
The Decline of a Tourist Destination and the Militarization of the Place, the Acapulco Case

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Abstract

The article examines the militarization observed in the tourist destination of Acapulco after the impact of Category 5 Hurricane Otis in October 2023. The phenomenon left in its wake desolation and destruction in most of the hotels and tourist services in the tourist area and the city. Since 2006 to date, the city has experienced the recurrence of drug violence generated by organized crime, generating violent deaths, the withdrawal of international tourism and a significant drop in its main indicators. In response to this crisis, the federal government has announced plans for the construction of barracks in different places in the city and specifically in emblematic tourist places such as the House of Culture, the Convention Center, the Papagayo Park of Acapulco and the Club of Golf located on its main tourist avenue.

The research article aims to explore and analyze the current situation of Acapulco, exploring the challenges and analyzing the implications of militarization on the tourist destination and on the local economy and its iconic attractions. Through a qualitative approach methodology, it is intended to offer an exploratory vision of the current tourism crisis and formulate strategic recommendations to avoid further damage to the tourist image of the destination, the phenomenon of militarization of tourist destinations is unprecedented in Acapulco according to the literature search carried out.

Keywords: Acapulco, Hurricane Otis, militarization, barracks, tourist crisis, urban transformation.

Introduction

Acapulco, a tourist destination that was once synonymous with natural splendor and world-class entertainment, is now at a critical juncture that threatens its status as a favorite location for visitors from around the world. The devastation caused by Hurricane Otis in October 2023 marked the beginning of a series of challenges that have eroded its vibrant tourism industry and altered its identity as a traditional beach destination.

The city has not only had to deal with the aftermath of a devastating disaster caused by the hurricane but has also been hit by a wave of organized crime violence from 2006 to date, a situation that it has not been able to overcome, resulting in an alarming number of deaths, rent charges, kidnappings and the consequent decrease in international tourism. These events have precipitated a decline in key tourism indicators, plunging the local economy into a deep crisis that can be measured in the decrease in its hotel rooms before the hurricane with 20 thousand rooms and 10 months later with 7 thousand hotel rooms, according to figures from both local and state tourism secretaries with data dated August 1 2024 published in different journalistic media that disseminate the hotel occupancy of the destination.

In an attempt to address this situation caused by the overwhelming violence of organized crime and the consequences of the hurricane, the federal government has outlined plans for the construction of military barracks in iconic sites of Acapulco, such as the House of Culture, the Center of Conventions, which is already being dismantled for the construction of a hospital and with the military presence inside, the Papagayo Park and the Golf Club that is already occupied by members of the National Guard and soldiers stationed in the city as possible observe and read in different local media. Although these measures seek to increase security, they raise doubts about the good progress of the destination, which will cause long-term repercussions on tourism and the cultural identity of the port since they change the appearance of its attractions into military barracks, thereby causing an image of militarization of the port and the loss of artificial tourist attractions, such as a large part of its hotels and recreation centers or restaurants, to this must also be added the loss of natural attractions of incalculable value such as thousands of endemic trees and a great variety of fauna until now unquantifiable animal.

This investigative article is important given that it proposes to explore and analyze the current situation of Acapulco, exploring the challenges and analyzing the implications of militarization in the tourist destination and in the local economy and in its iconic attractions. Through a methodology that integrates qualitative approaches, the aim is to offer an exploratory vision of the tourism crisis and formulate strategic recommendations to avoid further damage to the tourist image of the destination given that the phenomenon of militarization of tourist places is unprecedented in that There are no known other national sites in a similar situation according to the literature search carried out for this research.

This study is of singular importance due to the measures implemented by the government as it implies a significant transformation in the main tourist strip of Acapulco, but also raises questions about the future of tourism in the port and its implications on local identity. The militarization of these key spaces generates a public debate in Acapulco society about

prioritizing security over tourism development in this iconic coastal city. This drastic change not only redefines the vocation of these eminently tourist places, but also impacts the economy and the tourist's perception of the tourist destination.

In this context, it is crucial to analyze and understand in depth the factors that have contributed to the decline of Acapulco as a tourist destination and the interrelation between this process and the militarization that is currently taking place. This research seeks to explore the underlying causes, consequences and implications of this complex phenomenon, with the aim of providing a comprehensive and informed vision that contributes to reflection and informed decision-making.

Research question

What is the impact of militarization on the emblematic tourist spaces of Acapulco and how does this affect the perception of the destination and tourist development?

This research question has the main objective of analyzing and understanding how the militarization of iconic tourist places in Acapulco, such as the House of Culture, the Convention Center, the Papagayo Park and the Golf Club, influences the general perception of the destination and in the development of sustainable tourism.

The purpose of this research

It is to explore, identify and describe the effects of militarization in terms of the image of Acapulco as a tourist destination. Inquire among tourism service providers, students and teachers in the tourism area about their opinion on the topic and the future behavior of visitors, those interested in the topic and the possible impact on the local economy. In addition, it seeks to provide recommendations and perspectives that contribute to informed decision-making regarding the proper management of security and tourism development of the destination.

Conceptual Framework

Militarism: According to the RAE, “militarism is described as the excessive preponderance of the military in the politics or public life of a country”, “State policy consisting of the maintenance of a strong military organization with offensive capacity and prepared to war.(ASALE & RAE, 2024) This definition highlights the disproportionate influence of the military in the public, political and social affairs of a country.

Bellicism: The RAE defines “Bellicism as the tendency to promote war or/to resolve conflicts through it.” This definition highlights the aggressive attitude and prone to armed confrontation that characterizes warmongering. (ASALE & RAE, 2024)

Image of the destination: This term refers to the perception and mental representation that tourists have of a destination (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993).

Without a doubt, the image of Acapulco has been repeatedly affected by drug violence and the scenes of people murdered on its main tourist avenue and sometimes on the main beaches of the

port, the recurring warnings from the State Department of The United States has definitely reduced the arrival of American tourism to the port, and of course militarization and violence are factors that have affected the image of Acapulco as a safe destination, which in turn has affected its tourist attraction for very segments. important.

Perception of safety: According to Tarlow (2002), the perception of safety is a key factor in choosing a tourist destination.

In Acapulco, the perception of security can be affected by the military presence and associated drug violence that have diminished that perception.

Safety tourism: According to Mansfeld (2006), this concept refers to tourists' preference for destinations perceived as safe.

This factor can play an important role in the decrease in the popularity of Acapulco, and without a doubt the security of a tourist destination is important for the arrival of international tourism, since due to this the constant alerts from the United States Department of State to its citizens not to travel, have generated a decrease in the flow of foreign tourists to the destination, in addition to drug violence, now there is also the perception of insecurity of a destination that was hit by the devastating passage of a category 5 hurricane like Otis , and if the militarization of the destination is added to this, it can then be stated that in the preferences of tourists the search for tourist destinations without security problems will be a constant.

