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Call for Papers

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Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism is an open access, peer-reviewed interdisciplinary research journal, aimed to publish articles and original research papers that contribute to the development of both experimental and theoretical nature in the field of Environmental Management and Tourism Sciences. The Journal publishes original research and seeks to cover a wide range of topics regarding environmental management and engineering, environmental management and health, environmental chemistry, environmental protection technologies (water, air, soil), pollution reduction at source and waste minimization, energy and environment, modelling, simulation and optimization for environmental protection; environmental biotechnology, environmental education and sustainable development, environmental strategies and policies.

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Also, this journal is committed to a broad range of topics regarding Tourism and Travel Management, leisure and recreation studies and the emerging field of event management. It contains both theoretical and applied research papers and encourages obtaining results through collaboration between researchers and those working in the tourism industry.

The journal takes an interdisciplinary approach and includes planning and policy aspects of international, national and regional tourism as well as specific management studies. Case studies are welcomed when the authors indicate the wider applications of their insights or techniques, emphasizing the global perspective of the problem they address.

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Integration of Environmental Procedures and Team Cohesion: Survey of Tourism Industries in the Fez Meknes Region

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Abstract: This article studies the impact of integrating environmental actions at the level of tourism industries, focusing on the tourism sector in Morocco. It examines the impact of integrating environmental processes on the management of these industries and on team cohesion. The paper identifies the concepts of environmental management and team cohesion. To juxtapose the literature with the field, we conducted a field survey in Morocco's oldest region, Fez-Meknes, where tourism is important and local industries took advantage of the absence of tourists during the COVID-19 period to implement several environmental actions. By implementing these processes, tourist industries can improve their brand image and make considerable savings. On the other hand, they need to consider the impact of these new practices on team cohesion. Our article will attempt to examine the relationship between the implementation of environmental initiatives and the cohesion of players in the tourism industries of the Fez-Meknes region.

Keywords: management environmental; cohesion; tourism industry; brand image, Morocco.

JEL Classification: Q01; R11; Z32; M31.

Introduction

Climate change is now threatening the entire planet, with hurricanes, floods, intense heat waves and forest fires. The consequences of climate change are only just beginning to be felt, and natural damage could intensify if those involved fail to take action to mitigate this scourge.

Today, taking the environment into account should be the occupation of all players, especially companies. They are obliged to act in a sustainable and socially responsible manner. According to Rosenblum et al (2000), the tourism industry consumes the same amount of energy as the manufacturing sector.

The world tourism organization (UNWTO) points out that CO₂ emission from the tourism sector are set to increase by at least 25% by 2030. At a global level, transforming the tourism sector towards climate action is not a choice but an obligation. If current behaviors persist, the consequences for the planet could be catastrophic. The African continent is no exception. In the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa), Morocco is the country most affected by global warming, welcoming over 13 million tourists every year, according to the Moroccan National Tourism Office (MNTTO).

The integration of environmental considerations into the Moroccan tourism industry is forcing a juxtaposition of traditional management with environmental management: making the environment an object of strategy (Hatchuel.1999). Nevertheless, environmental management meets the requirements of the external environment, while inflicting new processes on the internal environment (employees). The integration of environmental practices can be a source of motivation for teams, as well as generating conflict and employee

disunity within the tourism industry. As a result, green management can be a source of cohesion, just as it can lead to incoherence.

Team cohesion inflicts to unite actors towards a collective action that will lead to the achievement of environmental objectives within tourism industries.

The originality of our research is to study the factors of environmental management on team cohesion within the tourism industries in Morocco. We chose the most ancient region of Morocco, Fez-Meknes, to conduct our study. To this end, we have turned to an exploratory study of the region's largest proactive industries in the field of environmental management.

This study seeks to answer the following questions: What do we mean by environmental management and team cohesion? What is the relationship between these two concepts? Does team cohesion have an impact on the implementation of environmental management?

We'll begin our article by outlining the methodological framework for environmental management and team cohesion, and then discuss the relationship between environmental management and team cohesion. Secondly, we will present the methodology adopted and the various tourism industries covered by the case study. Finally, we will highlight and discuss the results of our research.

1. Environmental Awareness and Integration of Environmental Management

1.1. Taking the Environment into Account: A Review over Time

On a global scale, environmental concerns first came to the fore in the 1970s, when the United States created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whose main mission was to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) published the report "Our Common Future".

