (in the *back office*) must empower the guide (in the *front office*) so that they can adapt the script in real time, based on the group's learning pace.

The emphasis of technical event management is used here to ensure that the experience is fluid and engaging, even if intellectually challenging. The focus of the operation shifts from "meeting the schedule" to "achieving the learning objective".

Phase 4: Learning Assessment and the Improvement Cycle. The "Manager-Pedagogue" *framework* revolutionizes travel evaluation. Traditional management measures success through satisfaction KPIs (NPS, *reviews*). This model proposes a two-layer evaluation: (1) **Logistics Satisfaction Assessment** (measuring service efficiency, linked to hotel and transport management) and (2) **Pedagogical Impact Assessment** (measuring transformation). This second layer is implemented through qualitative techniques, such as mediated discussion groups at the end of the trip, analysis of travel diaries, or post-trip *follow-ups* to verify how the traveler applied the acquired knowledge. This qualitative data is more valuable than TripAdvisor *reviews*, as it provides deep *insights* for improving the pedagogical design of the product.

Phase 5: Marketing and Sales Based on Intellectual Value. The marketing of a product developed under this *framework* cannot depend on mass appeal or price wars. The manager must adopt a niche marketing strategy, focused on communicating the *intellectual and transformative value* of the experience. The agency's communication must reflect its pedagogical authority. This involves producing relevant content (articles, lectures, *webinars*), using testimonials of transformation (and not just leisure), and forming a sales team (consultants) that knows how to sell "education" and "personal development," instead of "packages." The price of the educational program is justified by its uniqueness, specialized curation, and lasting impact, not by comparing it to the competition.

Implementing this five-phase *framework* requires a hybrid professional, the "Manager-Pedagogue," whose academic training allows them to move fluently between the rigor of the agency's administrative and financial processes and the human sensitivity of experiential pedagogy.

This model not only responds to the contemporary demand for meaningful travel, but also creates a robust and sustainable competitive advantage. By selling transformation instead of transactions, the travel agency ceases to be a *commodity* intermediary and becomes an experiential education institution, redefining its purpose and value in the market.

The proposed structure aligns all of the author's academic competencies: Pedagogy provides the *soul* and method of the product (Phases 1 and 2); Tourism Management provides the business *structure* and



The feasibility (Phases 1 and 5); the Tourism Technician and Hotel Management ensure smooth *execution* and hospitality (Phase 3); and the Tour Guide is the central agent for value delivery (Phase 3). This integrated model is the practical materialization of the intersection between the two major areas of training, proving that management can be humanized by pedagogy, and pedagogy can be made viable by management.

8. CONCLUSION

This article aimed to investigate the intersection between Pedagogy and Tourism Agency Management, two areas of knowledge that, although frequently treated as separate entities, prove to be profoundly synergistic. The research demonstrated that the tourism industry, historically focused on logistical efficiency and the standardization of services as a way to guarantee quality and profitability, is facing an exhaustion of this model. The commoditization of products (packages, flights, hotels) and the rise of a post-pandemic consumer, who seeks not only leisure but also meaning, transformation, and learning, demand a radical reconfiguration of the role of the agency manager. Traditional technical training in tourism, focused on the operation of systems and the management of events and hospitality, while fundamental for delivering a quality service, proves insufficient to meet this new demand for intellectual and pedagogical depth in travel experiences.

The main contribution of this work was the theoretical articulation that positions Educational (or Pedagogical) Tourism not as a niche restricted to school excursions, but as a central strategy for differentiation and adding value to the travel market as a whole.

It has been argued that applying the fundamentals of experiential pedagogy, notably the concepts of John Dewey (1938) and Paulo Freire (1996), allows tourism managers to redesign their products. The trip ceases to be a set of logistical services and becomes an "experiential curriculum," where the destination is the classroom, and the experience is actively mediated to provoke critical reflection, knowledge construction, and the development of the traveler's autonomy, thus reclaiming the emancipatory potential of the act of traveling.

It has been demonstrated that the challenges of traditional agency management—such as the difficulty of innovation, the ease of replicating itineraries, and the pressure of price wars—can be mitigated through the adoption of a management focused on the intangible: content and mediation. The true competitive advantage lies not in the *itinerary*, which is easily copied, but in the *quality of the pedagogical curation* and the *didactic competence of the guide-mediator*. These elements, when rooted in the agency's culture, create a robust barrier to entry, as they depend on highly qualified human capital and a management vision that values the long term (a



Customer transformation) over the short term (the transaction margin), requiring leadership that deeply understands both processes and people.

The "Manager-Pedagogue" *framework*, structured in five phases (Diagnosis, Design/ Curatorship, Operation/Mediation, Evaluation, and Commercialization), represents the practical synthesis of this academic intersection. The model details how training in Pedagogy and Tourism Management complement each other in administrative practice: pedagogy informs the product *design* and delivery methodology, while management ensures financial viability, operational efficiency, and the correct commercialization of this added value. This *framework* offers a tangible path for travel agencies to reposition themselves in the market, not as mere intermediaries, but as experiential education institutions capable of designing and delivering trips that effectively teach, inspire, and transform their clients.

The role of the tour guide has been repositioned as the central pedagogical asset in this new configuration. The manager-pedagogue, in their role as a people manager, has as their primary task the training and empowerment of this professional, transforming them from a logistical informant into a facilitator of dialogue and a mediator of knowledge. The quality of the learning experience depends directly on the guide's ability to create a safe environment (hospitality) where critical questioning (pedagogy) can flourish. The agency's management must, therefore, invest heavily in the didactic training of its field teams, recognizing them as the front line in delivering intellectual value, and not just operational value.

The research also indicated that technology, although often seen as a standardizing force, can be an ally of educational tourism, as long as it is subordinated to pedagogy.

CRM and Artificial Intelligence tools can be used in the *Diagnostic* phase to identify learning profiles, while *online* platforms can be used in the *Curation* phase to deliver pre-trip content. However, the educational manager must ensure that technology is used to personalize and deepen the experience, and not to stifle the flexibility necessary for the act of learning, which is inherently human, fluid, and sometimes unpredictable, requiring the sensitivity that only human mediation can offer.

It is reiterated that the fusion of Pedagogy with Tourism Management is not merely a theoretical possibility, but a strategic necessity for the survival and relevance of travel agencies in the 21st century. The academic competencies analyzed in this curriculum form the ideal professional profile to lead this transformation. The manager who understands that the greatest value of a trip is not what the client sees, but what they *come to see* after the trip, is truly capable of innovating. This professional no longer sells destinations; they sell new perspectives, a product whose value is inestimable and whose competition is almost nil, guaranteeing the sustainability and purpose of their organization.



It can be concluded, therefore, that the implementation of a pedagogical management approach is the path to the humanization of tourism. It reclaims travel as an act of discovery, not consumption, aligning the agency's commercial success with the human development of its clients. By doing so, the tourism manager fulfills not only their administrative function of generating results, but also their social function as an educator, using the world as a vast classroom and actively contributing to the formation of more conscious, critical, and empathetic individuals, which fully justifies the intellectual and financial investment in this business model.

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