Resilience of tourism destinations: This concept refers to the ability of a destination to resist, adapt or recover from challenges or disturbances (Butler, 2013).

In the context of Acapulco, resilience can be crucial for its ability to recover from its current tourism decline and the problems it currently suffers; on many occasions Acapulco has shown its resilience to natural phenomena such as Category 3 Hurricane Paulina. in October 1997 that devastated a large part of the city and its tourist area, but without a doubt the resilience of a tourist destination goes hand in hand with the intervention of the authority and the government's effort to recover the destination and the adaptability of its people to emergency and crisis situations. In the case of Acapulco, it should be highlighted as a case study that in situations of serious crisis or emergencies, the city must be divided from the tourist destination, since in both cases studies have been carried out, as reported by Muñoz et al (2023), the capacity of Recovery or resilience are not the same in both cases. In studies carried out by this author, it was observed that the resilience of Acapulco as a city was much faster and more effective than as a tourist destination, and as a sample or example of this, we must The city began to recover in weeks from Hurricane Otis and the widespread looting of its shops and warehouses, restaurants and hotels, convenience stores, self-service stores and supermarkets by a mob that for a week looted the city due to the inaction and passivity of the security authority. the three levels of government, something never seen in the history of the city, for its part Acapulco as a tourist destination and ten months after the hurricane is still in recovery seeking to rebuild its devastated tourist

infrastructure with a hotel plant of more than 20 thousand rooms, of which at the time of writing these lines, 7 thousand rooms are available.

Tourism governance: This concept refers to the ways in which actors and institutions (public, private and community) interact, make decisions and exercise authority in relation to tourism (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

Tourism governance can be a key factor in the way in which Acapulco manages its tourist decline and its militarization, in recent years the authority at its three levels of government has been highly questioned by offering poor and ineffective management in relation to the insecurity, drug violence and pressure exerted by social groups that do not find attention and solutions to their demands, thereby causing repeated seizures of the once international main tourist route, to carry out their marches, rallies and blockades for up to 24 consecutive hours, taking hostages. to the city and its main tourist avenue, generating chaos and the image of a tourist destination without governance or authority, institutional weakness is manifest in Acapulco to carry out effective tourism governance.

Militarization: Mendoza (2019) defines militarization as the presence and/or intervention of the armed forces in a specific area.

In the context of Acapulco, it refers to the military presence in tourist spaces such as the beaches full of tourists with the presence of the different armed forces in the face of the wave of murders in sunlight not only of tourists but among the different members of the cartels. of drugs that compete for drug sales plazas or spaces on the streets and beaches of Acapulco, the impact of the militarization of the destination seriously affects the perception of security and the image of the destination.

Theoretical Framework

Acapulco has entered the life cycle of the tourist product in the stage of decline, the decline of the tourist destination is due to various factors such as the loss of competitiveness compared to other tourist sites, the image of an unsafe place due to drug violence that today Since 2006, it has been experiencing the deterioration of its tourist infrastructure due to the devastating impact of Hurricane Otis and poor maintenance of its tourist area by the government, the loss of more than 70% of its hotel plant and its main sources of employment, a very low investment in promotion and advertising, the loss of such important segments as cruises, spring breakers, almost zero nightlife due to drug violence, the still unquantifiable loss of thousands of trees, flora and fauna due to the passage of the hurricane that show the tourist city with an extremely devastated environment, a tourist destination without its own identity, for many years without sufficient air connection and the consequent decrease to almost zero of international tourism, the militarization of iconic sites of the city, and a long etcetera, all these relevant factors lead us to understand and affirm that the situation that Acapulco is currently experiencing is in the stage of decline within the life cycle of tourist destinations.

In his work, Factors that contribute to the decline of tourism, Ioannides states that there are multiple factors that can contribute to the decline of a tourist destination. These include the overload of infrastructure, the depreciation of the environment, the loss of cultural authenticity and increased competition from other destinations (Ioannides, 1992, p., 711).

The current actions of the federal government to try to address and mitigate or reduce the problem of drug violence and insecurity in the destination have led to the installation of military barracks in Acapulco in iconic places not only for their eminently touristic vocation but for being fundamental pillars of fun and family recreation such as the Papagayo Park the ecological lung of the port of Acapulco, also the installation of a military barracks in the House of Culture of Acapulco, and the Convention Center, a tourist place par excellence, the Golf Club taken by the National Guard as command, filling the main tourist avenue with four barracks that added to the permanence in the upper area of the port where the 27 Military Zone and the Naval Zone are also located, covering a range of approximately 13 kilometers in length of the bay in an area extremely covered by the military presence in times of peace and where despite this drug violence has not decreased, the above without failing to mention the presence of the local and state police, tourist police, ministerial police and other police corporations who operate in the city.

In his study on the militarization of tourist destinations in Mexico, Mendoza argues that the military presence can have both positive and negative effects. On the one hand, it can improve security and deter crime, but, on the other hand, it can discourage visitors and negatively affect the image of the destination (Mendoza, 2019, p. 375).

Regarding the perception of insecurity in tourist destinations, the port of Acapulco has not improved its indicators, and at the national level, the tourist port has on some occasions been ranked in the first national place for insecurity and the number of violent murders. At the national level it continues to increase with 182 thousand deaths since the beginning of President AMLO's government according to figures from the SNSP (2023), as far as Acapulco is concerned, the newspaper El Sol de Acapulco, subsidiary of Sol de México, on its front page on the 21st March 2024 publishes the following: Jonathan Padilla / El Sol de México.

In Guerrero, 156 homicides were recorded during February, 11 more than in January, reported yesterday the head of the Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection (SSPC), Rosa Icela Rodríguez. "The entity went from ninth to fifth place nationally by number of murders, displacing Michoacán." ("Guerrero goes from ninth to fifth place nationally by number of murders") During the last few months, Guerrero has faced a wave of violence that affects its tourist cities as well as the towns in the mountains, where organized crime groups commit massacres or launch attacks with explosive drones.

<https://www.elsoldeacapulco.com.mx/republica/sociedad/en-dos-meses-aumentan-homicidios-en-guerrero-11626262.html>

Perception of safety in tourist destinations, Tarlow has studied the importance of the perception of safety in choosing a tourist destination. According to his research, the

perception of safety is one of the most important factors for tourists when selecting a destination (Tarlow, 2002, p. 80).

In the case of Acapulco, the sophistication of the drug cartels in using cutting-edge technology to combat their rivals, such as drones with explosives, as in the war between Ukraine and Russia, increases the perception of insecurity, the perception of security can be affected by the military presence and the associated violence, the most compelling and indubitable proof of the impact is the loss of very important tourist segments mentioned above associated with the increase in the number of deaths.

Sustainable tourism development: According to Weaver's research, sustainable tourism development is key to avoiding the decline of tourist destinations. This approach advocates a balance between economic growth, environmental conservation and social well-being (Weaver, 2006, p. 25).

