

Organizational agility in the Tourism Sector: Effects of corporate culture on the agile experience

Agilidad Organizacional en el Sector Turismo: Efectos de la cultura empresarial en la experiencia ágil

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to understand the effects of corporate culture on the agile experience of PYMES in the accommodation and food and beverage preparation services of the tourism sector in a city in southern Sonora, in order to contribute to their development and competitiveness. To this end, a quantitative study was developed. The design was non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional. The study subjects were decision-makers at PYMES; the sample was non-probabilistic with a convenience quota. The instrument was applied, data was collected, the correlation between Corporate Culture and Agile Experience was determined, and finally, the results were analyzed and discussed. The conclusion was that the level of adoption of agile organizations was high, and it was determined that corporate culture does positively and significantly affect the agile experience.

Organizational Agility in the Tourism Sector: Effects of Corporate Culture on the Agile Experience		
Objetivo	Methodology	Contribution
To understand the effects of corporate culture on the agile experience of PYMES in the accommodation and food and beverage services sector in a city in southern Sonora.	The instrument was applied, data was collected, the correlation between Business Culture and Agile Experience was determined, and finally the results were analyzed and discussed.	Generate knowledge that serves as a basis for strengthening business culture, improving the agility, innovation capacity, and adaptation of tourism PYMES in the region.

Agility, Tourism, Culture

Resumen

El propósito de la presente investigación, fue conocer los efectos de la cultura empresarial en la experiencia ágil de las PYMES de servicios de alojamiento y preparación de alimentos y bebidas del sector turismo de una ciudad del sur de Sonora, para contribuir a su desarrollo y competitividad. Para ello se desarrolló un estudio de enfoque cuantitativo, el diseño fue no experimental, de tipo correlacional y transversal, el sujeto de estudio fueron los tomadores de decisiones de las PYMES, la muestra fue no probabilística de cuota por conveniencia. Se aplicó el instrumento, se recolectaron los datos, se determinó la correlación entre Cultura Empresarial y Experiencia Ágil y finalmente se analizaron y discutieron los resultados, teniendo como resultado que el nivel de adopción de organizaciones ágiles fue alto y se logró conocer que la cultura empresarial si afecta de manera positiva y significativa la experiencia ágil.

Agilidad Organizacional en el Sector Turismo: Efectos de la Cultura Empresarial en la Experiencia Ágil		
Objetivo	Método	Contribución
Conocer los efectos de la cultura empresarial en la experiencia ágil de las PYMES de servicios de alojamiento y preparación de alimentos y bebidas de una ciudad del sur de Sonora.	Se aplicó el instrumento, se recolectaron los datos, se determinó la correlación entre Cultura Empresarial y Experiencia Ágil y finalmente se analizaron y discutieron los resultados	Generar conocimiento que sirva como base para fortalecer la cultura empresarial, para mejorar la agilidad y la capacidad de innovación y adaptación de las PYMES turísticas en la región

Agilidad, Turismo, Cultura

Area: Advocacy and attention to national problems

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Introduction

Currently, organizations are immersed in a complex and dynamic environment, where the primary challenge for decision-makers lies in detecting early signals of change in markets before these evolve into established trends, thereby missing the opportunity to capitalize on them (Gómez *et al.*, 2023).

According to Quiroga, Martín, and Baldivieso (2021), volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA)—an acronym derived from the English terms *Volatility (V)*, *Uncertainty (U)*, *Complexity (C)*, and *Ambiguity (A)*—describe a new reality characterized by complex and shifting contexts in which organizations are compelled to adapt and develop responsive capabilities due to the continuous transformations impacting their strategies.

Innovation and the adoption of emerging technological trends are driving accelerated changes in business models, leaving traditional organizations struggling to respond due to their rigidity and slow adaptability to the dynamics of the current environment (Lapicki & Terlato, 2021).

To respond to the ongoing evolution of organizational ecosystems, agility has become a key factor in enhancing organizational performance. More flexible models must be adopted, and a culture of agility cultivated among individuals, thereby identifying the most effective strategies for adapting more rapidly to changing environments (Pacheco, 2023).

