

FILM COMMISSION MODEL AS A STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE TAMPICO-MEXICO METROPOLITAN AREA

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Abstract

This article presents a Film Commission (FC) model as an alternative with the potential to contribute to the economic development of the Metropolitan Area of Tampico, Mexico (MAT). The proposal is theoretically based on approaches to economic development with a regional approach and the potential impact of film commissions based on different international studies. The model is the product of a questionnaire made up of the opinion of eight experts who have worked closely with these projects in Mexico, applied through in-depth interviews with 69 individuals considered as living or social forces of the region, analyzing five dimensions: audiovisual infrastructure, service infrastructure, human and material resources, monumental heritage and the existing possibilities, according to the opinion of the public and private sectors. Based on the results, stakeholders are interested and consider that creating a FC would be very positive for the MAT because it would boost audiovisual infrastructure, economic growth, visibility and image improvement, induced tourism, and positioning within international markets. Furthermore, it would promote productive linkages “forward” and “backward” contributing to consolidating regional growth and development dynamics. Beyond the academic aspect, our work can contribute to the public policy agenda, given that the proposed model is not part of current official development policies.

Keywords: Film Commissions, local-regional development, film industry, induced tourism, Delphi method, Tampico.

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INTRODUCTION

Promoting sustainable territorial development in the broadest sense of the term requires approaches that transcend the local level, especially for metropolitan areas. In this way, regional development is much more than a passive statement; in fact, it implies coordinated efforts of different social actors to preserve or detonate better levels of investment, employment and welfare. As detailed below, this paper outlines a Film Commission (FC) model to contribute to economic development in the Metropolitan Area of Tampico, Mexico (MAT).

FCs are non-profit offices that connect the audiovisual industry with state and municipal governments (administrations) or institutions in order to facilitate and promote the filming of movies and the recording of audiovisuals on location, thus contributing to the dimensioning of the territory with significant economic and communicative spillovers¹ (Nieto, 2015a). That is, the effects that the

¹ Martínez (2010b) says that by economic spillover one should understand the participation resulting from the assets and liabilities that are contributed directly, indirectly and induced in a given economic space and time. By communicative spillover,

external demand for filming brings to the social fabric and the new contribution they confer to the attractions of the city, transforming it positively in the eyes of its audiences (Martínez, 2012). Furthermore, these organizations are agents in charge of attracting and channeling audiovisual productions and have a double economic dimension: first, the stimulation itself through various mechanisms and, second, the economic impact derived from these activities (Rodil, 2003).

The word *Commission* implies the idea of a “multi-sectoral working group” and presupposes the need for diverse institutional subjects to work together, unifying their relative knowledge, interests and resources (Cucco & Richeri, 2021). Martínez (2010a) adds Swift’s (2003) proposal when talking about democratic participation, opening consensus policies and creating forums that are attentive to the benefit of the citizenship, the city and, in this case, its image.

The *Diccionario de Creación Cinematográfica* (Sánchez, 2003, p. 196) says that the concept of *Film Commission* can be translated as *Film Office* and defines it as follows: “Government office or agency at the local or regional level that assists film or television production companies in location scouting, obtaining approvals or permits, locating local production services and technical equipment, providing weather information, and other such activities.”

The *Association of Film Commissioners International* (AFCI) defines them as government commissions in charge of managing the film services of a territory. To this end, film commissions create an associative structure to enhance their work and maximize synergies between members (AFCI).

In summary, from the constant notions, the authors found of how they define the concept of what an FC is, the literature reviewed and various Film Commissions in Mexico², which are government offices that provide advisory services and support to film and audiovisual productions of all kinds, both national and foreign, generate direct and indirect jobs for small and medium industries and contribute to regional development and promotion of their state, territory or municipality (Nieto, 2005; 2015a; 2015b).

One of the main reasons for studying the FC was that it was determined to lay the foundations of an audiovisual project that could generate economic and social development for the metropolitan area of Tampico, thus benefiting the population, its quality of life and boosting local commerce, the fabric of audiovisual companies and the image of the metropolitan area.