In the case of Acapulco, the devastation caused by Hurricane Otis left its environment very damaged; the authorities in charge of ecology and the environment at the three levels of government have so far not publicly released the figures for the number of hectares of flora and fauna, trees of all types and animals that were devastated by the hurricane, it is not yet known if they have initiated studies or evaluations of the destructive impact of Otis or at least initiated a massive reforestation campaign to replace trees or species endemic to the Just like the fauna, in addition to the above, the urban area continues to grow in its spaces considered as a territorial reserve of the city and the destination. An example of this is the Veladero Park, which continues to be invaded by unscrupulous leaders who take advantage of the fall of trees begin the process of burning and clearing land to establish new human settlements without the necessary basic services or the authorization and disincorporation of those lands from the territorial reserve of the city that have been authorized by the government, the temperature of the environment of the port Acapulco ranges between 33 degrees to 36 degrees of heat, but with the significant loss of flora and fauna caused by the hurricane, the temperature of the current environment has risen two more degrees, reaching levels of 38 degrees, which will rise in the season. summer or the so-called "canicula days" which is the highest level of heat in each summer season.

From the above, it can be deduced that what was stated by (Weaver, 2006) the destination is very hurt in the conservation of its environment and in its social well-being, the ecological imbalance and the conservation of its environment will bring unforeseen consequences as a unhealthy destination in environmental terms, which will have an impact on its economy.

On the other hand, if militarization continues, the authorities of the three levels of government, in the case of Acapulco, must consider as a strategy to rejuvenate the destination and mitigate the negative effects of militarization and apply public policies aimed at strengthening tourism development. sustainable.

For his part, Ahworth, G. (2007), in his book *Militarizing the Tourist Gaze: Architecture, Space, and Subjectivity* (2007), explores how architecture and military space influence the way tourists perceive and experience tourist destinations. The book analyzes how the presence of military structures, such as fortresses, bunkers and battlefields, affects the subjectivity of tourists and contributes to the construction of tourist narratives.

In the book *Tourism and Politics: The Case of the Military and Homeland Security Experiences* (2011) by Noam Shoval: It analyzes how the militarization of tourist destinations can be used to strengthen national identity and promote security. He examines how tourism experiences related to the military and national security influence visitors and the perception of tourist destinations.

Jill Didur in her book *Unsettling Partition: Literature, Gender, Memory* (2006) examines the case of Cyprus as a militarized tourist destination after the partition of the island and how this has affected collective memory and tourist narrative. She focuses on literature, gender, and identity in relation to the militarization of tourism.

For her part, Stephanie Brewer, in her article *Militarized Mexico: the war was lost, but peace does not come* (2021), states that the militarization strategy implemented by the current Mexican government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has deepened the participation of the forces armed.

Brewer, (2021) mentions that AMLO reiterated in his successful 2018 campaign that he would reorient the strategy against violence. As president, he has implemented social programs that, in her analysis, will address some of the economic causes of insecurity.

The military nature of the National Guard caused concern from the beginning due to the risks it represents for human rights. Members of the GN National Guard have been involved in alleged arbitrary executions in 2020 and 2021; In 2021, the GN has sought to get relatives of the victims to accept compensation in exchange for not promoting investigations into the events. Since 2020, the GN has approximately the same number of complaints before the National Human Rights Commission as the Secretariat of National Defense, Sedena. In the first three months of 2021, the GN and Sedena were the authorities most reported for mistreatment, among other human rights violations, and each of these institutions motivated more than one complaint per day on average. Brewer, (2021).

The Acapulco case

In relation to the Acapulco case, in recent years the presence of the armed forces has been constant since months before the devastating passage of Hurricane Otis in October 2023, the military presence has been observed in iconic places such as the Convention Center with the arrival and installation of a significant number of military elements who stealthily and silently settled in that tourist space from the month of February 2018 whose presence and participation

became more evident in the work of support to the health authorities for the vaccination of the local population during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 1 Places and dates of arrival of military forces to Acapulco

Number	Location	Approximate date of arrival	Observations
1	Acapulco Convention Center	Approximately February 2018	The presence of military personnel began on that date, before the Covid-19 pandemic
2	House of Culture	October 24, 2023	From that date on, they secretly entered the inside using its facilities as bedrooms and bathrooms despite the destruction of the facilities by Hurricane Otis.
3	Papagayo Park	October 24, 2023	From that date on, they secretly entered the inside using its facilities as bedrooms and bathrooms despite the destruction of the facilities by Hurricane Otis.
4	Golf Club	October 24, 2023	From that date on, they secretly entered the inside using its facilities as bedrooms and bathrooms despite the destruction of the

			facilities by Hurricane Otis.
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Source: Own elaboration.

The Secretary of National Defense, Luis Cresencio Sandoval, during one of President AMLO's press conferences in Acapulco at the naval base facilities, announced that there are already 21 properties for the installation of military commands and 2 housing units for the National Guard that will be used as housing for the elements of the military forces with an approximate number of 3,970 military members with an investment of five thousand million Mexican pesos, and the places where said military facilities will be built are the following according to what was published in the local newspaper "El Sur",

According to the newspaper article, the 21 properties identified for the construction of National Guard barracks in Acapulco and Coyuca de Benítez, Guerrero are listed in the following table 2.

Table 2 Properties identified by SEDENA for the construction of GN barracks

Number	Property	Location
1	International Airport Acapulco	Acapulco, site of tourist interest
2	Military Camp in Cumbres de Llano Largo Acapulco	Acapulco
3	Modulo Costa Azul (Colonia Costa Azul)	Acapulco, site of tourist interest
4	Twin Tanks Water (Capama) Acapulco	Acapulco
5	Acabus collective transport terminal	Acapulco
6	Center for Industrial and Services Technological Studies (CETIS 117)	Coyuca de Benites
7	Los Terrazas	Acapulco
8	Technological Institute of Acapulco	Acapulco
9	Industrial and Services Technological Baccalaureate Center (CBTIS 14)	Acapulco
10	Colonia Palma Sola	Acapulco
11	FINABIEN TELECOM	Acapulco
12	BAM 7	Coyuca de Benites
13	Acapulco Convention Center or Acapulco International Center, also today converted into construction for a 3rd Hospital level	Main tourist avenue, site of tourist interest
14	Bodega la postal	Acapulco
15	House of Culture of Acapulco	Main tourist avenue, site of tourist interest
16	Bugambilia Hotel	Site of tourist interest
17	Papagayo Park	Main tourist avenue, site of tourist interest
18	Social Rehabilitation Center (Prison, CERESO)	Acapulco

19	Expolicía	Acapulco
20	Fractionation Costa Dorada Acapulco	Acapulco
21	Viverista Acapulco Ecological Park	Acapulco

Source: Own construction with data obtained from the El Sur newspaper.

As can be seen in table 2, the list released by the General Secretary of National Defense lists 6 eminently touristic nature sites that are contemplated for the construction of barracks, 4 of them are the most emblematic or iconographic sites of the tourist destination have already been taken over by the military forces and currently construction of military installations has begun inside.