In 1993, the European Community (EEC) adopted a regulation recognizing the voluntary participation of companies in a community eco-management and audit scheme. Three years later, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) introduced the ISO 14001 environmental management standard, and companies complying with the environmental charter could be certified as environmentally responsible enterprises. In 1997, Japan signed the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change in industrialized countries. In 2015 saw the first Conference of the Parties (COP), whose main aim was to bring together all countries and sectors, particularly the tourism sector. Each year this conference is held to meet environmental objectives, and we can present the different COPs as follows:

Table 1. Succession of COPs in recent years

COP	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Date	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
Countries	France	Morocco	Germany	Poland	Spain	Scotland	Egypt	UAE	Azerbaijan

Source: By the authors according to United Nations climate change (UNCC)

All the COPs highlighted the actions needed to help signatory parties and particularly vulnerable developing countries finance their environmental protection plans.

Morocco organized COP 22 as a signatory country and in parallel with all these changes and efforts, taking the environment into account were on Morocco's agenda. Particularly in the tourism sector, Article 12 of Law 99-12 states that the tourism sector is a priority in terms of environmental protection. In 2014, the country launched the national sustainable development strategy (SNDD) to raise awareness of environmental protection among the various stakeholders. The importance of the subject is confirmed at international and national level, and the tourism sector is also concerned. What's more, these industries need to equip themselves with the right management tools.

1.2. Environmental Management

1.2.1 Literature Review

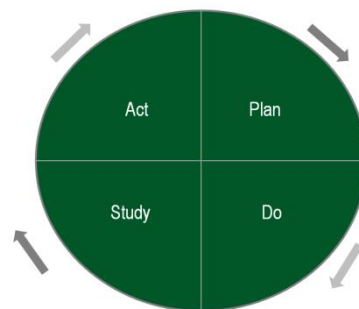
Etymologically, management refers to the set of processes by which objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. The notion of environment refers to the environment in which a company operates, including the environmental aspects of air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, human beings, and their interrelationships. (ISO 14002 2020) This new type of management is integrated within the company through the Environmental Management System (EMS). The EMS can be thought of as a set of formal structures of rules and resources that managers adopt to establish routines for achieving the company's environmental goals. This

system is a subset of the general management system (Nash and Ehrenfeld 2001). It can be added that the environmental management system implies the existence of formal systems and databases which incorporate procedures and processes for training personnel, for monitoring and reporting specific information on environmental performance, and which are available to the company's internal and external stakeholders (Melnik *et al.* 2002).

The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI 2023) defines the environmental management system (EMS) as a management system that allows you to continuously improve the environmental performance of your company. It can also be said that the EMS is a component of the overall management system, the aim of which is to implement, evaluate and improve environmental policy (Desmazes and Lafontaine 2002).

The implementation of an environmental management system follows the model of Deming's wheel: the company must plan a green strategy (plan), implement the strategy (do), check the realization of the strategy (study) and finally react by taking corrective action (act) (Deming, E 1980).

Figure 1. Deming.E wheel



Source: By the authors based on the work of (Deming, E 1980).

- **Plan:** Identify the causes of the problem and set the objectives you wish to achieve.
- **Do:** Based on the objectives set out in the plan, implement the actions.
- **Study:** Compare the plan's objectives with the actions taken in the second stage. The idea is to assess the extent to which the plan has improved the problem/process.
- **Act:** If the objectives have been achieved, the plan defined in the first stage should be retained, and the same process repeated for each new need.

By following this process, the tourism industry will be able to set up the environmental system that suits them best. Each time they have new objectives, they will repeat the same steps. Implementing an EMS in the tourism industry not only conserves natural resources, but also offers the following advantages.

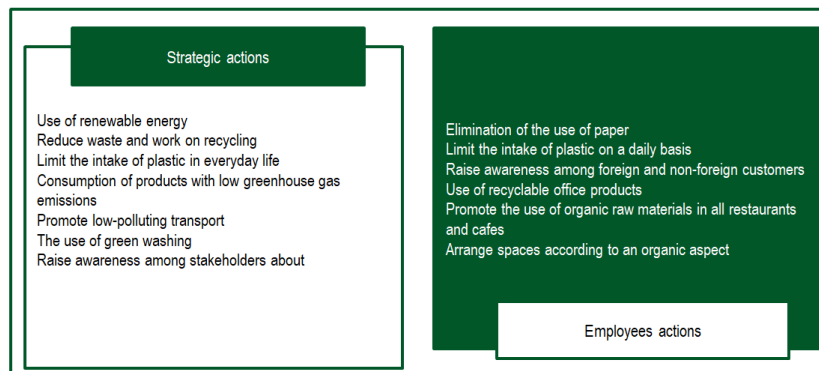
1.2.2 The Benefits of Implementing an Environmental Management System

EMS in the tourism industry brings several benefits, which we have listed below:

Preservation of the environment's natural resources for future generations.

