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The Local Gastronomic Experience of Domestic Visitors in Their Expenditure for Sustainable Development in Santa Elena-Ecuador

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Abstract

The visitor's expenditure on local gastronomy can contribute to sustainable development and significantly reactivate tourist destinations affected by the covid-19 pandemic. This study analyzes the incidence of local gastronomic experience towards the expenditure of domestic visitors for sustainable development of tourist destinations. An online survey of 237 residents of the province in Santa Elena-Ecuador is used. In the methodology, a previous questionnaire is applied to identify the characteristics of local gastronomy. Subsequently, the gastronomic experience is analyzed in two phases of consumption: before and during. In the gastronomic experience during consumption, three aspects that influence the economic expenditure of the visitor are considered: a. tangible (the type of establishment and the number of dishes consumed), b. social (the number of people accompanying the visitor) and c. economic (the monthly economic income of the visitor). In this phase of tourist consumption, the quantitative study of the multiple linear regression model is applied. The results explain that tangible, social and economic aspects during the visitor's gastronomic experience affect their expenditure. Furthermore, it is explained that local gastronomy has positive benefits for sustainable development of the destination. This study suggests that social interaction between visitors and their companion through gastronomic experience is a relevant issue for co-creation and marketing strategies of food and beverage establishments. Future studies may implicate identifying domestic visitors' social ties through gastronomic experience, also, if this local gastronomy could be traditional to create a niche tourism market and analyze the relation of visitor's expenditure with sustainable development of the destination.

Keywords: local gastronomy, visitor's expenditure, domestic visitor, sustainable development, tourist consumption, food & beverage establishments.

Introduction

In tourist destinations, different actions have been integrated to promote sustainable development (SD), such as implementing sustainability certifications, policies and plans, tools (ecological footprint, carrying capacity, corporate/business responsibility reports), technology for sustainability, among others. Governmental, non-governmental and private stakeholders have participated internationally in the implementation of these actions in the tourism sectors: accommodation; food and beverage (F&B); transport; recreation, attractions, and leisure (D'Arco et al., 2021). Although these proposals can contribute to the three pillars of sustainability: the economy of these destinations, social development and environmental protection, negative effects continue to be identified because of tourism (D'Arco et al., 2021; Palacios-Florencio et al., 2021).

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At the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic, a positive effect on the environment (one of the key axes of the SD) was identified due to the movement restrictions incorporated by the governments that limited the activities of the different economic sectors, both at the national and international level. These restrictions were executed with the purpose of avoiding the spread of the virus and minimizing its negative impact on people's health (Wright, 2021). However, this positive effect on the environment turned out to be temporary and negative in the tourism economy (Rume & Islam, 2020).

After the start of the pandemic, the F&B tourism sector has shown its resilience by incorporating technology and biosecurity measures, as well as directing its services to the local market with the purpose of promoting tourism reactivation and in turn contributing to some objectives of the SD, for instance: reduction of carbon gas emissions (Seyfi et al., 2022; Woyo, 2021). Domestic tourism has been more representative internationally in the tourism economy since the pandemic began (Arbulú et al., 2021).

In Ecuador, various actions have been implemented to deal with the pandemic and minimize its negative effects on the tourism economy at the national and local levels. The government took some actions to cope with the covid-19, such as: restrictions to limit the spread of the virus between March and September 2020; reduction of capacity at the beginning of the pandemic. Consequently, the government established some regulations to help tourism businesses to overcome the recession, for instance: the postponement of tax payments, the reduction of income tax in receptive tourism companies, among others. Some tourism businesses closed, and others, adapted to cope with the pandemic, such as food and beverage establishments (FBE) (Ministerio de Turismo, 2022; Superintendencia de Compañías, 2021).

The F&B sector offers gastronomic experiences, this tourism service is made up of tangible and intangible elements (Carpio et al., 2021). Although it is clear that the gastronomic experience plays an important role in tourist destinations, it has not been deeply examined whether the tangible characteristics of this gastronomic experience, as well as personal factors, such as: economic income, number of people accompanying the visitor and the number of dishes consumed as a result of the experience itself, have influenced the tourist spending of visitors for the contribution to the SD of tourist destinations. Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the influence of the visitor's local gastronomic experience on their expenditure for the contribution to SD.