Table 3 Land for the construction of Housing Units for elements of the GN

Number	Propert	Location
1	Colonia Granjas del Marques with 460 homes	Acapulco
2	Playa Diamante with 120 homes	Acapulco, tourist area
3	Total homes projected to be built in Acapulco 580 homes	Acapulco 580 Total homes

Source: Own construction with data obtained from the El Sur newspaper



Figure 1 Location map of the properties where GN barracks will be built in Acapulco

Source: Image taken from the newspaper El Sur

It should be noted that the El Sur newspaper's journalistic note mentions that these properties have been identified and selected by the authorities for this purpose, but it does not specify whether they have already been acquired or if they are in the acquisition process. South

Acapulco. (2024). "There are already 21 properties for National Guard barracks in Acapulco and Coyuca de Benítez." ("Tag: Coyuca de Benítez - El Sur Acapulco suracapulco I News...") https://suracapulco.mx/impreso/4/ya-hay-21-predios-para-cuarteles-de-la-guardia-nacional_-in-acapulco-and-coyuca-de-benitez/

The days after Otis made landfall, despite the presence of National Guard troops, there were long days of looting that left all the large and medium-sized stores in Acapulco devastated. López Obrador then promised to create a barracks in each neighborhood with more than a thousand homes. (Reconstruction of Acapulco, 2023)

During his administration, the president has been multiplying the work of the Armed Forces, not only in security, but also in construction work on large projects or in the management of airports and customs, something that his critics have described as a worrying militarization of Mexico. (Reconstruction of Acapulco, 2023).

Legal framework

However, it is necessary to highlight the places considered as touristic iconographic, that is, the 4 places that are located on the main tourist avenue that have already been taken by the military forces, and that given the legal nature of those places will have to go through a process of purchase - sale of the property or place, or change of legal regime, as was the case of the Acapulco Convention Center, whose legal trust regime had to be extinguished by decree dated July 11, 2023 published in the official newspaper of the government of the state of Guerrero by the state executive (State Governor) and whose facilities and administration were returned to the federal government to make way for the destruction of the Acapulco Convention Center and give up its land and the rest of architectural structure for the construction of a hospital radically changing its object, its image and its tourist functionality and today also to give way to the construction of a barracks or military command.

In relation to the House of Culture and according to the journalist Carlos Ortiz, initially that place was donated as a property through a donation agreement conditioned for 99 years by a German citizen named Wolfgang Schoenborn Stuertz, a naturalized Mexican, originally from Lezburg, on the 29th. November 1975 to the government of the State of Guerrero, represented by the then governor Rubén Figueroa Figueroa, Carlos Ortiz (2024).

Carlos Ortiz (2024) also writes that the property measured 11,076 square meters and whose owners prior to the German citizen were the couple formed by Ignacio Soto Durazo and his wife Alicia Almeida de Soto.

It was during the following government, that of Alejandro Cervantes Delgado, when the Guerrero Institute of Culture was created on April 20, 1983 as a decentralized public organization with legal personality and its own assets. The president signed decree number 468 for this purpose. "The House of Culture of Acapulco then became part of its heritage and should be the guarantor that Schoenborn Stuertz's conditional clause was fully and punctually fulfilled." ("Modifying the House of Culture would violate a

property donation.”) There should be no interest of any nature other than the cultural nature. On April 26, 1988, when the Culture Promotion Law was issued, it became a deconcentrated administrative body (OAD), dependent on the Secretary of Social Development of the state government. And it was not until October 15, 1999 that it resumed its original character as a decentralized public body (OPD). Carlos Ortiz (2024).

The agreement established its eminently cultural purposes for the enjoyment of the people of Acapulco and the city, then on Tuesday, May 31, 1988, the agreement was published in the official newspaper of the State Government, No. 44 issued by the governor of the state José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, an agreement that transforms Acapulco's house of culture into a coordinated establishment of cultural services. Changing its legal vocation is a violation of the purposes of that donation and of the agreement by which the land was donated for the construction of the Acapulco House of Culture, which has already been taken over by the National Guard.

Photo 1 House of Culture of Acapulco



Photograph taken from the internet before Hurricane Otis

The Papagayo Park was created by decree dated January 12, 1993 issued by the state executive Mr. José Francisco Ruiz Massieu and published in the official newspaper of the government of the state of Guerrero, also said decree was ratified in all its parts, terms and clauses and legal provisions also by former governor Rene Juárez Cisneros dated September 6, 2002, but recently the state governor Evelyn Cesia Salgado Pineda issued a new decree dated December 21, 2021 that substantially modifies its organic structure, but The purposes and objectives of the Park

continue to be preserved as mentioned in Article 2. The Papagayo Park will have the following objectives: I. Provide recreational services to the Acapulcan population and tourism in general; II. Promote culture, conservation and ecological protection; III. Promote citizen enjoyment of its facilities and equipment, and IV. The others that are similar to the previous ones, that is, in fact or de facto changing its legal nature as a public social welfare establishment means violating that decree, so nowhere in the text of the decree is it mentioned that it may serve in times of peace to accommodate military installations or that barracks could be built inside.

Photo 2 Entrance to Papagayo Park with the announcement of the construction of battalions and commands for the National Guard



Methodology

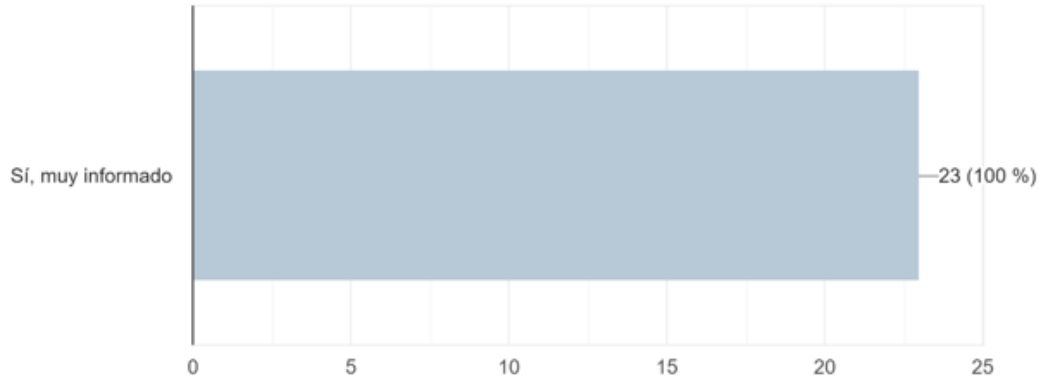
To address the issue of militarization and the decline of Acapulco as a tourist destination, a qualitative research approach was used. This research approach seeks to understand the factors that have contributed to this situation and analyze the implications that militarization has on tourism and the local economy. The methodology is descriptive since it aims to describe the causes and effects of the phenomenon that the tourist destination is currently experiencing. The study focused specifically on knowing the opinion of 50 key figures segmented into two groups between tourism service providers, teachers and students. university students of higher degrees related to the tourism career, from a universe of 500 people. Through the data collection instrument such as the application of a questionnaire with 10 questions that seeks to know what the opinion of all these people is, the application took place in four areas, the tourist area, the urban area, the university campus and through the internet, by sending the questionnaire via

email and WhatsApp in a period of 15 days from June 15 to 30, 2024, in the case of sending the questionnaire, the electronic league or link was previously sent to each one of the participants to be filled out on the Google forms platform. The sample is of a non-probabilistic type for convenience where it was sought to choose representative characters from each of the segments chosen and mentioned previously and divided into two segments such as university students and teachers and tourism service providers. Regarding documentary analysis, relevant documents were analyzed, such as government reports, tourist statistics, news from newspapers or newspapers and academic articles. These documents provided contextual information that supported the findings obtained through the questionnaires.

