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MAPPING GASTRONOMY TOURISM RESEARCH: LITERATURE REVIEW

Abstract

Purpose: This paper provides a review of the existing literature on gastronomic tourism experiences, with a focus on underrepresented perspectives, research domains, and methodologies.

Methodology: Employing the PRISMA protocol, a systematic literature review was conducted, analyzing 50 relevant studies published between 2017 and 2023.

Results: The findings reveal a significant prevalence of consumer-oriented research within the domain of destination marketing, comprising 88% of the analyzed studies. Conversely, exploration of provider perspectives in the domain of facility marketing is limited, accounting for only 10% of the sample. Moreover, a mere 2% of the total research integrates both consumer and provider perspectives, highlighting a gap in the literature. Methodologically, consumer-centric studies exhibit a preference for quantitative (QUAN) methods, with a notable utilization of the PLS-SEM technique. In contrast, provider-focused studies tend to gravitate towards qualitative (QUAL) methods, such as content analysis.

Conclusion: This review underscores the importance of balanced exploration using both QUAL and QUAN methods while considering perspectives from both consumers and providers. Such an approach is essential to achieving a holistic understanding of gastronomic tourism experiences and addressing the current research gap in the field, particularly within the realm of destination and facility marketing.

Keywords: Gastronomy tourism experience, consumer perspective, provider perspective, literature review

1. Introduction

Gastronomy tourism has emerged as a distinctive form of travel, emphasizing the pursuit of novel and authentic culinary experiences, traditions, and connections with local food in visited destinations (Dixit & Prayag, 2022; Martín et al., 2020; Laškarin Ažić et al., 2024). This trend has evolved from a secondary interest for travelers to a primary motivator, which is crucial to enhancing the overall tourism experience (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2017). As gastronomy tourism becomes a primary motivator for travelers, understanding the dynamics between consumers seeking unique gastronomic experiences and the providers offering these experiences becomes essential.

Previous studies, as highlighted by Rašan and Laškarin Ažić (2023), have predominantly focused on the consumer perspective, leaving a noticeable gap in understanding the role of providers. This research aims to address this gap by adopting a more

comprehensive approach that encompasses both consumer and provider perspectives. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to synthesize existing literature on gastronomic tourism experiences, considering perspectives of both consumers and providers. In doing so, it seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the current state of research in the field.

In accordance with this overarching purpose, the specific goal of this review is to identify research gaps in understanding gastronomic tourism experiences. This will be achieved through a thorough examination of underrepresented perspectives, research domains, and methodologies employed, thereby shedding light on areas requiring further exploration.

By identifying underrepresented perspectives and areas necessitating further exploration, this research aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in gastronomic tourism. By highlighting research gaps, it provides direction for future research endeavors and helps prioritize areas for research.

2. Research design

For this purpose, the PRISMA protocol (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) was applied in this research. The authors created a flow diagram to illustrate the study selection process (Figure 1).

Figure 1 PRISMA protocol
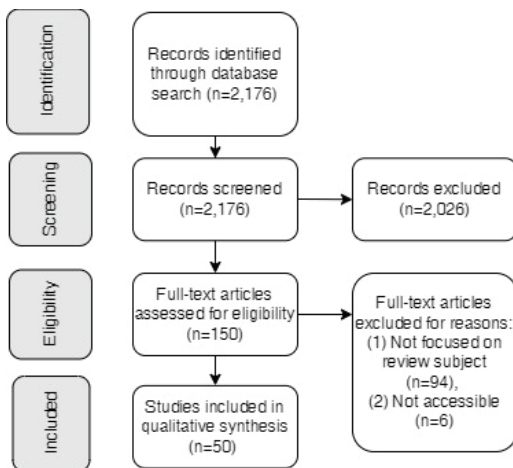
Source: Authors' research