The capacity to swiftly guide an organization toward agile practices enhances team performance. This, in turn, facilitates experimentation and validation of ideas prior to their implementation (Comella, Kaur, & Zaidi, 2019).

Agile organizations remain competitive by focusing on their objectives while effectively responding to unpredictable market changes. In essence, strategic agility refers to a company's ability to rapidly realign its direction, adapting to emerging needs, opportunities, and trends (Clauss *et al.*, 2021).

According to Aghina *et al.* (2017), an agile organization consists of teams operating within a member-centered culture, functioning through rapid cycles of learning and decision-making, and leveraging technology to generate value for all stakeholders. This combination provides organizations with both agility and stability, granting them a critical advantage in challenging VUCA environments.

Similarly, Gómez *et al.* (2023) emphasize that organizational agility is a company's ability to swiftly identify and respond to changes in its environment, enabling it to seize market opportunities more effectively.

Rotundo *et al.* (2015) argue that, in order to remain competitive, decision-makers must strengthen their firms' strategic processes, ensuring optimal performance of internal factors while improving control over the external variables in which they operate.

A process of organizational change aimed at leveraging new technologies to enhance operational efficiency, systems, and human resource management—thereby creating greater value for the customer—extends far beyond the simple adoption of digital tools. It requires a transformation that encompasses organizational culture and involves a thorough reassessment of the company's structure (Arango *et al.*, 2018).

Today's organizations must adopt a forward-looking vision, which entails implementing continuous and dynamic processes to adjust their strategies in response to environmental demands. This adaptability allows them to meet customer needs, deliver enhanced experiences, and remain aligned with market transformations and shifting consumer behavior. Consequently, organizations must engage in ongoing ideation and process improvement, which requires a sustained commitment to innovation (Valderrama, 2019).

In Mexico, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (PYMES) account for 99.8% of businesses with economic activity. They play a pivotal role in strengthening the economy, fostering local development, and generating positive social impact. PYMES drive economic performance by producing 52% of national revenues and employing 68% of the country's workforce in the business sector (Secretaría de Economía, 2024).

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2024), tourism contributed 8.6% to Mexico's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2023, establishing itself as a strategic sector of high relevance. Moreover, the National Statistical Information System of the Tourism Sector of Mexico (DATATUR, 2025) reported that in January 2025, Mexico received 3.9 million international tourists, representing an 8.5% increase compared to 2024.

At the state level, Sonora's Secretariat of Economy and Tourism (2024) highlighted a significant growth in tourism, reporting a 15% increase in visitor numbers in 2024 compared to the previous year.

As Gretzel *et al.* (2015) note, technology and globalization play a central role in shaping consumer activities, transforming expectations and compelling organizations to undergo inevitable change. Such evolution is essential for ensuring their continued operation and long-term success in the current market.

The tourism industry has undergone significant transformations. According to García (2017), access to online information has empowered users to independently manage their trips, taking into account key elements such as price, destination, and timing. For Ghaderi (2018), the travel experience is shaped by how tourists perceive the services and products offered, which can be further enhanced through technological support.

However, when analyzing PYMES in Mexico, it becomes evident that their main weakness lies in the scarcity of business information and the lack of integration. Many of these firms lack the necessary procedures, techniques, and standards to ensure long-term success, devoting limited time to such activities—often due to lack of knowledge. Consequently, they must strengthen both their organizational culture and structure in order to transform (Sánchez & Hernández, 2020).

This study was conducted among accommodation and food and beverage service companies within the tourism sector in a city in southern Sonora. Findings indicate that a traditional business culture prevails, and responses to change tend to be slow, which leads to inefficiencies in meeting customer needs and reduced competitiveness.

In light of this context, the following research question arises: To what extent does organizational culture influence agile experience in PYMES providing accommodation and food and beverage services within the tourism sector of a city in southern Sonora?

Based on this, the objective of the study was to examine the effects of organizational culture on the agile experience of PYMES in the accommodation and food and beverage service sector of a city in southern Sonora, with the aim of contributing to their development and competitiveness.

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

- H0: Organizational culture does not affect the agile experience of PYMES providing accommodation and food and beverage services within the tourism sector of a city in southern Sonora.
- H1: Organizational culture affects the agile experience of PYMES providing accommodation and food and beverage services within the tourism sector of a city in southern Sonora.