Results

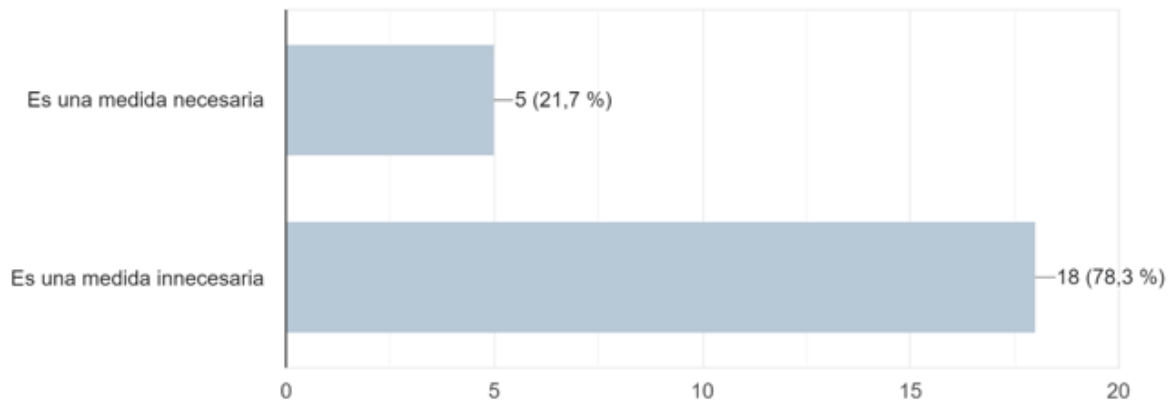
Tourist service providers

Graph 1



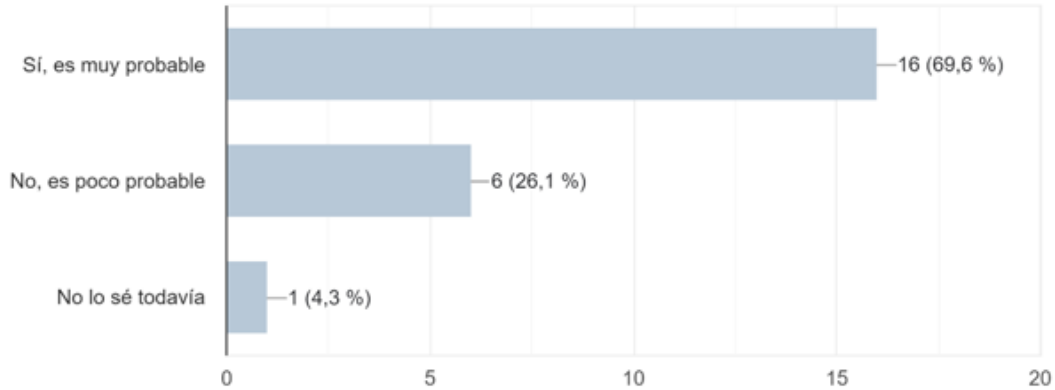
As can be seen, 100% of the tourism service providers are informed about the federal government's security strategy on the subject of the construction of the 21 National Guard barracks in different places in Acapulco.

Graph 2 What is your opinion on this?



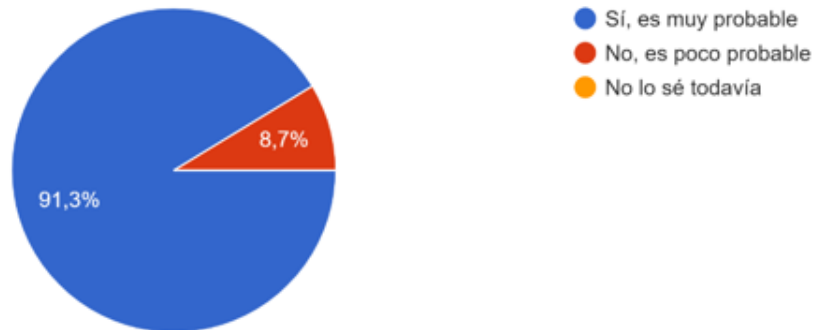
When asked their opinion, 21.7% responded that it is a necessary measure, and 78.3% of the interviewed tourism service providers responded that the installation of the 21 National Guard barracks in Acapulco is an unnecessary measure.

Graph 3 Do you think this measure will negatively impact tourism activity and the destination?



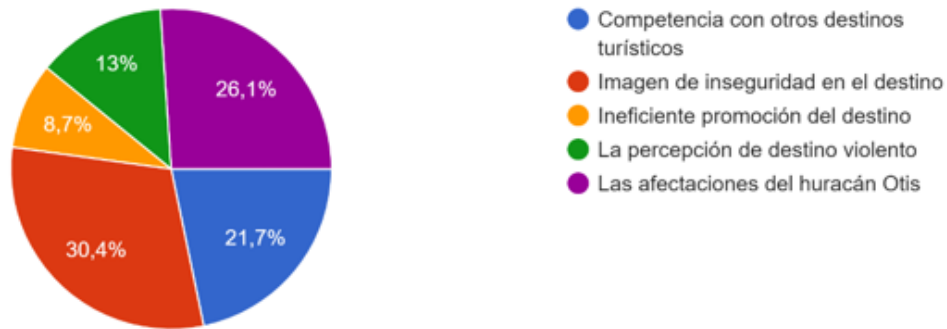
The answer to question 3 asked to the tourism service providers, 69.6% consider that this measure will have a negative impact on the tourist activity of the destination, 26% consider it unlikely and the rest do not know yet, they prefer to wait for the results of that measurement.

Graph 4 Do you think that as a result of Hurricane Otis, violence has increased in the city?