2. Literature review

2.1 Gastronomic Experience

Gastronomic tourism has been considered a type of tourism that has increased interest in the last three decades and has been analyzed as the main reason for traveling to a tourist destination and also as the main complementary activity when visiting a destination (Mariani & Bresciani, 2022; Mora et al., 2021; Soltani et al., 2021), since visitors consume the gastronomy of the destination when they carry out other types of tourist activities (Garibaldi et al., 2021). For this reason, the gastronomic experience has been analyzed as a factor focused on the demand and pertinent to the supply in tourism gastronomic service, thus, there are topics studied such as: motivations, intentions, loyalty, and satisfaction of tourists (Mora et al., 2021; Soltani et al., 2021). These aspects could be used for marketing purposes by the tourist offer and promote the economic development of destinations (Mariani & Bresciani, 2022; Mora et al., 2021). And in turn, the culture of destinations could be strengthened through gastronomy (Wondirad et al., 2021).

In the context of marketing, the gastronomic experience has also been analyzed through the concept of co-creation, which indicates that the consumer's experience is the result of their interaction with other parts involved during the gastronomic consumption process, such as companions. This interaction includes tangible aspects (tools and equipment for culinary production) and intangible aspects (local gastronomy traditions and customs) of the gastronomic culinary offer and that are influenced by social and cultural factors (Karamustafa & Ülker, 2019; Mariani & Bresciani, 2022). These extrinsic factors to the tourist demand, could be modified by the gastronomic tourist offer for the satisfaction of visitors, and therefore, increase their expenditure. On the other hand, the visitor's experience is influenced by their own perception that depends on the assimilation of information, which is subjective (Rachão, et al., 2021). In general, the gastronomic experience promotes a social interaction and produces perceptions that could increase expenditure of visitors in the gastronomic service.

2.2 Local gastronomy

Local gastronomy has been a fundamental axis in the visitor's experience in the tourist destination and in the image, they perceive of the destination, this influences consumers' actions, either recommending others, or becoming a frequent visitor (Soltani et al., 2021). Local gastronomy is analyzed from its attributes in general, although authenticity is highlighted as a crucial feature (DiPietro & Levitt, 2017; Wondirad et al., 2021). Also, it has been mentioned some outcomes in the demand resulting from the local gastronomy experience, for example: satisfaction and loyalty (Mora et al., 2021). The authenticity of local gastronomy motivates tourists to visit a destination since it allows them to learn about the history, traditions and customs of a human group established in a specific geographical region (Stalmirska, 2021), which means that the local gastronomy is a unique cultural experience for the visitor (Park et al., 2021), although every gastronomic experience is unique due to its subjectivity (Mora et al., 2021).

Likewise, it is mentioned that local gastronomy promotes the sustainability of tourist destinations (Wondirad et al., 2021). Sustainability is considered a motivating factor for visitors to destinations, which generates social, environmental, and economic effects (Palacios-Florencio et al., 2021). From the social perspective, there are benefits including: the protection of local culture, social inclusion (Ozturk & Akoglu, 2020). In the environmental aspect, benefits are specified such as: reduction of carbon footprint, savings in energy consumption (Eastham, 2019; Ozturk & Akoglu, 2020; Santos et al., 2020). While from the economic perspective, there could be income throughout the value chain, for example: profits for farmers, small and medium-sized producers of raw materials, salaries for employees in FBE (Ozturk & Akoglu, 2020).

On the other hand, the consumption of local gastronomy has increased in view of cultural motivations of visitors and the innovation of tourist establishments to recover from the crisis caused by the covid-19 pandemic (Apak & Gurbüz, 2023). During the pandemic, the consumption of local gastronomy has been risen due to the local tourist demand (Apak & Gurbüz, 2023; Sharma et al., 2022; Williamson & Hassanli, 2020). This implies that local gastronomy in the context of tourism could increase expenditure of visitors and contribute to the economic pillar of sustainability.