In this context, the region addressed as a category and object of study is the Tampico Metropolitan Area (TMA)³, comprising the municipalities of Tampico, Ciudad Madero and Altamira in the state of Tamaulipas (Map 1) and the municipalities of Pueblo Viejo and Pánuco in the state of Veracruz. The area is characterized by physical, social, cultural and economic relationships. It presents changes in its development pattern as a result of the reforms since its territorial space includes activities related to the oil industry, energy generation, port services, financial, educational, recreational, commercial, petrochemical and its derivatives⁴, as well as an important industrial sector. This mosaic of activities covers an area of approximately 5,300 km², surrounded by a vast system of rivers and lagoons forming one of Mexico’s most abundant streams. The principal rivers are the Pánuco and the Tamesí.

the controlled informative value chain of the image impact that the city causes not only in demand, but also in the creation of favorable expectations when it comes to attracting talent and external industry to the territory.

² Based on information obtained from 13 Mexican Film Commissions, as well as the opinion of 7 production houses and one *Freelance* that have had a relationship with Mexican Film Commissions (2005; 2015a:).

³ In the Mexican urban system, 74 metropolitan areas are identified (CONAPO, 2015) of which 7 are interstate, such is the case of MAT which specifically is bi-state encompassing the entities of Tamaulipas and Veracruz.

⁴ According to Esqueda (2018), it produces about 30% of Mexico’s chemicals and petrochemicals.

Map 1. Location map of Tamaulipas and Tampico



Source: Own elaboration.

According to information provided by the city's chronicler Marco Antonio Flores⁵, the word Tampico originates in the Huastecan words *Tam* refers to "place of" and *Piko* means "dog," alluding to the otters that lived in this region in pre-Columbian times. The beginnings of Tampico or Tampico Indígena date back to the first Huastecan tribes established on the banks of the Pánuco River, near Ciudad Cuauhtémoc, Veracruz (Pueblo Viejo). The first Tampiqueños were farming towns, catechized by Franciscans; among them Fray Andrés de Olmos, who, in the year 1554, and by license of Viceroy Don Luis de Velasco, founded La Villa de San Luis de Tampico.

Tampico was renamed five times until 1823: *Tampico*, *San Luis de Tampico*, *Tampico Joya*, *Tampico Alto*, and *Villa Santa Anna de Tampico*. The latter was born after settlers from Altamira headed by Mayor Don Juan de Villatoro mediated before General Antonio López de Santa Anna to found a municipality on the banks of the Pánuco River. On November 12, 1824, Tampico was granted the character of the port of height, beginning a great stage for this city due to the great commercial activity generated by the arrival and departure of ships loaded with merchandise.

Tampico has a population of 297,562 inhabitants according to the INEGI census⁶ in 2020, of which 205,933 inhabitants of Ciudad Madero, 269,790 of Altamira, 57,909 of Pueblo Viejo and 96,185 of Pánuco, for a total of 927,379 inhabitants in the TMA. If surrounding municipalities in the Huasteca region are considered, its zone of influence includes approximately 1.5 million inhabitants.

The metropolitan area is communicated with the main cities of Mexico due to the port and air movement with the world's production and commercial centers. In addition, there are two freight railroad lines, one from the northeast from Monterrey and the other from the southwest on the left bank of the Pánuco.

Tampico and Altamira are two of Mexico's most important foreign trade gateways. It is where two of the country's most modern and efficient ports are located. Tampico is the second deep sea port in the Gulf of Mexico; Altamira is one of the most modern and the first nationally in the trade of petrochemical fluids. Ciudad Madero has "Playa Mirama" located on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, the main tourist destination in Tamaulipas, the third destination by road nationwide, and one of the ten busiest beaches in Mexico, registering 8 million visitors in 2021.⁷

Tampico, once inhabited by people from different parts of the world - Spaniards, English, French, Germans, Dutch, Arabs, Chinese, North Americans, etc., who managed to establish their social communities capable of generating wealth, needs a change of image to help make it more visible to the outside world. Furthermore, a Film Commission would positively impact the region, helping to enhance its natural wealth. Thus, the creation of a *Film Commission* would contribute to promote the

⁵ Personal communication, August 15, 2019.

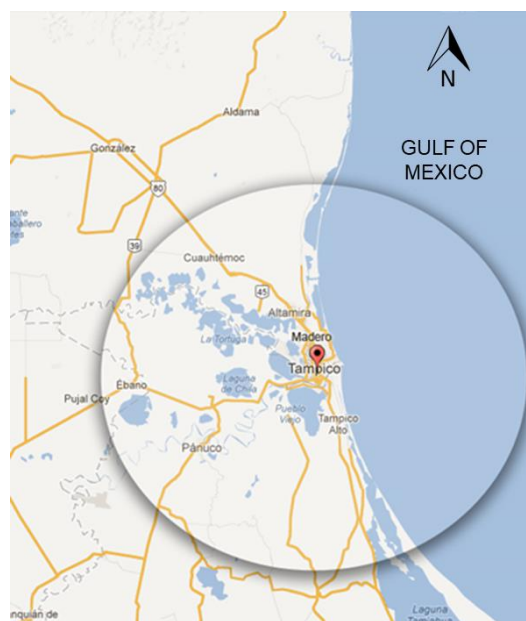
⁶ National Institute of Statistics and Geography.