For literature review, many previous tourism scholars have selected Scopus as an online scientific database due to its simplicity and fast search capabilities (Magano et al., 2023). For this reason, Scopus was selected as the most appropriate online search engine for the collection of relevant studies. The keyword "gastronomic tourism experience" was chosen for the search. Despite Google Trending indicating more interest in the term "restaurant experience", the authors justified the selection based on a wider scope of gastronomic tourism, covering experiences beyond just restaurants. Using the selected keyword, 2,176 studies were found. Further selection from the sample was based on the scope of the data including subject field, language, period of publication, and type of document, as recommended by Aguinis et al. (2018). The data selected as inclusion criteria for the final sample were: (a) only complete studies, (b) written in English, (c) published between 2017 and 2023, and (d) journal studies in the final publication stage. Following the listed criteria, 150 studies were obtained. Next, the authors performed manual cleaning of 150 studies by reading their titles and abstracts. Manual cleaning identified 94 studies not focused on review subjects, which were then excluded from the sample. Furthermore, another 6 studies were removed from the preliminary sample as they were not accessible. A total of 50 studies on gastronomic tourism experiences were included in the final sample.

Then, the authors of this study applied the modified categorization system provided by Le et al. (2019) in the process of their data analysis. For each study, notes were taken about (a) the authors and the year of publication, (b) a perspective, (c) a research domain, (d) a research approach, (e) a collection site, (f) a collection strategy/technique, (g) a research tool, (h) a sample size, (i) a data analysis method, and (j) limitations. After completing the categorization process, the research findings were reported. This step is used to extract meaningful insights from the reviewed studies in the sample.

3. Findings and discussion

This section presents the results of trends in the research on the perspectives of gastronomic tourism experiences. To delve deeper into the findings, the authors will discuss each perspective individually.