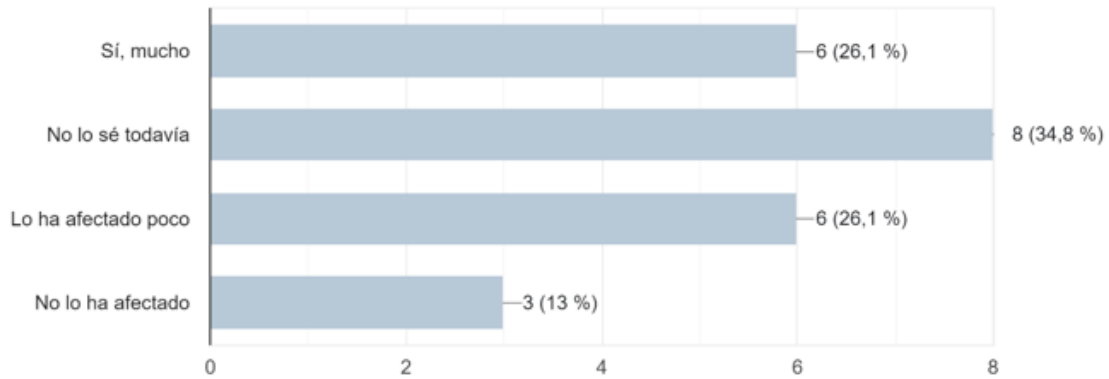
The graph is very eloquent, 91% of tourism service providers consider that after the devastating passage of Hurricane Otis, violence in Acapulco has increased significantly, the rest consider it unlikely.

Graph 5 After Hurricane Otis, what do you consider the main challenge you face as PST in Acapulco?



The main challenge for tourism service providers after Hurricane Otis is the image of insecurity of the destination with 30.4%, followed by 26.1% which are the effects left by the hurricane and that to date have not been resolved, with 21.7 % mark the competition with other destinations that Acapulco has due to the marked deterioration that the destination shows in many aspects caused and exacerbated by the hurricane.

Graph 6 Do you think that the city as a militarized destination has already affected your business?



Regarding this question, 34.8% of tourism service providers maintain that they still do not know if the militarization of the destination will affect their businesses, for their part, 26.1% consider that it will affect a lot, and similarly 26.1% He responded that this militarization has had little effect on him.

Graph 7 What strategies do you think could be implemented to promote Acapulco as a safe destination, without reaching the point of militarization?



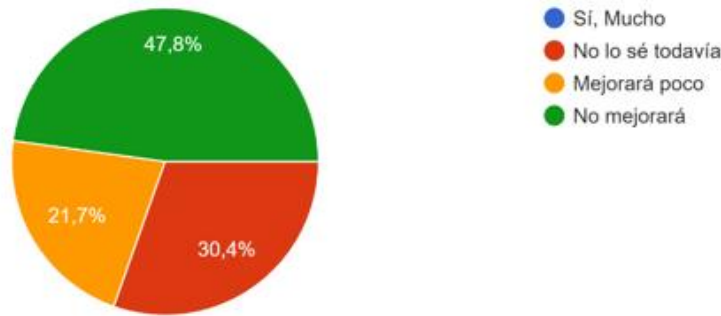
Regarding the question about strategies that could be implemented to promote Acapulco as a safe destination, without reaching the point of militarization, they responded as follows: 39.1% said that injecting economic resources into the destination to improve its infrastructure would be good for it, 30.4% mention the urgent need to propose a new reconstruction plan, and 17.4% respond that with more intelligence actions insecurity can be combated

Graph 8 What do you think about the installation of barracks in the Convention Center, Papagayo Park, the House of Culture and the Golf Club?



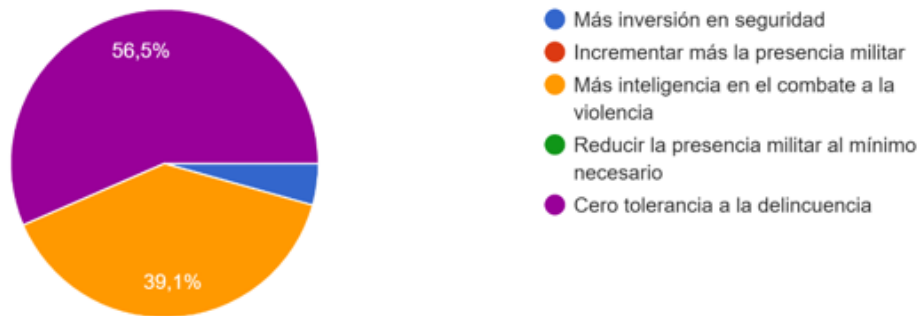
When asked about their opinion in relation to the installation of the national guard barracks in eminently tourist places, their response was the following: 87% responded that it does not agree with the image of a tourist destination, 8 7 of them respond that it is an exaggeration to install those military barracks inside those iconographic tourist spaces, the sum of both gives us an overwhelming response against this measure that they consider they do not agree with.

Graph 9 Do you consider that the installation of 21 barracks in Acapulco will improve the security of the city



47.8% of those surveyed were emphatic in stating that with these measures the security of the city will not improve, 30.4% indicated that they do not yet know if these measures will improve the security of the destination, and 21.7% indicate that security will improve little. , none of the responses were positive, there is a lot of skepticism to expect positive results with these measures from tourism service providers.

Graph 10 What measures do you suggest to improve security in Acapulco?



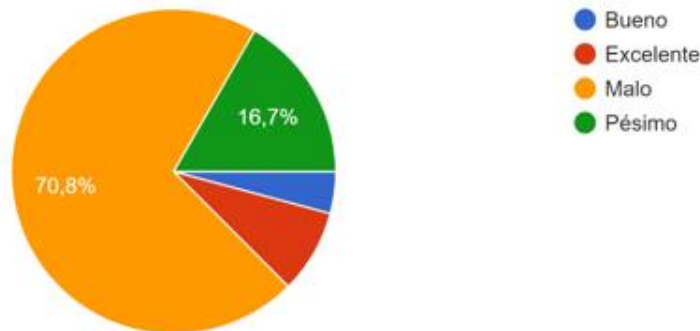
When asking tourism service providers about suggesting measures to improve security in Acapulco, the responses were the following: 56.5% point to zero tolerance for crime, 39.1% indicate that there should be more intelligence actions in the fight against crime. violence, the rest opt for more investments in security.

Results

Teachers and students of tourism schools

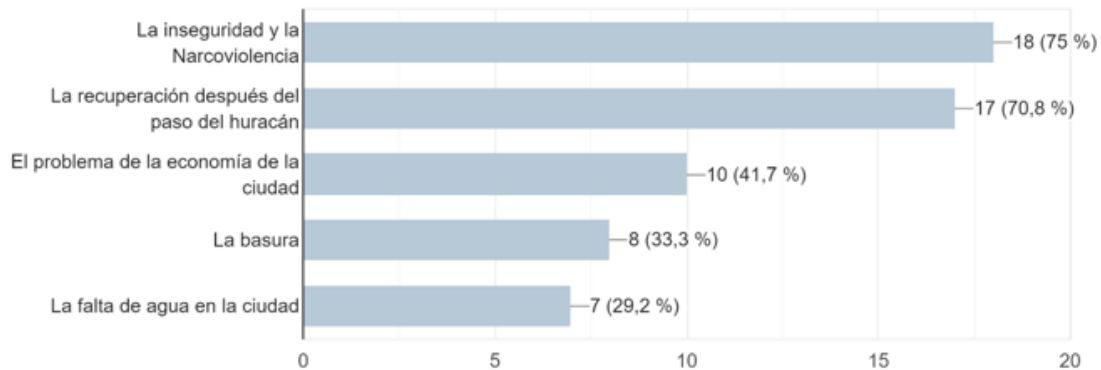
Graph 11

What is your perception of the current state of tourism in Acapulco?