2.3 Domestic visitors' expenditure on gastronomy

Domestic tourism expenditure on local gastronomy can generate significant economic, social, cultural, and environmental effects aimed at the sustainability of destinations (Stalmirska, 2021). The F&B industry has been a key in the development of tourist destinations, since it has generated significant direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts (Gursoy & Nunkoo, 2019). In fact, the F&B sector is relevant from an economic point of view in the tourist destination experience, since visitors spend

approximately 25% to 30% of their budget on it, which develops direct economic effects in tourism (Carpio et al., 2021). Due to the pandemic, most of the industries in tourism has decreased, thus, there has been an emphasis on addressing gastronomy towards domestic tourism to support the economic reactivation of destinations, whose income in other tourism sectors decreased (Wu et al., 2022). This implies the relevance of tourism expenditure in gastronomy at destinations.

3. Materials and methods

This study consists of two phases: 1) identifying local gastronomy, and 2) analyzing the gastronomic experience: before and during consumption. For this research, a survey is applied to visitors who have spent in local gastronomy. Two control questions are used in both phases: a) if visitors have consumed local gastronomy in the last 6 months northern area of the province of Santa Elena, and b) identification of the place of residence, which is not from the study area.

In the first phase, a prior online survey is carried out, with a convenience sample of 47 visitors who represent the potential domestic market to reactivate of tourism due to covid-19 and which cooperates with the objectives of the DS (Woyo, 2021). For this, it is established that the visitor is a resident of the following places in the province of Santa Elena: La Libertad, Salinas, Santa Elena (cantonal capital), and Santa Elena (southern zone), except for northern zone of Santa Elena canton because it is the tourist destination of this research. In this area of the study, there are a wide range of tourist coastal destinations such as: Montañita, Manglaralto, Olón, Ayangué, San José, among others (W. Carvache-Franco et al., 2019). After eliminating missing cases, the sample remains at 27 surveys.

In the second phase, a non-probabilistic method is applied and a convenience sample of 296 surveys conducted online, during February 2021, which after eliminating missing cases and applying the assumptions of the simple linear regression model (normality, linearity, homeodasticity, independence), is reduced to 234. The standard type of the multiple linear regression model is used because it allows all the variables to be analyzed simultaneously (James et al., 2021). Among the quantitative variables required by this model, there are visitors' expenditure and their monthly income, as well as the number of people who are their companion during the local gastronomic experience. In addition, the categorical variable of "type of establishment" is used, which is transformed as a dummy for its respective analysis with the research method before mentioned.

In the gastronomic experience before consumption, it is incorporated visitors' main motivation that promotes their trip to the destination of the northern zone in Santa Elena canton (Park et al., 2019). While, during the consumption, there are included the following components: a) tangible, b) intangible (Dixit & Prayag, 2022; Kaushal & Yadav, 2021). The tangible elements refer to: type of FBE (restaurants, cafeterias, catering service, mobile establishment, rustic dining rooms known as "cabins" in english and "cabanas" in spanish), main local raw material that it is produced in the area of the study (fish, shrimp, other shellfish, plantains, rice, among others), the main gastronomic dish (shrimp ceviche, seafood rice, fish stew, among others), and the number of dishes consumed. These tangible aspects reflect the characteristics of the local gastronomy service in this area of research (Williamson & Hassanli, 2020). The representativeness of this gastronomy as local is taken into consideration through the visitor's perception measured with the Likert scale: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree.

While, the intangible aspects consist of a diverse range of attributes, for example: healthy, attractive to the senses, well-known gastronomic dish, opportunity to make special requests, cheap, authentic flavor,

different flavor from the usual in the house, use of local raw materials, use of fresh products (Dixit & Prayag, 2022; Karamustafa & Ülker, 2019). Likewise, another intangible aspect is the type of service that is estimated according to the characteristics of FBE (Carvache-Franco et al., 2021; Rachão, et al., 2021). It is worth mentioning that during the gastronomic experience, there are personal factors that influence decision-making regarding the purchase, such as: the number of people accompanying visitors (social aspect) and the monthly income (economic aspect) (Ellis et al., 2018; Park et al., 2019). Finally, the level of gastronomic satisfaction is measured with Likert scale, as follows: very satisfied, satisfied, not satisfied/not dissatisfied, little satisfied, and very unsatisfied. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

1) The type of FBE, the number of dishes consumed, the monthly income and the number of companions of visitors during the experience of local gastronomy, influence on visitor's expenditure.