Table 1 Literature review

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
1	Rodrigues et al. (2023)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online and onsite by trained interviewers	Survey	Questionnaire survey	PLS-SEM	By using longitudinal design, researchers can track participant experiences and well-being over time, offering insights into the dynamics and causal relationships that may not be apparent in cross-sectional or one-time studies.
2	Şahin & Kılıçlar (2023)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey	PLS-SEM	This empirical study recognizes the uniqueness of Istanbul as a gastronomic destination and suggests that future research should consider different destinations and researcher models to enhance the generalizability and depth of insights into tourist gastronomic experiences.
3	Bonfanti et al. (2023)	Provider (managers)	Facility marketing	QUAL	Via a phone call or with the support of online communication programs such as Zoom or Google Meet	Interview	In-depth interview	Lexical and reflexive thematic analysis	This study acknowledges the limitation of a small sample size of managers and proposes a future research proposal. By including a larger and more diverse sample of managers and staff, as well as adopting a longitudinal approach, future studies can enhance the robustness and generalizability of findings in the context of restaurant management.
4	Soonsan & Somakai (2023)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online by researchers	Interview	Questionnaire survey	Factor analysis (CFA)	Research recommendations underscore the importance of a multifaceted approach to researching gastronomic tourism. By employing longitudinal studies, exploring destination characteristics, and utilizing qualitative methodologies, future research can contribute significantly to the planning, management, and promotion of gastronomic tourism destinations, ultimately enhancing the overall tourist experience and destination competitiveness.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
5	Kovalenko et al. (2023)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online by researchers	Survey	Question-naire survey	PLS-SEM	The study has a methodological limitation due to the purposive sampling procedure which limits the generalization of the results. This research was mainly focused on demand, which makes it difficult to convey the results to other subjects of gastronomy activity such as stakeholders, local communities, or businesses.
6	Myrnes-Hansen & Skeiseid (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Focus groups	Cartoon style illustration	-	The method employed in this study necessitates additional testing across varied contexts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the functions and constraints of visual stimuli, particularly cartoons, as catalysts for focus group dynamics.
7	Pappas et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Delphi technique	Question-naires	Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)	The study initially focuses on a specific context, namely Greece, and targets tourist segments from the UK and Germany, each of which possessing distinct cultural attributes. Additionally, the research study was conducted amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially influencing tourist perceptions. Further research is necessary to furnish empirical evidence elucidating the interplay between factors such as culture, income, education, and their correlation with food-related personality traits.
8	Sharma et al. (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Online by researchers	Survey	Question-naire survey	PLS-SEM	This study depended on self-reported data, which carries inherent limitations due to biases stemming from retrospective recall or social desirability. Therefore, future studies could employ a mixed-methods approach incorporating real-time and objective data collection methods.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
9	Batat (2020)	Provider (chefs)	Facility marketing	QUAL	Onsite by a researcher	Interview and netnography	In-depth interview, archival data, and researcher's observational notes	Content analysis	The limitation of this study is intricately tied to research methodology, which relies on in-depth interviews exclusively conducted with Michelin-starred chefs. This specificity poses a challenge in terms of generalizability. Additionally, the participant pool is confined to a single cultural setting, specifically the French context. This deliberate choice is in line with the focus of our research, emphasizing the significance of the French gastronomic heritage and its global impact. For future research, scholars may explore and contrast sustainable food practices not only within Michelin-starred chef-owned restaurants but also extend their inquiry to encompass luxury gastronomic establishments affiliated with upscale hotels and multinational corporations.
10	Galiñanes Plaza et al. (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAL	Onsite	Focus groups	Semi-structured group discussion / iRaMuTeQ software / XLSTAT Addinsoft 2019	Text mining analysis	Future research endeavors could delve into investigating the potential shifts in consumer expectations regarding dining out in light of the COVID-19 crisis. Employing a quantitative survey methodology would be particularly valuable in substantiating and extrapolating the discernible differences brought to light.
11	Stone et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by a panel research company	Survey	Question-naire survey	T-test significant	The analysis has so far been limited exclusively to quantitative data. In future research, it would be beneficial to incorporate qualitative methodologies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. Qualitative insights could offer nuanced perspectives, capturing the intricacies and contextual nuances that quantitative data alone may overlook.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
12	Park & Widyanta (2022)	Consumers and providers	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Exploratory qualitative study	Suppliers → in-depth interviews; Consumers → focus groups	Multiple analysis process to enable concepts and categories to emerge	The constraints of this study are inherent in its exploratory nature. Future research efforts could build on these preliminary findings by employing more targeted methodologies to validate and expand on the insights gleaned from this exploratory study. By so doing, researchers can enhance the depth and reliability of their findings, moving towards a more conclusive understanding of the subject matter.
13	Seyitoğlu & Ivanov (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAL	Online reviews from tripadvisor.com	Multiple case study	UGC platforms and websites	Thematic content analysis	This study is characterized by several limitations, including a relatively small sample size of robotic restaurants (13) and the exclusive evaluation of comments in English. To overcome these limitations, future research efforts might consider employing face-to-face interviews, a method that could provide richer and more in-depth insights into customer perceptions of robotic restaurants.
14	Kılıçhan et al. (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey	Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) / Factor analyses (CFA)	This study has limitations based on its sampling technique and population. Future studies can be conducted in different cultures and different geographies.
15	Basnyat & Ho (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Interview	In-depth semi-structured interviews	Content analysis	The limitations of this study are associated with a relatively small sample size consisting of only 20 interviews with tourists centered on Macau. Additionally, most participants were from Asian countries, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to a more diverse global context. To address these limitations, future research could undertake a similar study in other countries to assess the extent to which the identified findings can be generalized and whether cultural variations impact the outcomes.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/technique	Limitations or future suggestions