⁷ According to the local Chamber of Commerce, 99% of the tourists are of national origin.

audiovisual industry in the suburban area, mobilizing the region and vitalizing its productive fabric⁸, which is one of the most dynamic in the country.

On the other hand, it must be said that it is important that the people involved in the shootings -the production team, actors, stage managers, etc.- be able to return to the city since this entails hotel nights, consumables and miscellaneous expenses that will remain in the city. A reasonable time for a production team to move to a location and then return to sleep in Tampico the same day (short transfer time) is 45 minutes - the distance is about 50 kilometers. With this in mind, the following map was created with the radius of action of a Film Commission in the MAT (Map 2).

Map 2. Radius of action of a Film Commission in the MAT



Source: Own elaboration.

This map includes southern Tamaulipas and part of eastern San Luis Potosí and northern Veracruz. The southern part of the state of Tamaulipas includes a little beyond Cd. Cuauhtémoc, with the lacunary system of the Tamesí River and the lagoon of *La Tortuga*, with agricultural and cattle ranches, mainly; in the adjacent part with the state of San Luis Potosí, it arrives until the municipality of Ebano, flat land also with cattle ranches; and in the part of the north of the state of Veracruz, in the region *Huasteca*, it includes beyond the municipality of Pánuco, Pueblo Viejo, Tampico Alto and other small towns. Its main bodies of water are Laguna de Tamós, Pueblo Viejo, Tamiahua, and coastal plains with agricultural ranches. Tamaulipas and Veracruz border the *Gulf of Mexico* and, together with the state of San Luis Potosí, are territories with good visual architecture and enjoy great landscape diversity.

1. LOCAL-REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FILM COMMISSIONS

When speaking of development in the socioeconomic sense, it is implicitly assumed that it implies progress and well-being, i.e., the transition from an undesirable social, economic and political status to a satisfactory condition. It, therefore, consists of providing equitable opportunities for social (e.g., education and health), economic (e.g., employment and wealth), political (e.g., representation and voting rights) and justice (e.g., safety and security) fulfillment to the members of society. Because of these implications, development has historically been a central theme in academia and policy. Although the conception and analysis of development in these terms has been consolidated over several decades, there are still reduced views that limit it to merely monetary and quantitative aspects. However, it is perhaps in its spatial application where more work remains to be done since in most studies, a macro approach predominates that focuses its analysis on national sets and ignores the

⁸ For more on the socioeconomic outlook and potential of this region see the work of Tello, Rangel-Blanco & Esqueda-Walle (2019).



local-regional realities of the phenomenon (Esqueda-Walle, 2017; Esqueda-Walle, 2018).

The territorial nature of economic development has remained for a long time in a situation of theoretical marginality due to the abandonment of the spatial reference and for taking the company or the economic sector as the unit of analysis, detached from its territorial environment; also, for restricting its approximation to a uniform and undifferentiated space (Albuquerque, 2004). The concepts of territorial development, local development or regional development are usually used to specify the subnational geographic scope of development; however, there is no single criterion by which the analysis of development can be spatially disaggregated so that it can be approached from a political-administrative perspective (country, state, municipality, etc.), economic, functional, social, natural, among others.

It should be noted that territorial development is currently a concept that is becoming more relevant as a result of the expansion of trade liberalization and economic integration processes. When moving to the regional sphere of development, the conceptual demarcation becomes more complex since there is a high degree of subjectivization in this regard, largely due to the polysemy that surrounds the elements that make up regional development since, as in the case of development, the term region is a multidisciplinary construction.

Regional development can be understood as a process that lies in a localized structural change (in a territorial area called 'region') associated with a permanent process of progress in the region itself, the community or society that inhabits it (Boisier, 2001, p. 7). It is then a process of economic growth and structural change leading to an improvement in the standard of living, in which three dimensions can be identified: an economic one, in which local entrepreneurs use their capacity to organize local productive factors with sufficient levels of productivity to be competitive in the markets; another, sociocultural, in which values and institutions serve as a basis for the development process; and, finally, a political-administrative dimension in which territorial policies make it possible to create a favorable local economic environment, protect it from external interference and promote local development. Regarding local-regional development, the territorial values of identity, diversity and flexibility that have existed in the past in the forms of production based not only on large industry, but on the general and local characteristics of a given territory stand out fundamentally (Vázquez, 1988; Albuquerque & Cortes; 2000; Rustan et al., 2022; Promnil, 2022).