An economic advantage: tourism businesses that take the environment into account benefit from savings on their energy bills: electricity, water. Waste management is also a major burden for these establishments.

Figure 2. Strategic and employees' action within the tourism industry



Source: By the authors.

A competitive advantage: the brand image of a tourist establishment is enhanced when it takes action to protect the environment. This attracts more environmentally conscious customers. In fact, ISO 14001 certification is one of the conditions under which eco-responsible travelers choose tourist establishments.

A socio-cultural advantage that focuses on long-term respect for cultural heritage. This advantage also concerns support for local and international actions.

Based on all the EMS actions to be implemented at tourism industry level, it's clear that the integration of these new environmental actions will lead to an upheaval in the habits of the players, who will be required to act collectively, cooperate and coordinate in order to achieve the EMS objectives. This is where we talk about cohesion. To better understand the concept, let's look at the literature on cohesion.

2. Team Cohesion: Theoretical Framework

2.1. Definition of Authors

In its broadest definition, the enterprise is a social structure guided by instrumental rationality, enabling a group of individuals to contribute to a common purpose. In other words, it is a social dynamic that is brought together within a structure to achieve its objectives. However, the involvement of its members can differ from one individual to another, and can be either objective or subjective, creating a divergence of goals.

In this sense, one of the company's challenges is to get the social capital to adhere to the convergence of the company's goals. The manager's new mission is to mobilize all the means at his disposal to create this social bond.

In management science, the notion was born out of the work of several authors who evoked the search for harmony (Taylor 1911), or the famous proverb "strength through unity" (Fayol 1916).

Indeed, the union of personnel is a great strength for the company, so we must strive to establish it. Cohesion is the need to unite and harmonize all staff actions and efforts. He insinuates that the union of a company's personnel is one of the great forces acting on its members to keep them in the group" (Fayol 1918).

Cohesion is the value members place on their membership of the group, while wanting this affiliation to endure in the face of challenges. Cohesion thus refers to the force that brings group members together voluntarily, where emotions and rewarding feelings between group members play an important role, and thus face the challenges they encounter as a whole (Hart 1982).

Janis is also known as "groupthink", a situation in which group members are so tightly knit that they lose their ability to think critically about other group members and themselves. At this level, there is no opposition in any of the decisions; we're dealing with several individuals and two hemispheres that think in the same way for the group as a whole.

We also add that cohesion is the sharing of collectively accepted ideals and values. Thus, the communion of ideals shared projects and collectively accepted values. From the same to the same, we can say that cohesion refers to adherence, cooperation, mutual aid, shared values and ideals (Schein 1985).

Cohesion is the ability of an organization to adapt to unforeseen or unpredictable disruptive events, and not to generate them spontaneously. It is therefore a condition and a figure of sustainability, also close to the concept of resilience. It evokes metaphors such as the orchestra, the sports team or the cycling peloton. In this way, it conjures up images of mutual understanding and trust, whether explicit or implicit, of the capacity for substitution between players, and thus of organizational solidarity. (Dupuy & Travaillé 2014)

(Moustakas 2023) is considered cohesion as an essential ingredient to address common societal challenges. This cohesion manifests itself through the organization's culture, its identity, beliefs, values and norms, as well as rites and codes, but also its human capital, everything that is anchored in the human brain: experience, training, leadership ability, interpersonal relations, motivation. To this end, a motivated, loyal, competent and cohesive workforce will enable the company to develop more effectively. Cohesion can therefore be seen as the ability to form a whole, a unity based on ideal, common values, shared emotions, a community of mind and heart. In other words, it's the result of all the forces acting on members to keep them in the group, to encourage them to participate and cooperate, and to make them supportive of one another. The same motivation and identity of objectives, combined with mutual trust and confidence in the group and its organization, are expressed at group level by cohesion.