16	Badu-Baiden et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN/QUAL	Online by a panel survey company	Survey	Questionnaire survey / STATA software	Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) / Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (Fs/QCA)	The limitations of this research arise from the exclusive focus on a sample comprising only US tourists who traveled to Europe and Asian countries. This narrow sample restricts the generalizability of the conceptual model to a more diverse population. To address this limitation and enhance the robustness of the model, a future study should aim to validate and refine the conceptual model using non-US samples with varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds and regions.
17	Valverde-Roda et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey / SPSS	K-means clustering	The limitation of this study is the confined time frame of data collection. Future research could enhance the scope of this research by examining gastronomic tourism in the city across various seasons and periods throughout the year.
18	Kattiyaporn-pong et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Online reviews from different online platforms	Mixed purposeful sampling	NVivo software / User-generated content (UGC)	Sentiment analysis and thematic analysis / Duoethnographic reflections of researchers	The primary limitation in sampling and data collection for this research is the reliance on only five online gastronomic tourism platforms for gathering information on gastronomic tourism in Thailand. To address this limitation, future studies could incorporate quantitative data, capturing respondent profiles and their eating behaviors and preferences.
19	Lin et al. (2022)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online reviews from tripadvisor.com	Multiple case study	User-generated content (UGC)	Content analysis	In this study, one of the primary challenges posed by big data lies in the classification of key terms and the construction of categories. Future research could enhance our understanding of gastronomic experiences by delving into perspectives from both the supply and demand sides of the market.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
20	Mora et al. (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online by researchers	Survey	Structured questionnaire / SPSS / SmartPLS software	PLS-SEM	A notable limitation of this research is the restricted time span of the fieldwork. To address this constraint, future research is recommended to undertake a more extensive and in-depth investigation concerning the gastronomic offerings tailored for tourists in Spain.
21	Cordova-Buiza et al. (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey / SPSS software v. 24	K-means clustering	The primary limitation of this empirical study lies in the data collection time frame. Future researchers are encouraged to address this limitation by reinforcing research that emphasizes the significance of gastronomy from the supply perspective.
22	Hernández-Rojas & Alcocer (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey / SPSS software / SmartPLS 3.3.3	PLS-SEM	Concerning the limitations of this study, it is noteworthy that additional variables could have been considered to explain satisfaction with the restaurant. Future research could explore the intersection of information between supply and demand, aiming to provide insights into achieving an appropriate balance in specific markets.
23	Hernández-Rojas et al. (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire survey / Smart PLS 3.2.9	PLS-SEM	-
24	Ramírez-Gutiérrez et al. (2021)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Online reviews from tripadvisor. com	Analysis of tourist social media communication	Specialized software and exploratory statistical treatment	Content analysis	The results of this study are influenced by the examination of a single case and the sample size. For future research, conducting content analyses of tourist comments and opinions could involve adding additional code categories. Exploring several non-emblematic case studies could also be considered, contributing to the development of a model that better represents the communicative activation of diner experiences.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/technique	Limitations or future suggestions
25	Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Online and a paper-and-pencil method	Survey	Questionnaire / IBM-SPSS Statistics Version 21 / PLS-SEM	PLS-SEM	The primary limitation in this paper stems from the use of a non-probabilistic sampling strategy, impacting the generalizability of the results. Future research could consider adopting a qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of tourist assessments of the experiential variables considered.
26	Filimonau & Krivcova (2017)	Provider (restaurant managers)	Facility marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Interview	Semi-structured interviews	Content analysis	To bolster the representativeness and robustness of the findings, seeking managerial opinions on the topic in question through the application of a large-scale, quantitative survey could be beneficial.
27	Cherro Osorio et al. (2022)	Provider (chefs)	Facility marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Interview	In-depth face-to-face interviews	Content analysis	The main limitation of this paper stems from the absence of input from diners, as well as the lack of comparisons with other types of restaurants and a broader range of destinations. Future studies could address these limitations by including input from international tourists or local patrons who have experienced these restaurants, providing diverse insights into the effectiveness of the gastronomic elements employed.
28	Villagómez-Buele et al. (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaires	Multiple correlation and regression techniques	The primary limitation of this research lies in its temporality, conducted within a specific period (January to March), making its results potentially subject to variations in demand. As a future research direction, it would be valuable to explore the relationship between a gastronomic image and destination loyalty.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
29	Pratt et al. (2020)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Question-naires	IPA, IRPA and IAA analysis	Limitations of this study arise from a relatively small sample size of cooking schools considered. To address these constraints and broaden the scope of the study, future research could conduct a comparative analysis by including cooking classes from various destinations in the South-East Asian region.
30	Moral-Cuadra et al. (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Question-naire	PLS-SEM	When addressing the limitations, conducting a study over a more extended time frame and engaging a broader spectrum of stakeholders, including the local population, businesses, and public/private entities, could provide a more comprehensive understanding.
31	Crespi-Vallbona & Mascarilla-Miró (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Question-naire	Case study	This research would benefit from complementing its findings with in-depth interviews with wine enthusiasts to refine the wine tourism experience. Additionally, the scope of the study is limited to the Pla de Bages DO region. To ascertain the broader impact of wine tourism and its economic, social, and cultural development potential, similar studies should be conducted in other wine DO regions. This comparative approach would offer insights into the unique characteristics and challenges of different wine tourism destinations.