Since economic development is a multidimensional phenomenon that manifests in different ways at different spatial scales, the regional aspect is particularly relevant for its analysis, understanding, design and implementation of public policies (Esqueda-Walle & Rangel, 2021). However, territorial development must be conceived based on public policies based on the premise of sustainability⁹ and its different dimensions (Rangel et al., 2021). The latter is necessary for development promotion strategies to have an effective and lasting socioeconomic impact; therefore, development is either sustainable or not.

As can be seen, territorial (local-regional) development is both a process and a result of the interaction of multiple agents and factors; therefore, it can be promoted deliberately, although not simply (Montes de Oca, 2020). In this regard, Chumpon (2022) states that different strategies can successfully promote local development. Although, based on these considerations, a strategy little explored in Mexico and not implemented in the study region of this research is the one that could be implemented under a film commission model explicitly designed for this purpose and their implications have been discussed, it is worth highlighting the impact identified in the literature.

According to Cucco & Richeri (2021), film commissions can stimulate transcultural phenomena since they often act as intermediaries between the audiovisual production business (production companies, directors and screenwriters) and the host area (local institutions and community). Nicosia (2015) points out that FCs can be estimated with impacts beyond a cultural activity but also as a possible tool for the efficient development of a territory, able to simultaneously promote and valorize the historical, artistic and natural resources of the places and produce economic benefits linked precisely to the reactivation of tourism and the possible revenues destined by the producers of the film and television industry.

⁹ In this regard, Gasmí & Mounir (2022) point out that development plans can be very effective tools for achieving sustainable development goals.

Promoting territory by FCs generates benefits in two industries, tourism and audiovisual (Di Cesare & La Salandra, 2015). For Körössy & Santos (2022), Turpo et al. (2022), it is clear to them that FCs have relevance for the development of the tourism sector because for many years, they have actively worked to attract not only audiovisual productions but also tourists interested in the productions filmed in the place. Likewise, in some regions of the United States, tourism offices have been identified as registering significant increases in tourism after the premiere of a film or television series filmed in their jurisdiction. Film's influence as a powerful tourism driver has been known since the 1990s (New Mexico State Film Office & State Investment Council, 2009). This is the phenomenon that various authors have researched and defined as induced tourism.¹⁰

Moreover, creative industries are not based on exploiting material resources but on knowledge. Therefore, in theory, they are more sustainable than other industries and lend themselves better to be commercialized abroad (Cucco & Richeri, 2021). Therefore, due to its characteristics, for different Mexican regions such as the MAT, implementing a film commission model is a viable alternative to contribute to sustainable regional economic development through different mechanisms.

2. METHODOLOGY

The general objective of the article is to investigate whether the conurban area of Tampico, in Tamaulipas (Mexico), meets the necessary conditions to create, prospectively, a public, semi-public or private office for the management of audiovisual production.¹¹

The first particular objective was to analyze whether it meets the ideal conditions to install a Film Commission there, taking into account:

- Audiovisual infrastructure,
- Service infrastructure,
- Human and material resources,
- The local natural, monumental -or artistic- heritage,
- The existing possibilities are according to the opinion of the social forces involved in the subject.

The study was based on the arguments given by representative *stakeholders* of the region when presented a first model and other models that, after an analysis, were also presented to them. The main idea was to propose the feasibility of a local FC that, from the audiovisual industry, the economy of the area and its sociocultural fabric, could offer an attractive image of it. However, as indicated before, this first article focused on the proposal of an “ideal” model for the TMA.

The research has as a background solid research on the subject in which it is involved (i.e., Martínez, 2003; Nieto, 2005; 2010; 2015a and 2015b) and in others that are recognized for their quality and replicability (i.e., Rosado & Querol, 2006).

Likewise, the director of *Pantalla Profesional Telemundo* magazine¹² was the one who introduced to Luciana Cabarga, the pioneer of the Film Commissions in Mexico and, through her diligence, it was possible to contact other commissioners in Mexico (who have worked closely with the film commissions) to form a *Panel of Experts*.