In practical terms, team cohesion means that the "potential" of a group of people is greater than the sum of the "potential" of each individual team member. Indeed, a manager needs to understand that managing a team is not about managing a sum of individuals, but that there's one element he or she needs to take care of in addition to each team member: team spirit. Otherwise, the risk is of falling into a management of individualities

and never succeeding in achieving collective objectives. Similarly, implementing an environmental management system requires team cohesion.

2.2 Relationship between Environmental Management and Cohesion

The relationship between environmental management and team cohesion has been of interest to several authors. According to (Bollecker & Naro 2014), group cohesion is a strong element in the convergence of corporate goals. Both authors point to the value of integrating team cohesion into all corporate strategies, namely environmental. (Mersali S 2004) Environmental management is associated with the collective commitment of its members to an environmental management policy. Moreover, (CRCI 2004) stresses that implementing environmental management within a tourism business requires: mastery of a certain method, involvement of partners and mobilization of human resources. We also note that environmental management needs to be supported both by formalized systems and by more informal approaches that play more on the processes, behaviors and potential of the players involved. (Martinet and Reynaud, 2004) Disseminating environmental values and raising employee awareness would appear to be essential conditions for an ecological shift (Boiral, 2007).

All these authors' assertions confirm that the implementation of an environmental strategy depends on indicators of cohesion: collective action, commitment, shared values, communication, cooperation and human capital. This supports the interconnection between EMS implementation and team cohesion. To better analyze this relationship, we will adhere the theoretical framework to an empirical field study.

3. Methodology

Scientific research is a dynamic process or rational approach that enables us to examine phenomena, solve problems and obtain precise answers through investigation. This process is characterized by being systematic, rigorous and leading to the acquisition of new knowledge. The functions of research are to describe, explain, understand, control and predict facts, phenomena and behaviour. To carry out our study, we opted for a qualitative approach.

3.1 Study Survey

Our qualitative sample was drawn from the tourism sector in the Fez-Meknes region. The tourism industries we selected must meet three criteria:

A large tourism industry: tourism industries mainly include hotels, restaurants, guest houses, cultural facilities and transport. We chose large tourism industries for the simple reason that they receive a large number of customers, so their impact on the environment is considerable, and the implementation of an environmental strategy requires a significant investment that these industries are able to finance.

A tourism industry that takes the environment into account: The companies we have selected must take the environment into account through proactive environmental strategies.

Consideration of environmental certifications: we have chosen to work with companies that are familiar with environmental certifications or are in the process of obtaining them. Based on these criteria, we selected a qualitative sample of six companies in the region:

- Case 1: Hotel ***** City; Fez
- Case 2: Hotel***** City; Fez
- Case 3: Hotel*****City; Fez
- Case 4: Riad ****City; Meknes
- Case 5: Guest House**** City; Azrou
- Case 6: Restaurant - City; Meknes

3.2 Collecting Data

We consider the reliability of our coding to be quite satisfactory. We first carried out a mobile survey of all the establishments available in the region, in order to select the tourism industries that met our three above-mentioned criteria. This said, the interview guide remains our main source of data collection. It is based on three themes: the first takes into account the company's descriptive information, the second takes into account the environmental strategy, the actions implemented and the type of certification, while the third focuses on team cohesion with regard to the environmental strategy implemented. In each case, we interviewed four people: the plant's general manager, two team leaders and an operator. The idea was to propose the same questionnaire in order to obtain neutral information. Each interview lasted between 40 and 70 minutes. The table below lists all the cases interviewed:

Table 2. Interview classification

Case	Tourism industry	City	Date of interview	Time
Case 1	Hotel *****	Fez	05/05/2023	70 Min
Case 2	Hotel*****	Fez	06/04/2023	65Min
Case 3	Hotel*****	lfrane	07/20/2023	40 Min
Case 4	Riad ****	Meknes	08/10/2023	68Min
Case 5	Guest House****	Azrou	09 /09/2023	35 Min
Case 6	Restaurant - Fez	Meknes	09/17/2023	70 Min

Source: By the authors

3.3 Data Analysis

To analyze the data, we transcribed the interviews and then carried out a thematic content analysis. After transcribing and following the recommendations of (Miles and Huberman.2003), we analyzed the thematic content. This analysis was carried out firstly based on the entire corpus (transcribed interviews), segment by segment.