32	Gupta & Saj-nani (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Question-naire	PLS-SEM	This study lacks research on the perception of authenticity among foreign tourists. Future research could be aimed at identifying this distinction, shedding light on how authenticity perceptions evolve with repeated visits and their subsequent influence on tourist overall experiences and intentions to recommend the destination.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
33	Rodríguez-López et al. (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire via the *Qualtrics* platform / LISREL software / PROCESS software	LS regression and bootstrap estimation	The scope of the study is limited by its focus on only two restaurants. Replicating the study by comparing restaurants with diverse characteristics could confirm whether the findings from these two types are applicable across different restaurant contexts. By extending the comparison to include different types of restaurants, researchers can explore the generalizability of the results and gain insights into how different restaurant characteristics influence the outcomes being investigated.
34	Rodríguez-Gutiérrez et al. (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire	PLS-SEM	The main limitation of this research is the restricted time frame of the fieldwork (March and April 2018). Future studies should consider extending the research to include other months and seasons for a more comprehensive analysis. Additionally, exploring gastronomic tourism from the supply side and investigating the loyalty resulting from satisfaction with local cuisine could be valuable avenues for future research.
35	Kala & Barthwal (2020)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN / QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Survey / Interview	Questionnaire / Semi-structured interviews	Regression analysis	The findings of the study are specific to tourists visiting Rishikesh and Badrinath, limiting their generalizability to other destinations. Additionally, a larger sample size is recommended to enhance generalizability. Future studies are advised to employ rigorous qualitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of visitor food experiences during holidays.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
36	Berbel-Pineda et al. (2019)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire / SPSS / SmartPLS 2.0	PLS-SEM	This research has several limitations. Firstly, it exclusively focuses on one city, Seville, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to other urban contexts. Secondly, the specific antecedents and outcomes in the model pose a limitation in extending the results to other conceptual frameworks. Thirdly, the cross-sectional design of the study may not fully capture variables associated with prolonged processes, potentially leading to a misrepresentation of effects that become apparent over longer periods. Future studies could enhance the robustness of the analysis by adopting a longitudinal approach, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships and outcomes over time.
37	Kiatkawsin & Han (2019)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Online by a research agency	Survey	Questionnaire / IBM SPSS version 23 / AMOS software	SEM / Factor analysis (CFA) / Promax / Maximum likelihood rotation method	Regarding limitations, it is essential to note that the samples in this study may not fully represent the overall luxury restaurant customer population. Caution is needed when interpreting the results, as the influence of culture remains unknown. To enhance the robustness and generalizability of the findings, future researchers could explore opportunities to replicate the conceptual framework in other luxury restaurant markets.
38	González Santa Cruz et al. (2019)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire / SPSS v. 22	K-means clustering	The main limitation of this research is the specific time frame in which it was conducted, i.e. in February 2018. To enhance the applicability of the study, it would be beneficial to extend the research to encompass future tourist demands of the city throughout the entire year.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
39	Nicoletti et al. (2019)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire / SPSS v23	K-means clustering	Expanding the study to focus on the supply side could identify potential gaps between tourist expectations and offerings in Trapani, providing valuable insights for the tourism sector. Exploring both demand and supply sides would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics shaping the tourism experience in Trapani.
40	Dressler et al. (2019)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire / IBM SPSS Statistics 19	Descriptive statistics / PCA (principal component analysis)	Data collection in this study took place within a confined time frame, limited to two summer months, without active measures to ensure sample validity through quotas or similar techniques. By conducting similar research in diverse settings, researchers can broaden the scope of understanding and draw more robust conclusions about the factors influencing the phenomenon under investigation.
41	Sthapit (2019)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Interview	Semi-structured interviews	Thematic analysis	Reliance on a single destination imposes limitations on the broader applicability of the findings to other destinations. To address this constraint, future studies could employ a larger and more varied sample size in different destinations.
42	Vargas-Sánchez & López-Guzmán (2018)	Providers (chefs)	Facility marketing	QUAN	Online	Survey	Questionnaire / SPSS, version 20 / Warppls 6.0 software	SEM	The limitation of this research lies in its exclusive focus on distinguished chefs with Michelin stars from Spain. To enhance the breadth and generalizability of the findings, a promising avenue for future research could be to extend the study to include chefs from various countries.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
43	Ramón et al. (2018)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Online through Facebook	Survey	Questionnaire	SEM	A primary limitation of this research is its exclusive focus on restaurants with Michelin stars, limiting its applicability to various types of culinary establishments. Future avenues of research could broaden the scope by including a diverse range of culinary settings to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors at play.
44	Lee et al. (2018)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite by researchers	Survey / Interview	Questionnaire / ZMET survey / In-depth interviews / Microsoft Visio / Photoshop	Kelly's repertory grid technique	The current study concentrated on tourist experiences of Hakka gourmet food and cultural heritage, acknowledging a potential limitation in capturing the entirety of tourist experiences. Future research could employ a confirmatory method to develop specific tools tailored for assessing 'experiencing tourism-inheriting cuisine'.
45	Brito & Vale (2018)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite by researchers	Survey	Questionnaire	Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) / SEM	There are doubts regarding whether the predictive role of the nostalgic proneness construct would remain effective in relation to food nostalgia when the situation changes. To address these uncertainties and expand the research agenda, future studies could explore associations between food nostalgia measurements and specific details concerning the type of food or recipe.
46	Aaltojärvi et al. (2018)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAL	Onsite	Interviews	In-depth interviews	Case study / Framing theory	The dataset in this study is constrained in terms of both its size and its exclusive focus on the Finnish context. Given these limitations, caution should be exercised when generalizing findings to broader contexts or populations. Future research could consider expanding the dataset to encompass a more diverse sample size and incorporate multiple geographical contexts.