The central axis of our research methodology was the *Delphi method*¹³, an exclusively pre-determined instrument applicable to particular fields, in which the experts needed coincided with the profile already outlined (Landeta, 2002) and in which *the Coordinator*, hereinafter *the Researcher*, contacted a group of eight people, called the *Panel of Experts*, through a letter sent by e-mail, in

¹⁰ For more information, see the articles by Busby & Klug (2001) and Riley, Baker & Van Doren (1998).

¹¹ Thanks to Madelyn Ávila and Eduardo Gaytán for their support in the development of the research and especially all the experts and informants who participated in the field work.

¹² José Antonio Fernández is the director of the magazine (with specialized information for film, video and television professionals), which was launched in Mexico in September 1991.

¹³ This method was very useful because the experience and experiences that the *Panel of Experts* have had in their daily work was instructive for the construction of the questionnaire, which was applied in the city of Tampico, and for the argumentation of the *Mexican Ideal Model* (Nieto, 2005, pp. 100-108), which served as the basis for the application of interviews in the *Spanish Film Commissions*.

which they were invited and indicated what their participation would consist of. As a result, the *Panel of Experts* was formed as follows:

- Luciana Cabarga (+) and Alicia Castillo (*Morelos Film Commission*).
- Jorge Santoyo (Founder of *CONAFILM*¹⁴ and tutor of *Sevilla Film Commission*).
- Sarah Hoch (Founder-Director of *GIFF*¹⁵).
- Terry Fernández (Location Manager of *Argos*¹⁶).
- And the *Film Commissioners* of the states of Hidalgo, Baja California and Veracruz¹⁷.

The *Panel of Experts*, determined by the *Researcher*, are *rational people and specialists* (Landeta, 2002) who have dedicated many years of their lives to this work and know the FC in Mexico in depth. They are people who have been fully involved in their profession and know about efficiency and effectiveness in management, essential for any good audiovisual producer, and who also know about the benefits that an office of this type, a creative industry, produces in the economic, social and image development of a country.

The panel of experts provided with their knowledge and experience and proved to be very appropriate for achieving the proposed objectives (Landeta, 2002). In addition, to the *Panel of Experts*, the *Researcher* initially sent them a 33-question questionnaire called the *Experts' Preliminary Record* to learn about their beginnings, the good and bad experiences developed, and other aspects of their management activities at the head of the FC that they direct or directed.

Subsequently, the *Researcher* sent the *Expert Panel* a second 10-question questionnaire called the *Experts' Decalogue* to finalize some issues related to the elaboration of another of our research instruments: the questionnaire that was applied to the city's social forces.

An *Initial Questionnaire* is constructed with selected information from the *Experts' Preliminary Record*, the *Experts' Decalogue* and the *Mexican Ideal Model*.

The *Initial Questionnaire* is sent to the *Panel of Experts* for them to provide their opinions and points of view individually. This information makes the *Researcher* reflect on the importance and need to consider the sectors, institutions and personnel that are most involved in the work of a *Film Commission*.

The *Researcher* considers, based on the opinions of the *Panel of Experts* and according to the objectives and research questions, to direct the questions toward sectors considered essential, necessary or basic in the management activity of an FC in general. Thus, five precise *dimensions* and activities were established¹⁸, as follows:

IAV - Audiovisual Infrastructure:

- Recording studios or forums.
- Suppliers of audiovisual equipment and materials.
- Private television stations (open and pay TV).
- Audiovisual and sound production companies.
- Photographic and advertising specialists.
- Film exhibitors and cultural events.
- New media/web designers.
- Graphic designers in general.
- Post-production service providers.

¹⁴ *National Film Commission Mexico A.C.*

¹⁵ Guanajuato International Film Festival.

¹⁶ Number one in documented locations in Mexico, with more than 11 thousand and approximately 1,700,000 kilometers searched.

¹⁷ Reynaldo Chavarría, Ulises Hernández and Próspero Rebolledo (+) respectively.

¹⁸ This does not mean that all these activities are included among the people interviewed, but rather that this selection of activities has helped to determine the questions to be considered in the *Questionnaire* and selected the social forces of the city who, in our opinion, have the power to make decisions.

PL - Local Heritage:

- City Chronicler.
- Chroniclers of natural and monumental heritage.
- Social anthropologists.
- Urban planners, architects.
- Historians, writers.
- Cultural promoters.