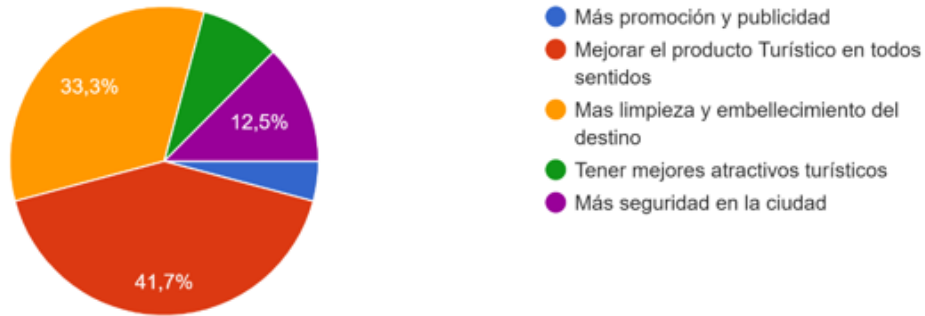
The perception of the teachers and students of tourism schools who were interviewed about the current state of tourism in Acapulco is mostly devastating, as can be seen in this graph, 70.8%, that is, more than half consider it bad, and If we add to this the percentage of the remaining 16.7% of those interviewed, we are faced with an opinion that is undoubtedly mostly negative,

Graph 12 What do you think are the main challenges that Acapulco faces as a tourist destination?



In this multiple choice question, for this segment of respondents, the main challenge facing the tourist destination is undoubtedly insecurity and drug violence with 75%, followed even by the recovery of the destination after the passage of Hurricane Otis, with This concludes that the problem of drug violence has currently been unresolved for decades, while the recovery of the destination after the hurricane is expected to be gradual.

Graph 13 What measures do you consider necessary to revitalize tourism in Acapulco?



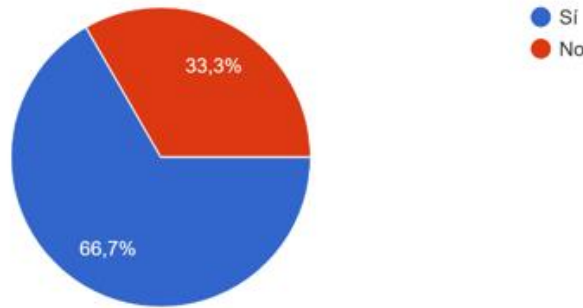
Regarding what measures they consider necessary to revitalize tourism, 41.7% said that the improvement of the tourism product should be a priority, followed by 33.3% who mention there should be more cleaning and beautification of the destination, the rest continue to insist in the field of security in the city.

Graph 14 What measures do you consider necessary to improve security in Acapulco?



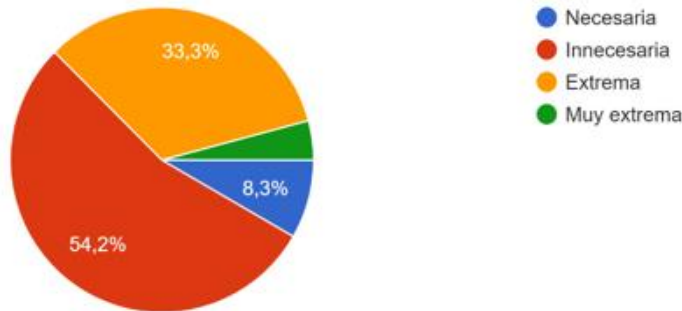
As can be seen in this graph, the response of those interviewed, that is, 50% of them, opt for intelligence strategies to combat organized crime, just like the tourism service providers, which shows that the intelligence on the actions of a greater number of national guard troops in combating organized crime, without a doubt, this means more intelligence on the installation of 21 barracks to combat insecurity and drug violence.

Graph 15 Do you know about the federal government's security strategy in the construction of 21 barracks, 4 of them in tourist places such as the House of Culture, the Golf Club, the Convention Center and Papagayo Park?



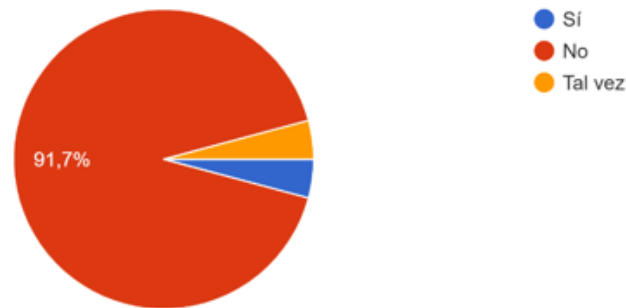
66.7% of those interviewed responded that they are aware of the federal government's security strategy with the installation of 21 national guard barracks in Acapulco, 4 of them in iconographic tourism places such as the Convention Center, the House of Culture, the Papagayo Park and the Golf Club, the rest responded negatively.

Graph 16 What is your opinion about the militarization in Acapulco and the installation of barracks in tourist and iconic places and its impact on tourism?



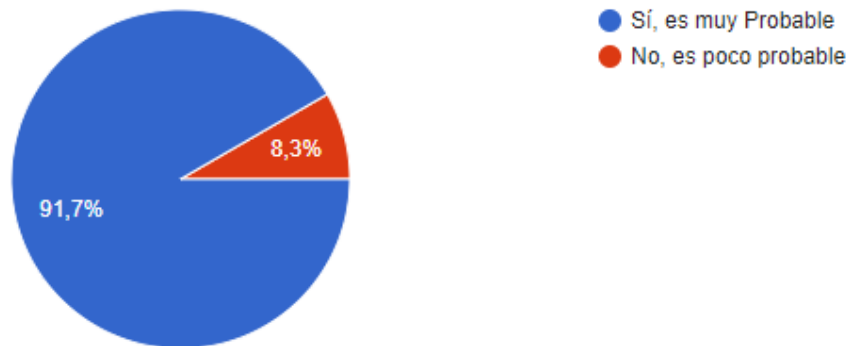
The opinion of 54.2% of those interviewed mentioned that this measure is unnecessary, as did the PSTs who were interviewed, while 33.3% consider that the militarization of the tourist destination with the installation of 21 barracks is an extreme measure, 4 of them in eminently tourist sites.