No.	Authors and year	Perspective	Research domains	Research approach	Collection site	Data collection strategy/ technique	Research tool	Data analysis method/ technique	Limitations or future suggestions
47	Akdag et al. (2018)	Consumer	Destination marketing	QUAN	Onsite	Survey	Questionnaire	Sampling method / Frequency analysis / Multiple independent samples t-tests / χ^2 analysis/ Multiple regression analyses	The use of the convenience sampling method in this study imposes limitations on the generalizability of the findings to broader populations, in terms of both the gathered data and the associated constraints. To address this limitation, future research could undertake a more comprehensive investigation of gastronomic experiences and the factors influencing gastronomy satisfaction in diverse Mediterranean destinations.
48	Huang (2017)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAL	Online reviews	User-generated content	WORDij 3.0 software	Semantic network analysis (SNA)	This study adopted a case study approach, concentrating on a specific specialty food and a single restaurant brand. To broaden the scope and enhance the applicability of the study, future research could consider comparing the perceptions of local food not only between domestic residents and foreign customers.
49	Horng & Hsu (2021)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN	Online	Survey through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk)	Questionnaire / SmartPLS v.3.2.9 software	PLS-SEM	Future studies have the potential to delve deeper into the interactive relations among cognitive and affective components, along with esthetic stimulation.
50	Hsu et al. (2022)	Consumer	Facility marketing	QUAN/ QUAL	Online through the Wenjuanxing platform	Focus group	Open-ended questionnaire / NVivo software / Stata version 15 / Mplus version 8.4	Exploratory data analysis (EFA) / Item response theory (IRT) / CFA / SEM	The scale employed in this study reveals incompleteness when it comes to high-level affective gastronomy experiences. To address this limitation and ensure more comprehensive coverage of construct variance, it is recommended that future research incorporates additional items that specifically capture the nuances of higher-level affective gastronomy experiences.