4. Results and discussion

In the first phase, two essential aspects are identified: 1) basic attributes of local gastronomy based on dishes commonly bought by visitors in the area, and 2) domestic visitor's level of perception regarding to the "local" representativeness of the gastronomy mentioned as it is from the area of the study. In relation to the basic attributes of local gastronomy, the following aspects are identified: fish is the main raw material used in dishes bought by visitors (48.1%), while main dishes consumed include: shrimp ceviche (44.4%), rice with fried fish (37.0%), seafood rice (59.3%), shell ceviche (37.0%). The gastronomy presented in this research is considered by the visitor as local gastronomy of the area of study (55.6%), although this gastronomy is also found in other places on the Ecuadorian coast (M. Carvache-Franco et al., 2021).

The consumption of local gastronomy by the visitor could support the sustainability of destinations, since it involves the use of natural resources in the area for gastronomic production and the generation of income for residents who can access a better style of life (Dixit, 2019). For this reason, the main results identified for the consumption of local gastronomy in this first phase is used lately for the second phase of this research. Although sustainability requires the inclusion and conscious management of processes and materials towards economic, social, and environmental issues (Ozturk & Akoglu, 2020).

Table 1. Phase 1

Main component of gastronomic dishes consumed	valid percentage
fish	48.1
shrimp	40.7
other shellfish	7.4
green plantain	3.7
Most consumed gastronomic dish prepared with shrimp	
shrimp ceviche	44.4
breaded shrimp	37.0
garlic shrimp	7.4
rice with shrimp	7.4
none	3.7
Most consumed gastronomic dish prepared with fish	
rice with fried fish	37.0
fish bun	18.5

fish ceviche	14.8
fish encebollado	14.8
fish casserole	7.4
fish stew	7.4
Most consumed gastronomic mixed seafood dish	
seafood rice	59.3
mixed ceviche	18.5
none	11.1
seafood soup	7.4
seafood casserole	3.7
Another most consumed gastronomic variety	
shell ceviche	37.0
bolon made of green plantain	25.9
squid ceviche	11.1
octopus ceviche	7.4
none	7.4
clam ceviche	3.7
lobster ceviche	3.7
oyster ceviche	3.7
Perception of dishes and gastronomic variety as local gastronomy of the northern zone of the province of Santa Elena	
strongly agree	55.6
somewhat agree	40.7
neither agree nor disagree	3.7

In the second phase, two types of local visitors are differentiated in correspondence to the number of hours that they remain in the destination investigated: the overnight visitor (38.0%) and the non-overnight visitor (62.0%). The following socio-demographic data of domestic visitors is found: most of the domestic visitors are from La Libertad canton (32.9%), with third level of education (55.7%), in an age range between 21 to 40 years (84.8 %), with an independent job occupation (60.3%).

The visitor travels to the northern zone of the province of Santa Elena, mainly motivated by recreational activities at sea and the beach (32.5%), and gastronomy (30.8%). Although the sun and beach is the type of tourism most demanded in this area, gastronomy also encourages the travelling of domestic visitors; which implies that this destination could promote strategies focused on gastronomy as an alternative tourist product, but also to reduce the negative effects of mass tourism on beaches (Stalmirska, 2021). See table 2.