RHyM - Human and Material Resources:

- Main audiovisual professionals.
- Filmmakers.
- Groups of actors, models, theater.
- Schools of dance, music, dance, acting.
- Poets, writers, playwrights.
- Staging, set designers.
- Creative shop.
- Unions of painters, masons, carpenters.

IS - Services Infrastructure:

- Hospitality (restaurant representatives / food / fast food / banquets at home, mobile catering service).
- Lodging.
- Transportation, mail, car rental, boats.
- Firefighters, police, civil protection, transit (traffic).
- Health (hospitals), ambulances.
- Public works.
- Tourism (public offices and travel agencies).
- Construction industry.
- Press.
- Private security.
- Veterinarians, animal trainers.
- Various suppliers: office supplies, woodworking.
- Real estate industry (rental of locations, offices, warehouses).

AySP - Authorities and Private Services:

- Authorities and civilian and military representatives.
- Authorities and municipal representatives.
- Religious authorities.
- Social clubs.
- Diplomatic representations in the city.
- Organizations and Civil Associations.

It is decided to include general questions or questions common to the five dimensions set in the questionnaire, as well as *sector-specific* questions for each. Thus, the questionnaire will contain the same questions addressed to the five sectors (BTI / PL / HR & M / SI / AYSP) and then there will be specific, delimited or particular questions for each sector.

With all the information provided, a proposal is made for a *Final Questionnaire*, integrating general or common questions and sectorial or specific questions. Questions on which quantitative and qualitative data are to be collected.

Quantitative variables: dichotomous questions, Likert scale, different degrees of gender, concepts that, rather than producing statistics and diagrams, aspire to configure a discourse that emerges from the collectivities.

Qualitative indicators allow to know the reflections and points of view of the people interviewed and to obtain meanings from the most “chante” words or concepts.

This proposed *Final Questionnaire* is returned to the *Panel of Experts* for their interpretation of the issues referred.

The *Expert Panel* reviews and analyzes the questions and sends them to us. Then, based on their opinions and points of view, the Researcher determines and constructs the *Final Questionnaire*. The first 38 questions are general or common to the five dimensions; from question 39 onwards, the questions are sectorial or specific and they handle quantitative data in order to gather general information about the knowledge of the subject: if they consider it important to set up a FC, which locations, what type of film genres are remarkable in the area, etc. Finally, the qualitative data seek to know the points of view, opinions and reflections on the implementation, organization, operation and promotion that a Film Commission should have in their locality and their context of influence.

The *Final Questionnaire*, established in five *Interview Guides*¹⁹, addresses the following sectors: *Audiovisual Infrastructure, Local Heritage, Human and Material Resources, Service Infrastructure* and *Authorities and Private Services*. In each of them, the first 38 questions are the same for all sectors and are grouped into five large blocks of questions:

1. Questions of general knowledge of the topic to be investigated (1-5).
2. Questions about knowledge of the audiovisual infrastructure (6-14).
3. Questions about developing infrastructure plans, services and human resources in the area (15-29).
4. Questions on whether they believe there can be input from the education sector in developing a Film Commission (30-34).
5. Questions about citizen participation (35-38).

In the second part of each *Interview Guide*, from question 39 onwards, each sector is explicitly examined.

The *Researcher* determines the ideal individuals or social forces in the city of Tampico to interview - apply the *questionnaire* or *interview guide*- according to the sector, in the following manner and order:

- 15 people from the Audiovisual Infrastructure Sector.
- 15 people from the Local Heritage Sector.
- 15 people from the Human Resources and Materials Sector.
- 10 people from the Services Infrastructure Sector.
- 14 people from the Authorities and Private Services Sector.

Most of the *Questionnaire* applications were face-to-face, audio-recorded and then transcribed; the rest requested to be sent by e-mail and, once answered, were forwarded by the same means.

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodology inspired by Teun A. van Dijk (1994; 1999; 2004; 2006) was taken into account.

Next, the authors read the questions and answers collected in the interviews, by sector and in the order described above, to validate or refute the objectives set out at the beginning.

After examining all the responses from the sector, the type of discourse was classified as follows:

- Homogeneous.
- Disparate or heterogeneous.
- Neutral or not saying anything.