Tourism holds significant economic importance for countries, driving growth that is reflected in both revenue generation and job creation. In this context, it is crucial to understand what tourists seek in each destination in order to maximize the use of available resources (Figueredo, 2017).

The relevance of this research lies in generating knowledge that serves as a foundation for strengthening organizational culture, thereby enhancing the agility, innovation capacity, and adaptability of tourism PYMES in the region.

This paper is structured into six sections. It begins with an introduction presenting the research question and objectives, followed by the methodology, which details the type of study, variables, and period of analysis. The third section presents the results, while the fourth and fifth are dedicated to acknowledgments and funding sources, respectively. Finally, the document concludes with the main findings of the research.

Methodology

A quantitative study was conducted with a non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional design, where the variables under examination were Organizational Culture and Agile Experience. According to Hernández *et al.* (2014), the purpose of a quantitative approach is to define reality with the greatest possible accuracy. A non-experimental design is characterized by the absence of deliberate manipulation of variables, while correlational studies aim to establish the degree of association between two or more variables. In cross-sectional studies, data are collected at a single point in time.

The study population consisted of decision-makers from PYMES in the accommodation and food and beverage service sector of a city in southern Sonora, with a total of 100 participants.

The sampling method was non-probabilistic, specifically quota sampling by convenience, as the only requirement was that the decision-maker be a collaborator of the PYMES in the accommodation and food and beverage sector and willing to participate voluntarily.

A diagnostic instrument for the adoption of agile organizations, adapted from the Agile Manifesto, was applied. The instrument consisted of 30 items, and participants' responses reflected the extent to which they adopt agile organizational practices. These items were grouped into five dimensions: Agile Experience, Organizational Culture, Cross-functional Collaboration, Customer Feedback, and Organizational Vision. A five-point Likert scale was used, where Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, and Strongly Agree = 5.

For the analysis, three levels of agile organization adoption were established, as presented in Table 1. Dimension-specific and overall means were calculated. Additionally, the correlation between variables was assessed using Pearson's coefficient with a significance level of 0.05. McDonald's Omega was employed to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement instrument. Linear regression analysis and the statistical significance test for the correlation coefficient (*t*-test) were also conducted using the R software, version 4.3.3.

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Table 1

Levels of Agile Organization Adoption

Level	Lower value	Upper value
Low	1.0	3.0
Intermediate	3.1	4.0
high	4.1	5.0

Source: Authors' elaboration (2025).

The procedure followed for the development of the research was to apply the instrument, then collect the data, determine the validity and reliability of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega, determine the level of adoption of agile organizations, examine communication between Business Culture and Agile Experience, and finally, analyze and discuss the results.

Results

For the validity and reliability analysis of the instrument responses, the general cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated and by dimension (see Table 2), obtaining a general average of 0.97, 0.91 for the Agile Experience dimension, 0.93 for Cross-Functional Collaboration, 0.90 for the Corporate Culture dimension, 0.76 for the Customer Feedback dimension, and 0.78 for the Organizational Vision dimension, demonstrating good consistency in the responses.

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Table 2

Reliability statistics, Cronbach's alpha

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha
Agile Experience	0.91
Cross-Functional Collaboration	0.93
Corporate Culture	0.90
Customer Feedback	0.76
Organizational Vision	0.78
General average	0.97

Source: Authors' elaboration (2025).

The McDonald's Omega coefficient was also applied to measure the instrument's internal consistency, yielding a score of 0.98, indicating that the instrument's items consistently measure the same construct.

Regarding the level of adoption of agile organizations, a general value of 4.3 was obtained, with the Agile Experience dimension at 4.2, Interfunctional Collaboration at 4.4, Business Culture at 4.1, Customer Feedback at 4.4, and Organizational Vision at 4.2. This shows that the level of adoption of agile organizations in general average and by dimension is high.

In addition, an analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the Business Culture and Agile Experience variables using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the statistical significance test for the correlation coefficient (t-test).