Graph 17 Do you agree that military commands are built in emblematic places in Acapulco, affecting its essence as recreational centers and eminently tourist places?



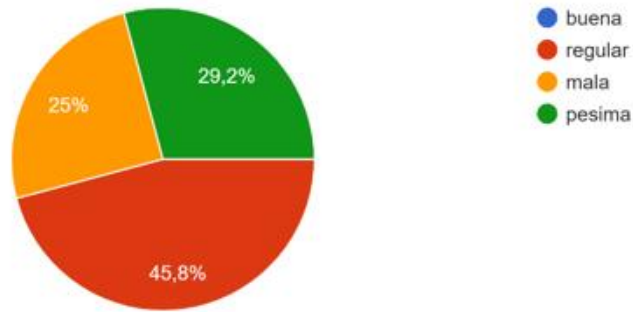
The graph is more than eloquent, 91.7% of those interviewed in this segment stated that they did not agree with the construction of military commands in the emblematic places of tourism in Acapulco, this response is nothing more than confirmation of the previous one, it should not militarize the tourist destination.

Graph 18 Do you think that this measure will affect the image of Acapulco as a tourist destination?



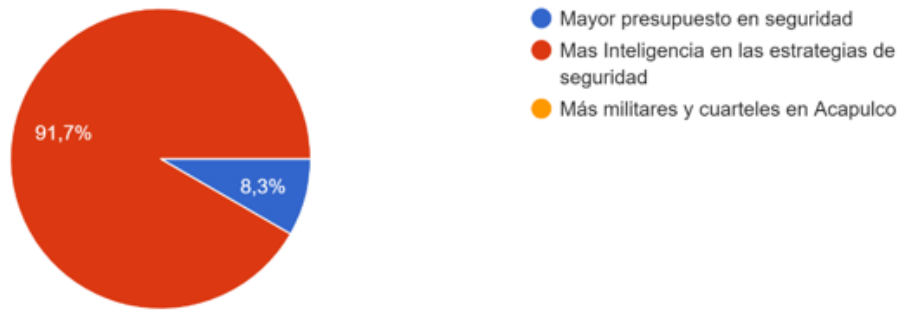
Of course, 91.7% consider that the tourist image of the port will be affected with the militarization and the installation of the 21 barracks for the national guard, 4 of these commands in tourist places, and 2 housing units that are already being built to provide permanent housing. to all the troops detached in Acapulco.

Graph 19 How do you consider the security strategy



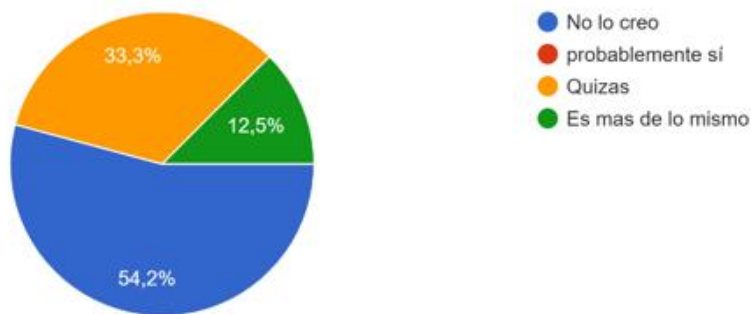
In response to the question, 45.5% respond that the strategy is regular, 29.2% highlight that the measure of militarization of the tourist destination as a security strategy is terrible and the rest, that is, 25% affirm that said measure is bad, but if the response of “terrible” and “bad” is added, the result increases by 54% of negative statements to that strategy.

Graph 20 What security measures do you think could work better in Acapulco?



The following question was also asked to tourism service providers and the result is almost similar, both segments believe that there should be more intelligence in the security strategies of the federal government over the strategy of militarization of the destination, only 8.3% agree in its response for a larger security budget in the face of the militarization of Acapulco.

Graph 21 Do you think that the current strategy of militarizing the destination will work?



Finally, when asked if they consider that the strategy of militarizing the tourist destination will work, skepticism gains ground as more than half respond in the negative, that is, 54.2% consider that said measure will not work. 33.3% hope for a “maybe”, the rest opt for a customary response to the actions of all governments in matters of security, they consider that the militarization of Acapulco is more of the same.

Findings

- 1.- According to the responses of those interviewed, militarization has not served any positive purpose to inhibit or stop the drug violence that the tourist destination has suffered since 2006, since its presence is just that, only in person, the executions in beaches in broad daylight have not stopped in recent months with the arrival of more soldiers to the tourist destination, the collection of fees, extortion and executions and shootings between rival gangs continue, the burning of public service motor transport vehicles does not stop either. the military presence has ended,
- 2.- The militarization or presence of the GN national guard and the Sedena or Navy did not stop the looting that the entire city was subjected to during Hurricane Otis, on the contrary, an excessive tolerance of the military forces to looting was observed, and The presence of the state and municipal police during the looting was non-existent.
- 3.- Militarization has been prioritized excessively in the destination over taking care of the image of Acapulco as a tourist destination, the installation of 21 barracks, 4 of them in eminently tourist places, reflects this.

Conclusions

Excessive militarization has led the port of Acapulco to an exaggerated installation of barracks and military zones. The city already has a military zone, a naval zone and now 4 national guard barracks facilities on the main tourist avenue in a extension of 13 kilometers that includes the presence of the preventive police, and on many occasions with the presence and support of the state police and the ministerial police and a small but in-person force of the tourist police, in addition to the traffic police and police auxiliary and banking, there are 12 military and police corporations with a presence that act daily in the port. If you really wanted to give results, you could divide the tourist avenue between all the armed forces and police by 1.08 kilometers to

protect and monitor each of those corporations in the 13 kilometers that the Acapulco bay measures, distributed between 1.08 km per corporation.

It is concluded, according to what was expressed by the interviewees, that the militarization of Acapulco will negatively impact the image and negatively increase the perception of a tourist destination with problems of insecurity and militarization.

According to the interviewees, it is concluded that drug violence increased immediately after the meteorological phenomenon given the scenes of robbery and looting that not only the tourist area but the entire city was subjected to.

Recommendations

Taking into consideration the responses of those interviewed, it is recommended that the federal government listen to and know the opinion of the tourism sector for this type of measures that, in the voice of tourism service providers, students and teachers of tourism schools, are unnecessary measures of According to the experience of previous actions similar to the militarization of the destination, militarization does not solve or reduce the problem of drug violence that Acapulco has been experiencing for almost two decades.

According to those interviewed, zero tolerance to the problem of drug violence and more intelligence actions in the fight against this phenomenon are recommended.

It is suggested to work on changing the image of insecurity that the tourist destination has had for almost two decades.

According to what was expressed by those interviewed, in addition to a port reconstruction plan, greater economic investment in tourist infrastructure and urban equipment that was damaged by the hurricane and that until today after 10 months of the tragedy still continues to show an image of destruction, abandonment, aging, presenting a changed and impoverished destiny.

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