Table 2. Phase 2

Before consumption	
	valid percentage
travel motivation	
recreational activities at sea and on the beach	32.5
gastronomy	30.8
recreation activities in general	22.8
sport activities	5.5
recreation activities in rural areas	4.2
other	4.2

The visitor mainly consumes the following tangible attributes of the local gastronomic experience: “cabins” (58.6%) as a gastronomic establishment; shrimp (46.4%) and fish (44.3%) as raw material;

seafood rice (32.5%) and rice with fried fish (28.3%) as gastronomic dishes. Although this gastronomy is local, it would be interesting to analyze if it has characteristics of traditional gastronomy because this could imply opportunities for a specialized niche that value gastronomy based on cultural aspects of a specific social group in a destination (Dixit & Prayag, 2022). In the area of the study, there is a peculiar type of FBE known as a "cabin", which is recognized as rustic, thus, as different other types of FBE, which suggests that gastronomic strategies should focus on this type of FBE. See table 3.

Meanwhile, during the consumption of visitors, it is observed the intangible attributes of local gastronomy related to service, biosecurity issues and satisfaction. The main type of service consumed is the service at the table (91.1%); there are two biosecurity measures most relevant to visitors: the use of a mask (48.5%) and social distancing (32.1%); the main characteristics of gastronomic satisfaction are: familiar dish (69.2%) and authentic flavor (40.5%); and the main levels of satisfaction are: satisfied (38.4%) and very satisfied (36.7%). According to Dixit (2019), the qualities of the service in the gastronomic experience influence customer satisfaction, which in turn affects subsequent travel decisions for gastronomy reasons. For example, the use of biosecurity measures influence consumers' intention to purchase F&B services (Iniguez et al., 2021). Therefore, the appropriate communication of these intangible attributes through marketing strategies can generate positive expectations in consumers (Chen et al., 2021). See table 4.

Table 3. Phase 2

During consumption: tangible aspects of the gastronomic experience	
Most frequented type of gastronomic establishment	valid percentage
cabin	58.6
restaurant	41.4
Main gastronomic raw material that satisfies	
shrimp	46.4
fish	44.3
banana	5.1
others	4.2
Most purchased gastronomic dish	
seafood rice	32.5
rice with fried fish	28.3
shrimp ceviche	24.1
others	8.0
shell ceviche	7.2

Table 4. Phase 2

During consumption: intangible aspects of the gastronomic experience			
a. Type of gastronomic service	valid percentage	d. Main characteristic that motivates consuming local gastronomy	valid percentage
You receive the food in the table	91.1	authentic taste	40.5
You receive the food through a takeout order	3.8	different taste than usual at home	27.8
You line up and receive the food at the checkout counter and bring it to the table to serve yourself	3.0	fresh products	20.3
You serve your food standing next to the wheelbarrow	2.1	use of local products	11.4

b. Main biosecurity measure for covid-19		e. Level of satisfaction	
use of mask	48.5	very satisfied	36.7
social distancing	32.1	satisfied	38.4
use of alcohol	18.1	not satisfied/not dissatisfied	5.9
temperature taking	1.3	little satisfied	8.0
c. Main characteristic of gastronomic satisfaction		very unsatisfied	11.0
known dish	69.2		
appealing to the senses	14.3		
healthy	7.6		
the opportunity to make special requests	6.3		
cheap	2.5		

Both tangible and intangible attributes are important during the dining experience. Several authors explain the attributes in the gastronomic experience and their influence on visitor behavior (Dixit & Prayag, 2022; Karamustafa & Ülker, 2019; Kaushal & Yadav, 2021). The tangible and intangible aspects are generally differentiated, although these aspects are consistent with the type of FBE (Karamustafa & Ulker, 2019). This suggests that the type of FBE most frequented is a key issue to analyze its influence on visitor’s expenditure towards local gastronomic experiences.

According to Dixit & Prayag (2022), visitors as consumers during the gastronomic experience becomes a co-creator since their individual characteristics and external factors may influence their experience. Visitors attend F&B establishments in the company of family, friends, colleagues, or others; and, for different social reasons for interaction such as: celebrating, creating and/or maintaining ties, satisfying social status, among others (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020). Horner & Swarbrooke (2016) explain that the income of consumers and the people who accompany them during the consumption experience are influential factors. Thus, in this study it is confirmed that the income of domestic visitors, the people who accompany them, as well as the number of dishes consumed and the type of FBE, are factors during the gastronomic experience that affect visitor’s expenditure in FBE.