We then grouped the significant themes into "thematic codes». Thematic codes are labels that designate units of meaning for the descriptive information collected during a study (Miles Huberman, 2003). We used an abductive coding technique, drawing on a preliminary list of codes from the literature and adding codes emerging from the field. We coded using Nvivo 12. We consider the reliability of our coding to be quite satisfactory.

4. Research Results

4.1. Result

Based on the interview guide we held with the various interviewees from the 6 cases, we obtained the following word cloud:

Figure 3. Word Cloud from Nvivo 12



Source: By the authors.

This word cloud represents the frequency of the words that were repeated most often the interviews by the twenty-four interviewees in our six cases.

The words "environment" and "cohesion" were the most frequently repeated by our interviewees. In fact, during our interviews mentioned that integration of environmental aspect had an impact on the cohesion of social capital and, that, conversely, good team cohesion made it easier to implement environmental actions. We also note a high frequency of the word "unwillingness", which was the feeling of operators when environmental actions. We also noted a high word frequency for "employees", "membership" and "voluntariness", as employee involvement was mainly voluntary.

We also obtained a word surface that clearly shows the importance of the most repeated notions, which are only our key words: cohesion and environment.

Figure 4. Surface of keys words

environment	account	certification	reduce	instead	paper	plastic	promote	provide			
				training	voluntary	brand	certified	hotel	image		
		bills	solar		important	allows	bulbs	carry	dishes	integrati	
cohesion	14001			iso		alternati	led	non	objectives	organic	
		using	categorization	membership	use			products	raising	recycling	
	environmental			processes	water	audit	material				
taking		panels	employees			awarene	natural	riad	staff	union	unite
				team							
					actions	building	new	spite	towards	sunwillin	washin

Source: By the authors.

▪ **Classification of transcripts in relation to environmental strategy:**

-Water reuse:

"Before water reuse, we used between 300 and 600 liters of water a day, but today this consumption has been halved. The annual savings are enormous" (Manager, Case 2).

"The implementation of this practice led to a real reluctance on the part of employees, we were going to lose almost a significant number of technicians who worked within the facility" (Manager, Case 6).

-Installing solar panels:

"We installed solar panels on our roofs" (Manager, Case 2).

"The solar panels were a real energy saver, reducing our electricity bills by 50%" (Manager, Case 1).

"The region's weather and the state of the world's environment were two important arguments for us to install solar panels at our hotel" (Manager, Case 6).

- Use of low-energy LED bulbs:

"Changing the bulbs was a real energy saver" (Manager, Case 1).

-Zero plastic strategy:

"At our hotel, we have implemented a zero-plastic strategy" (Manager, Case 1).

"We even encourage our customers to stop using plastic, and provide them with cardboard bags" (Manager, Case 2).

"At our restaurants in the Fez-Meknes region, we have replaced plastic on all our import and packaging with cardboard" (Manager, Case 6).

-Replacement of industrial raw materials with ORGANIC raw materials:

"In our restaurants, all raw materials have been replaced by" Organic materials" (Chef, Case 6).

- Dishwashing with alternative products, replacing chemical detergents:

"We have replaced our detergents with vinegar and salt, and this has been appreciated even by our customers" (Manager, Case 4).

-Improved brand image:

"We have implemented environmental instructions in the rooms, such as turning off lights and using water sparingly. This has improved our brand image" (Manager, Case 3).

▪ **Classification of transcripts in relation to environmental strategy and cohesion:**

-Strengthened team bonds (cohesion) when integrating environmental strategy:

"The teams were welded together, especially when they knew it was in the service of the environment" (Manager, Case 2).

-Impact on teams after installation of solar panels:

"Installing the solar panels on our roofs was a very big mission for our technicians, until today it's a struggle almost every day" (Manager, Case 1).

"It created stress because it was a new process for us" (Operational, Case 1).

"During the installation of the solar panels, we felt that even the managers didn't know what we were supposed to do, I think there was a lack of communication and cooperation" (Operational, Case 6).

"The new procedures for installing solar panels created false conflicts between employees" (Operator, Case 2).

-Employee awareness and training:

"We did employee training, but he was frustrated" (Manager, Case 6).

"Awareness was raised through several meetings, but because of the installation of these new environmental processes, we had a large number of resignations" (Manager, Case 3).

-The importance of cohesion:

"Cohesion is very important in this case, if the team members are united they will implement these new environmental processes well as they should, otherwise they will do it in spite of themselves and it will be a failure for the strategy" (Manager, Case1) .