Source: Authors' research

3.1 Consumer perspective

The data given in Table 1 indicate that most studies in the sample prioritize a consumer-centric approach (88%). This approach predominantly concentrates on investigating how tourists perceive and interact with gastronomic offerings of a destination. Despite considerable emphasis placed on destination marketing within these studies, there is a noticeable research gap concerning the exploration of gastronomic experiences within the realm of restaurant marketing. This suggests that fewer studies have specifically addressed the marketing dynamics of gastronomic facilities, particularly in terms of understanding and navigating the intricacies of restaurants situated within tourist destinations.

In studies focusing on destination marketing, the gastronomic experience is often examined alongside various factors such as tourist life satisfaction, quality of life, trip satisfaction, emotions, experience value, behavioral intentions, place attachment, and memorability. Understanding these interconnections is vital for destination management, as it enables stakeholders to bolster the destination's brand image by strategically developing and promoting its gastronomic offerings. Conversely, the limited number of studies in the domain of facility marketing may signal a potential opportunity for further research. Exploring gastronomic experiences within the facilities themselves could yield valuable insights into the intricacies of food-related services. Uncovering factors such as food preferences, overall satisfaction, identity, aesthetic stimulation, emotions, memorability, and behavioral intentions cannot only enrich understanding but also potentially pave the way for improvement and innovations in the business sphere. This deeper dive into the dynamics of gastronomic facilities could lead to the development of tailored strategies to enhance customer experiences and drive business success within the hospitality industry.

Moreover, the presented data suggest a clear preference for QUAN techniques in gastronomic research, with a higher frequency of use compared to QUAL and MIX methods approaches. This trend indicates that researchers in this field tend to rely more heavily on numerical data analysis to explore consumer perspectives on gastronomic tourism experiences. In QUAN studies, questionnaires are the primary research tool due to their perceived reliability and limited potential for researcher influence

on respondent behavior. However, the application of analysis techniques varies, with PLS-SEM being the most popular, followed by other methods such as K-means clustering, EFA, PCA, ANOVA, CFA, regression, and CBBE.

Despite the prevalence of QUAN approaches, QUAL methods are also applied in consumer-centric studies. Content analysis is the most common qualitative analysis technique, along with other methods such as fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA), Kelly's repertory grid technique, and framing theory. In-depth interviews are the preferred data collection technique, although other methods such as the Delphi technique and focus groups are also utilized.

While QUAN and QUAL methods dominate, there is a recognition of the value of integrating both approaches through MIX method designs. Sample studies which employed MIX methods typically utilize exploratory sequential design, where QUAL results inform the development of new survey instruments for subsequent QUAN analysis. This indicates a growing understanding of the complementary nature of QUAL and QUAN approaches in gastronomic research.

Moreover, scholars in QUAL studies acknowledge the relativistic nature of their findings due to contextual factors such as cultural settings, geographical context, data collection limitations, and sample characteristics. This recognition underscores the importance of considering diverse perspectives and contextual factors in gastronomic research methodologies and interpretations.

3.2 Provider perspective

Results also indicate that there is a noticeable imbalance in the reviewed literature, with most studies focusing on the consumer perspective and only a limited number on the provider perspective. Specifically, only 10% of the studies addressed the provider perspective, primarily examining the gastronomic experience in the domain of facility marketing, particularly in luxury restaurants. Research areas include sustainability, design and delivery, knowledge, post-COVID-19 crisis strategies, and the connection between menu design and responsible food selection. The absence of studies in the domain of destination marketing represents a gap in the literature, signaling an opportunity for future research to explore and address this aspect.