It is important to note that calculating the correlation coefficient does not guarantee that there is an association between the variables. Therefore, it is recommended to calculate whether the coefficient is statistically significant to confirm whether a correlation exists. This test is based on the premise that the null hypothesis (H0) assumes no association between the variables, while the alternative hypothesis (H1) assumes an association between the variables.

As can be seen in Table 3, the correlation result is positive with a value of 0.893 showing a strong correlation, with a confidence interval of 95%, where the p-value or probability value (p-value) is equal to 2.2e-16, being less than the reference significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is not accepted, which indicates that the correlation coefficient obtained is statistically significant, in addition the confidence interval by excluding zero confirms this result.

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Table 3
Pearson correlation and statistical significance test

t = 19.726, df = 98, p-value < 2.2e-16
alternative hypothesis: true correlation is not equal to 0
95 percent confidence interval:
0.8458405 0.9273830
Cor: 0.8937692

Source: Authors' elaboration (2025).

Once it was confirmed that the Agile Experience is affected by the Business Culture, a simple linear regression model was developed (see table 4) to delve deeper into the behaviors and correlations, as a result the intercept was 4.22400 (expected value of the dependent variable when the independent variable is zero) and 0.75426 for the slope that is related to the Business Culture, with this it is observed that the slope predicts an increase of 0.75426 in the Agile Experience variable for each increase in the Business Culture variable. In addition, resulting in a p-value: 2.00e-16, which indicates that it is statistically significant since it is less than the reference significance level of 0.05, so the alternative hypothesis (H1) that there is an affectation between the variables is accepted.

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Table 4
Linear regression model between the Agile Experience variable and Business Culture

Intercept	Business Culture	P-Value
4.22400	0.75426	2.00e-16

Source: Authors' Elaboration (2025)

It can be observed from the research results that the Agile Experience is positively affected by Corporate Culture, which means that as a culture of change is fostered among employees and strengthened, so too is the Agile Experience.

Therefore, the results coincide with the author Blanco (2023), where he mentions that agile organizations are distinguished by their dedication to establishing a shared understanding and purpose, fostering trust, respect and the creation of valuable work ties in their collaborators, by a vision of change that is significant for their structure, and the empowerment of their collaborators as an essential skill for their operation.

Conclusions

Organizational agility has gained significant relevance, especially in these volatile times. Although these topics have been discussed for some time, their true importance has not always been recognized. Today's organizations need a vision for the future to be able to respond to changing environments and quickly take advantage of market opportunities.

As previously mentioned, tourism is one of Mexico's main economic sectors, generating significant growth through its economic impact and job creation. Hence, it is important for PYMES in the tourism sector to develop strategies that allow them to transform into agile organizations and foster a culture of change among their employees, enabling them to respond to market needs.

Through the development of this research, it was discovered that corporate culture does positively and significantly impact the agile experience in PYMES providing accommodation and food and beverage services in the tourism sector of a city in southern Sonora. These findings offer a solid foundation for improving corporate culture, thus boosting their agility, capacity for innovation, and adaptation.

Finally, it can be noted that the level of adoption of agile organizations in the PYMES studied is high. This indicates that they are implementing and utilizing agility principles, practices, and values that allow them to compete in a dynamic environment, offering better experiences to their customers. Given the relevance of this topic, it is important to continue developing research in other sectors and in general.

Declarations

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest. They have no financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the submission of this article.

Author contribution

Hinojosa-Rodríguez, Carlos Jesús: Project idea, bibliographic review, resources, writing, editing, proofreading, data analysis, formulation of results.

De la Mora-Yocupicio, Arturo: Project idea, writing, editing, proofreading, bibliographic review.

Moncayo-Rodríguez, Lizette Marcela: Project idea, bibliographic review, data collection, writing, editing.

Quiroz-Campas, Celia Yaneth: Bibliographic review, data collection, writing, editing.

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Availability of data and materials

The instrument used in this research can be requested from: carlos.hinojosa@itson.edu.mx

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Abbreviations

DATATUR	National Statistical Information System of the Tourism Sector of Mexico.
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography.
PYMES	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.
VUCA	Volatility (V), Uncertainty (U), Complexity (C) y Ambiguity (A)

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