-Team buy-in:

"Our buy-in was rather forced" (Operational, Case 1, 2,6).

"Buy-in was rather voluntary" (Operational, Case 3,4).

"We were reluctant to take these new actions" (Operational, Case 5).

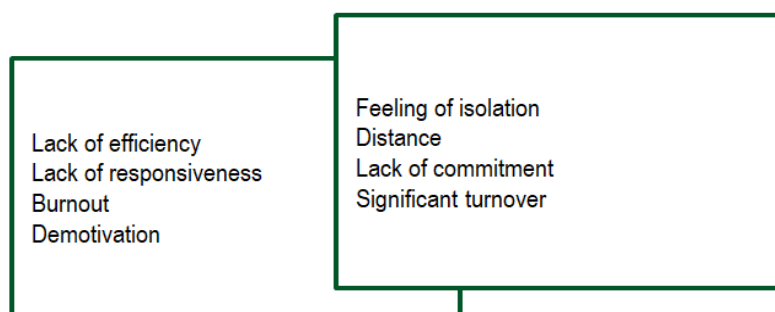
4.2 Discussion

According to our interviewees, this enables them to define themselves as an environmentally responsible tourism industry, and the second aspect is that the use of environmental processes enables them to make substantial savings. Indeed, before the integration of environmental actions, water consumption at the four hotels in our case study varied between 300 and 900 liters per day, bearing in mind that the WHO declares a water consumption standard of between 20 and 50 liters per day.

Today, consumption generally varies between 100 and 300 liters per day, which is important both for the environment and for their bills. According to the managers, the introduction of these new techniques has given them a new eco-responsible identity in the region, enabling them to make substantial savings on their water, electricity and other bills.

However, on the part of management, the integration of these environmental processes into the tourism industry has generally led to employee reluctance, resignations and false conflicts. These are the consequences of inconsistency:

Figure 5. Consequence of incoherence in tourism industry



Source: By the authors.

The effects of incoherence can be detrimental to the company, and this is where the role of management must intervene to protect its actions. Through its various tools, management aims to align the individual behaviors (cohesion) of the company's players towards its environmental objectives (Antheaume.2013). On the part of employees, reluctance and forced commitment were due to the lack of communication and cooperation between managers and employees in the environmental strategy.

From these results, we can say that cohesion plays a dual role, it can be a lever for the integration of environmental strategy through: communication, cooperation, staff union, training and awareness. But it can also be an obstacle to the implementation of the environmental strategy, in which case the integration of environmental actions will not only be a failure but will lead to the emergence of new phenomena such as forced

adhesion, reluctance, resignations, individualization and demotivation. This approach is normally valid for all companies wishing to integrate the environmental aspect. In our study, we took a specific case, that of the tourism industry. We can summarize this in the following figure 6:

Figure 6. Implementation of environmental strategy according to cohesion



Source: By the authors.

Conclusions

Our subject is of great importance, for the years to come the search for new environmental management methods will be at the center of all countries' concerns.

Our work has allowed us to highlight that environmental awareness is now the responsibility of all sectors, particularly the tourism industry. In the Fez Meknes region, several tourism industries are aware of the environmental aspect. They have put in place a number of measures to meet environmental requirements, and all the tourism industries find that it's a win-win situation that helps to preserve natural resources on the one hand, and to make significant savings on the costs of these establishments on the other. The brand image of some of our cases has been improved after the installation of these processes. However, the biggest obstacle was the reluctance of employees to adopt these new processes, the lack of communication and cooperation between managers and operators, and the individualism of certain players. These factors represent indicators of cohesion. Taken as a whole, the results show the importance of environmental management and team cohesion in ensuring the success and renewal of environmental strategy.

Certainly, the results of this article have important implications for our understanding of environmental management and team cohesion. Nevertheless, there are some limitations that need to be mentioned. The qualitative methodology limits the possibility of generalizing numerical results. Consequently, these results are specific and contingent to the context of our study. In short, our research is limited to the study of a few cases, so it would be wise to propose future research examining the diagnostic and interactive configuration of the same subject in several other regions of the country.

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Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

Seffar Andaloussi Sofya: Choice of the subject, writing of the article in its entirety, development of interviews with the interviewees, interpretations and analysis of the data.

Hemmi Mohammed: General review of the article at the level of all the parts, supervision of the data.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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