Model 1 relates the domestic visitor’ expenditure with the type of FBE, the monthly income of the visitor, the number of people who accompany the visitor during the local gastronomic experience and the number of dishes consumed. The model demonstrates that there is a significant variance in visitor’s expenditure, $F(4, 232) = 8.0, p = <.001, R^2 = .12$. The type of FBE predicts the visitor’s expenditure $\beta = .01, t(232) = -.16, p = .870$. An increase in the type of FBE shows a decrease in visitor’s expenditure by -.24 points, $B = -.24, 95\% \text{ CI } [-3.18, 2.69]$. The monthly income of visitors significantly predicts the visitor’s expenditure $\beta = .06, t(232) = 1.03, p = .306$. For each monthly income of visitors, their expenditure on local gastronomy increases by .004 points, $B = .004, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.004, 0.12]$. The number of people accompanying the visitor in the local gastronomy experience predicts the visitor's expenditure $\beta = .08, t(232) = 1.29, p = .200$. For each number of people that accompany the visitor, their tourist spending increases by .69 points, $B = .69, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.37, 1.76]$. The number of dishes consumed predicts the tourist expenditure of the visitor $\beta = .31, t(232) = 4.77, p = <.001$. For each number of dishes consumed, the visitor's tourist spending increases by 2.74 points, $B = 2.74, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.61, 3.88]$. See table 5.

Table 5. Phase 2

Model 1	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardize coefficients	you	Next.
	B.	Std Error	Beta		

(Constant)	11,156	3,785		2,947	.004
Type of FBE	-.244	1,488	-.010	-.164	.870
Monthly economic income	.004	.004	.063	1,025	.306
Number of people accompanying	.693	.539	.084	1,286	.200
Number of dishes consumed	2,743	.575	.311	4,768	<.001
a. Dependent variable: tourist expenditure of the visitor					

The result of this research is consistent with the data presented by Horner & Swarbrooke (2016). Although the visitor's income influences their expenditure in F&B, this is a factor that cannot be controlled by tourism companies. However, tourism companies can manage the other aspects of model 1, therefore, these results suggest that FBE focus on the social (visitor's companion) and tangible (type of FBE and number of dishes consumed) aspects during the gastronomic experience, since through their effective management F&B businesses could increase the domestic visitors' expenditure, thus reduce the negative economic impacts in low seasons for this destination.

On the other hand, an increase in the type of FBE is observed, showing a decrease in visitor's expenditure by -.24 points, $B = -.24$, 95% CI [-3.18, 2.69]. The monthly income of domestic visitors forecasts their expenditure $\beta = .06$, $t(232) = 1.03$, $p = .306$. For each monthly visitor's income, their expenditure on local gastronomy increases by .004 points, $B = .004$, 95% [-0.04, 0.12]. The number of people accompanying domestic visitors through the local gastronomy experience predicts visitors' expenditure in F&B $\beta = .08$, $t(232) = 1.29$, $p = .200$. For each number of people that accompany each visitor, the visitor's expenditure increases by .69 points, $B = .69$, 95% [-0.37, 1.76]. The number of dishes consumed predicts the visitors' expenditure $\beta = .31$, $t(232) = 4.77$, $p = <.001$. For each number of dishes consumed, the visitor's expenditure increases by 2.74 points, $B = 2.74$, 95% [1.61, 3.88]. These results indicate that the independent variable with the most remarkable incidence on visitors' expenditure in FBE corresponds to the number of dishes consumed. This signifies that the consumption of dishes may rise due to the interaction of visitors and their companion, therefore, it could be useful to develop marketing strategies to influence an interaction between the visitors to FBE and their companion that motivate them to consume more dishes of local gastronomy.

Social aspects should be considered by managers of F&B businesses within the theory of co-creation to plan the gastronomic experience to increase the consumption of local gastronomy. According to Matson-Barkat, S., & Robert-Demontrond, P. (2018), during the gastronomic experience in restaurant establishments, it is observed that this social interaction represents: sharing social integration, celebrating social rituals, reinforcing social status, create memories. These social actions during the gastronomic experience can promote a greater number of companions to the visitor, as well as an increase in the consumption of gastronomic dishes, and therefore, the increase in visitor's expenditure in FBE. Although the consumption of the local visitor may also depend on the interaction of the visitor with the tourist offer (Dixit & Prayag, 2022).