If it is a *follower* response, i.e., one that speculates or goes around in circles and that the subject does not know how to answer, but in which he/she says something, the authors are interested in

¹⁹ In large-scale interview projects some researchers use an *interview guide* to ensure that key topics are explored with a number of informants. This is a list of general areas to cover with each informant. It is useful in team research and evaluation, or in other subsidized research. In team research, the guide provides a way to ensure that all researchers explore the same general areas with informants (Taylor & Bogdan, 1987).

finding the quantities to know if there is knowledge or not of the subject. In the case of a *knowledgeable* response, the authors worked on the verbs or items used to know:

- Which actors do you name?
- What actions does it presuppose for these actors?
- What tendency about these actors does the interviewee have, such as whether he/she agrees with the City Council and not with the *Film Commission*?
- What do you compare it to?
- What does it propose?

3. FILM COMMISSION MODEL


Based on the results, an “ideal model” of film commission is detailed, given the conditions of the Metropolitan Zone of Tampico, which, as mentioned above, is the product of the responses obtained from all the *stakeholders* interviewed.

For the establishment, organization, operation and promotion of an audiovisual operation in the *study region*, the following priority is considered:

- The creation of an FC capable of attracting and managing audiovisual productions was conceived as a tool to change the metropolitan image.
- Support from public and private institutions to set up an FC.
- The FC should be formed by professionals from the Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, while involving the private sector, the State Secretariat of Tourism and the three levels of government. The Commission should be an association of all of them.
- The formation of an Advisory Council of city specialists to regulate and support the management and direction of the FC.
- It is a priority to liaise with the Mexican Institute of Cinematography and the network of cultural promoters and managers in Mexico.
- It is essential to count on a human and instrumental technical team that can provide a professional service to the productions that come to the area.
- Create audiovisual markets, film festivals and tourism campaigns to promote the area for audiovisual professionals and artists.
- Seek trained personnel who know the basic functions essential in any FC.
- Possess a global and competitive vision at the international level.
- Establish policies that encourage and promote audiovisual production in the metropolitan area of Tampico.
- Creation of regulations to delimit the responsibilities incurred in any production of this type and to act accordingly.

In order to install and sustain an FC in the city of Tampico, the following strategies are necessary:


- The existence of *financial* incentives for talent, creativity, training and dissemination is the way to improve both the quality and quantity of human capital.
- The existence of regulations makes it possible to delimit the responsibilities incurred in productions of this type.
- The need for support from the private sector as well as from municipal and state governments.
- The training of professional human resources and the development of an updated technical team.
- To have competent professionals, since the realization of a film production involves logistics that demand a large number of personnel capable of carrying out pre-production and post-production processes, of carrying out the filming process, the script, the editions, the acting work, the locations, the scenery, the wardrobe, the makeup and the sound. In short, a broad organization of human, technical and economic resources.
- That those who work in audiovisual production see that it is feasible to carry out this activity if deficiencies such as lack of capital and updated technology are overcome.
- That the authorities consider that the culture of the metropolitan area can be made known through the production of short films and their projection in the different media.

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- To ensure that those who provide their services can reach an agreement that suits - and convinces - both parties (service providers and audiovisual productions) to reduce costs as much as possible.
 - The personnel who must attend to the service needs of audiovisual producers must be truly qualified to do so.
 - Government-dependent locations are free of charge, security is guaranteed, and all urban services in the area are available.
 - To explain to the Cabildo the purpose of creating an FC in the area and the benefits it would bring to the locality.
 - SEDESOL²⁰, DIF²¹, SECTUR²² are considered to be able to attend this type of activity.
 - To seek the physical space and grant public resources to create the Commission.
 - To obtain the necessary resources from the business sector.
 - Develop a clear and congruent business plan to convince the interested business sector.
 - Achieving the above objective would enable overcoming shortages such as capital and updated technology, thereby activating production in general.
 - Apply the methods and measures necessary to disseminate and promote the audiovisual and film industry.
 - The members of the *Committee* must be professionals whom interns can assist. In addition, they must be capable of overcoming any limitations that may arise during filming.
 - The *commissioners* will have to know how to take advantage of the opportunities created by film shoots and audiovisual projects of a historical-costumbrist nature exhibited at fairs and audiovisual markets.
 - Encourage the *Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas* to continue providing professionals, good communicators and talents that contribute, with their creativity and initiative, to the integration of professional film crews for the audiovisual industry and the FC. This will require a staggering program of teaching and learning process and, subsequently, a professionalization in the audiovisual sector.
 - The profile of the *intern* or trainee must be as follows: have vocation, availability, flexibility and responsibility; speak English, have basic production knowledge, know the technical language, have studied in the field of communication sciences or related to audiovisuals, have organizational knowledge, etc.
 - A *Film Commission* could propose initiatives to all production sectors, establishing a communicative interaction that would promote tourism in the conurban area. Its task would be, in the background, to promote the city not only as a favorable space for film “location” but also for commercials and advertising campaigns.
 - The creation of an *Advisory Council* of city specialists to regulate the management and direction of the Film Commission would allow more people from different areas to also contribute by advising, making proposals or even criticizing the official functioning of the Commission.
 - University professionals, media representatives, audiovisual specialists and people truly interested in cultural development should be part of the *Film Commission’s Advisory Council*.
 - Television, radio and the presses are the communication and propaganda services of the conurban area that could be used in an audiovisual production for the dissemination of its information - without forgetting the growing importance of a medium such as the Internet and social networks.
 - Making a medium or superior audiovisual production would not be difficult because the authorities are usually quite open, flexible and generally willing to cooperate.
 - One weakness is the lack of production companies, technical equipment and professionals specialized in filmmaking in the area. However, this weakness should not be considered an obstacle but rather an incentive.
 - The need to catalog natural or urban environments that have not yet been used: lagoons, beaches, rivers, urbanized locations, old buildings, and industrial buildings.