In provider-focused studies, QUAL research is more common, with interviews as the predominant data collection technique. Content analysis, lexical and reflexive thematic analysis are common in the analysis of QUAL data. Only one study in the provider sample applied the QUAN approach, utilizing SEM on a small sample size of 56 respondents for data analysis. This indicates a limited use of QUAN methods in provider-focused studies and suggests a potential avenue for future research.

Moreover, the QUAL authors in provider-focused studies state that the revitalization of the results and the difficulties of generalization were a limitation in their research. The lack of a common technical structure clearly poses a major challenge when it comes to describing unstructured data. Therefore, some QUAL scholars recommend that future research from the provider perspective should use QUAN techniques when examining the gastronomic tourism experience.

3.3 Both perspectives

Further, studies that consider both consumer and provider perspectives are rare, constituting only 2% of the examined literature on the gastronomic tourism experience. More precisely, only one study in the sample explores simultaneously both consumer and provider perspectives. For the purpose of gathering data, the study utilized QUAL methods, including in-depth interviews for providers and focus groups for consumers. Data analysis involved multiple processes to identify emerging concepts and categories. However, the study is acknowledged to have limitations, mainly due to its exploratory nature. It is essential to recognize that the findings may not be generalizable due to the specific focus and scope of the research.

4. Concluding remarks

Overall, this review underscores several critical gaps in existing research into the gastronomic tourism experience, shedding light on the limitations and biases present in the current literature. A significant shortcoming is the dearth of studies from the provider perspective, indicating a potential imbalance in understanding the industry. By emphasizing this gap, the review draws attention to the need for more research that explores gastronomic tourism experiences from the provider perspective.

Moreover, the review highlights the underrepresentation of the domain of facility marketing within consumer studies. This suggests that the existing body of research may not fully capture the complexities of the business aspects of gastronomic tourism experiences. The call for more studies in this domain reflects the importance of a holistic approach that considers consumer perspectives within the business domain to provide a comprehensive understanding of gastronomic tourism experiences.

Another noteworthy finding relates to methodological preferences within the field. The review indicates a predominant use of QUAN methods, with PLS-SEM being particularly popular in consumer-centric studies. This insight into methodological trends is valuable for researchers and practitioners in the field, providing an understanding of the prevalent tools and techniques employed in gastronomic tourism research. In response to this identified gap, the review advocates for a more balanced research approach that incorporates both QUAL and QUAN methods. This recommendation emphasizes the importance of gaining a comprehensive understanding of gastronomic tourism experiences by considering diverse perspectives and employing a mix of research approaches.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the further development of the theoretical framework in gastronomic tourism by summarizing existing knowledge and identifying gaps. It provides a foundation for future scholars to build upon and refine theoretical constructs related to both consumer and provider perspectives. By emphasizing the need for studies considering both consumer and provider perspectives, the review encourages a more holistic theoretical approach. This integration can lead to the development of comprehensive models that capture the dynamics and interactions between tourists and gastronomic service providers. The recognition of methodological trends indicates a predominance of QUAN techniques. The review suggests a potential shift towards a more diverse methodological framework, incorporating both QUAN and QUAL methodologies to enhance the depth of theoretical understanding.

5. Limitations and future research

There are several limiting factors in this study. Firstly, only the Scopus online database was used

for data collection. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to include other scholarly databases such as WoS, Google Scholar and Emerald Insight. Another limitation relates to the inclusion of studies published in the last seven years (2017-2023). To achieve greater representativeness, future researchers are advised to include a longer period in data collection of the sample. Thirdly, as this research only considered studies that dealt with gastronomic tourism experiences, a proposal for further research would be to include a methodological discussion related to other tourism areas, such as ecotourism, event tourism, etc.

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