Additionally, this study suggests that FBE may emphasize their marketing strategies to promote local gastronomy including social reasons, such as: creating and/or maintaining links, changing and/or maintaining social status, among others (Ellis et al., 2018; Roustá & Jamshidi, 2020). This implies a psychographic analysis of the local market segment, that is, analyzing lifestyles, social status, activities, interests, opinions, and attitudes that lead to a specific consumption behavior (Blanco-Moreno et al., 2023; Vargás et al., 2021) since the perception of domestic visitors towards a destination and its

gastronomy differs from the perception of the non-local visitor, consequently, their preferences as consumers is also heterogeneous (Wu et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the rise in local gastronomy consumption could have a positive impact towards sustainable development. From the social point of view, the consumption of local gastronomy may generate a greater representation of the local culture (traditional dishes, local raw materials, ways of serving food and drinks, etc.) through social ties that are created or preserved, because of sharing information (Bertan, 2020; Williamson & Hasanli, 2020). Nevertheless, culture is constantly changing due to the social interaction of individuals.

Likewise, the increase in local gastronomy consumption represents a consumption growth in local raw material, which promotes the reduction greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to sustainability (Rume & Islam, 2020). However, Seyfi et al. (2022) mention that this environmental benefit in the short term could provoke a negative effect in the long term if there is an expansion of domestic visitors, which could imply a rise in the use of natural resources and lead to an unsustainable model.

From an economic perspective, high levels of consumption in local gastronomy could generate direct, indirect, and induced economic effects owing to the flow of money generated by visitors, which represent the multiplier effect, meaning income for other economic sectors than tourism (Eastham, 2019; Sormaz, et. al, 2016). Although, it could emerge a revenue leakage when visitors consume products or services from other countries (Eastham, 2019).

Regarding the level of satisfaction, it is observed that 38.4% of visitors in FBE are satisfied with the local gastronomic experience, which can lead to their loyalty. DiPietro & Levitt, (2017) emphasize that gastronomic authenticity plays an important role in customer perception. Nevertheless, this authenticity may be affected if FBE implement cost reductions in local raw materials or skilled local labor to provide affordable prices for domestic visitors, whose income may be low (Santos et al., 2020). This implies that visitors' income also influences the gastronomy experience.

5. Conclusions

Gastronomy is one of the most dynamic sectors in tourism because it generates income as the main reason for visiting destinations, also as an additional activity within the overall travel experience (Carpio et al., 2021). The covid-19 pandemic has led to unplanned changes that demonstrate the possibility of reinventing the tourism sector towards a domestic market, which contributes to SD. This study explains that local gastronomic experience significantly affects visitors' expenditure, which represents social, economic, and environmental benefits for the local community and the natural environment. Visitors' expenditure revitalizes local economic businesses in tourism and other economic sectors (Sormaz, et al., 2016). Although visitors' expenditure in local gastronomy represents benefits for SD, in the future it could be examined the influence of visitors' expenditure in the sustainable development of the destination.

In this research, the local gastronomic experience incorporates attributes that influence domestic visitors' expenditure, such as: the type of FBE and the number of dishes consumed (tangible), the number of visitors' companion (social), and visitor's monthly income (economic). Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. It does not examine the types of social bond, whether it is family, friendship, or professional companion (Widjaja et al., 2020), which may be significant for marketing

strategies to increase direct economic effects in F&B according to visitor's expenditure (Park et al., 2019). Local gastronomy is related to the geographical area, although, it would be interesting to identify if it is also traditional gastronomy (Dixit, 2019). Likewise, the gastronomic experience is investigated using quantitative methods, still, visitors' perception could be expanded through qualitative methods to deepen consumer's perspective through the co-creation approach and experiences, such as sensations (Mora et al., 2021).

6. References

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