²⁰ Secretary of Social Development.

²¹ Integral Family Development.

²² Secretary of Tourism.

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- Provide necessary information on human, gastronomic, architectural, infrastructural, air, sea and land communication resources, financial centers and hotel infrastructure.
 - The profile of the commissioner must be as follows: production experience, experience in filming, public service skills, training in administration, business management, law and foreign languages.
 - Deploy a whole communication and propaganda strategy aimed at adequately disseminating the cultural heritage of the conurbation, without causing damage to the commons. The achievement of this objective would have the most positive effect on the tourist, economic and cultural development of the conurban area.
 - To reinforce the identity of this region of northeastern Mexico.
 - The programming of film festivals, television, fairs, markets and the Internet would help to awaken more significant interest in the audiovisual sector in the area.
 - Create an inventory of the audiovisual media sector and suitable people who can project the culture of the metropolitan area globally.
 - To propose initiatives that help to generate a directory formed by the technical equipment already existing in the area, aimed at the cinematographic, audiovisual or communicative promotion of the area.

In order to summarize the findings in a SWOT-type diagnosis, the following should be said for *strengths*:

The MAT has multiple sites and an attractive visual architecture for locations; it has the capacity and talent, an adequate infrastructure of services, and adequate communication routes. In addition, the social forces interviewed think that it is an area capable of providing specialized services to domestic and foreign producers.

For *weaknesses*, a lack of experience in film shoots was noted, a shortage of *production companies* and audiovisual professionals, a certain lack of culture and training, scarce audiovisual legislation, leadership and investment, the absence of a *Catalog of Experts and Services* in the city, a shortage of professional technical equipment, and a lack of promotion to local and national entrepreneurs.

Among the possible *threats* in Tampico, there is a lack of knowledge or ignorance of the authorities, including SECTUR, of what it means to have a Film Commission in the territory and the benefits it can attract; there is a lack of establishment of the region's identity, a shortage of promotional campaigns and competition with states that do promote their territories. Tamaulipas lacks a *State Filming Law* and the greatest threat is the civil insecurity it suffers.

In terms of *opportunities*, there is growing interest on the part of stakeholders and other social agents in creating an FC, the possibility of creating direct and indirect employment, economic benefits and increased tourism in the region.

4. CONCLUSION

Promoting regional economic development is challenging, especially in metropolitan areas, due to the high complexity of their multiple social, economic, political, and urban-rural interactions and geophysical characteristics. Thus, for the MAT and other regions, a film commission under the scheme of an Advisory Council can serve as a strategy to coordinate public, private and social efforts in this regard.


The agents involved are interested and consider that creating such an agency would be very favorable for the study region because it would bring benefits such as the activation of the audiovisual infrastructure, the economy, visibility and image improvement, induced tourism, and positioning within the international markets.

Based on the results, the implementation of the project would have a positive impact by promoting "forward" and "backward" productive linkages, which contribute to consolidating the dynamics of regional growth and development. Of course, this does not mean that it is not considered the only one that offers the greatest potential, but it does mean that it is one with high possibilities of increasing spillover, economic diversification and urban sustainability.

Beyond the academic aspect, this study can contribute to the public policy agenda since it is not part of the official development plans and policies. In future lines of research, it is important to consider deepening aspects of operation schemes, financing, profitability and estimates of a project's economic, social and environmental impact with the components mentioned in the article.

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