



Typology of Social Paradigm: Literature Review of Tourist's Gastronomic Experience

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Abstract: *In an examination of the tourist's gastronomic experience, scientific experts approach it in different ways, depending on the research paradigm to which they belong. In scientific literature, there are paradigms such as positivism, constructivism, criticism, postmodernism, and transmodernism. The purpose of this study was to analyze 55 scientific articles on the tourist's gastronomic experience according to key terms (ontology, epistemology, and methodology) and thus determine their affiliation to the appropriate paradigm. The empirical research results indicate that there are no studies of postmodernism and transmodernism, but there are studies of positivist (70.91%), critical (18.18%), and constructivist (10.91%) research views. Therefore, in future research, scientists should direct their gaze precisely in the direction of these paradigms. Further research findings indicate that the largest number of analyzed studies published in the last three years is in Asia (40%), North America (34.55%), and Europe (18.18%) where the authors predominantly apply a quantitative research approach (69.09%). The contribution of this research is reflected in the improved theoretical knowledge of the researched issues as well as the application of the same in determining the papers with regard to the type of paradigm to which the authors of selected papers belong. Also, this study is the first in conducting a paradigmatic analysis of gastronomic tourism studies.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The experience of consuming food is a key behavior that can complement the sensory, cultural, social, and epistemic motivation of tourists (Correia et al., 2020). Tourist pleasure is actually his/her experience based on a product or service that has provided him/her with an unexpected level of value or satisfaction (Crotts & Magnini, 2011), and this satisfaction will depend on his/her perspective on how to look at things and situations around him/her. In other words, two gastro tourists travelling together may have different perspectives depending on their position. In this context, the position represents the ideology of each person, more precisely, the paradigm to which they belong. A paradigm denotes a worldview or set of related assumptions common to a particular group of scientists exploring the world (Deshpande, 1983), asking ontological, epistemological, and methodological questions. Ontology implies a view of the nature of reality (Taylor & Medina, 2011), while epistemology deals with the question "What is the nature of the relationship between researchers and what is already known in the literature?" (Guba, 1990). Ontological and epistemological assumptions directly influence the methodological approach of researchers. The methodology is a part of a structure (Guba, 1990) that includes theoretical principles for providing guidance on how research is conducted in the context of a particular paradigm (Sarantakos, 2005).

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Although scholars have argued sharply over the 20th century about the superiority of their paradigms, at the beginning of the 21st century these wars finally came to an end as scientists come to realize that no research paradigm is superior to another (Taylor & Medina, 2011). It is important to emphasize that each scientific expert applies a different approach to research depending on the paradigm to which they belong. The following scientific paradigms are most often distinguished in scientific literature: (1) positivism, (2) constructivism, (3) criticism, (4) postmodern, and (5) transmodern. Based on the above, the main goal of this research was based on the theoretical knowledge of scientific paradigms (described in Chapter 2) to analyze in detail the scientific papers on the tourist's gastronomic experience according to key terms (ontology, epistemology, and methodology) and thus determine the scientific paradigm. The specific objectives of this research are to conduct a paradigmatic: (a) frequency analysis by year, (b) geographical analysis, and (c) analysis by research type. The qualitative approach in this research is extremely important because paradigmatic analysis of current scientific literature on the tourist's gastronomic experience allows not only a better understanding of this topic but also to determine the representation of each of these paradigms. Such an approach will ensure the reduction of current gaps in the literature and contribute to the improvement of knowledge and understanding of the researched issues. This research can be considered unique because so far there is no research in the literature that has dealt with the paradigmatic analysis of papers in the field of gastronomic tourism. This study is structured in such a way that the introduction is followed by a theoretical framework, analysis, conclusion, and references.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The positivist paradigm prevails in science starting from the assumption of a single comprehensible reality of independent facts for which quantitative measurements are made (Tsoukas, 1989). In other words, scientists study the world through a one-way mirror (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Such an approach is inappropriate especially in the context of the social sciences because research involves people and their real-life experiences (Healy & Perry, 2000). This research paradigm seeks to investigate, validate, and predict patterns of behavior and is commonly used in research to test a theory or hypothesis (Taylor & Medina, 2011). It is strictly focused on the objectivity of the process (Creswell, 2012) which is the main reason why the researcher of this ideology is only the controller of the research process outside the research site (Taylor & Medina, 2011). If we look at the assumptions of the paradigm, we can say that ontology represents realism, which tells us that society is predictable. So, it is possible to test and measure human behavior (Taylor & Medina, 2011). Positivists skillfully avoid theorizing about the topic they are researching but are already focused on measuring instrumental variables (Lougen, 2009). On the other hand, epistemology represents an objective relationship between researchers and respondents where the researcher cannot and does not influence the obtained results (Ponterotto, 2005). The methodological approach used by positivists is quantitative (deductive) research that uses mathematical-statistical methods to test hypotheses (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). What distinguishes positivists from other researchers is the application of quantitative research methods, while other ideologies have mostly used a qualitative approach. Likewise, the fundamental discrepancy between positivism and other paradigms lies in the fact that positivists separate themselves from the world they study, while researchers from other paradigms recognize that to some extent, they must participate in real-world life to better understand and express its apparent features and characteristics (Tsoukas, 1989).

The opposite of the positivist paradigm is the constructivist (interpretive) paradigm, in which researchers change their approach to research. They turn to the ideologies and values behind the findings, so they believe that reality actually consists of the relativistic multiple complex

realities that people have in their minds (Healy & Perry, 2000). So, there is not just one real truth. Exploring this constructed reality depends on the interactions between interviewers and respondents. Specifically, the researcher must be a passionate participant during his/her fieldwork (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Ontologically speaking, there is no access to one real world, but the goal is to step into people's skin, that is, to see the world through their eyes (Josselson, 2007). Thus, the epistemology of this paradigm is inter-subjectivism based on understanding and knowing about the other through an extended process of interaction such as interviewing and observing participants with the aim of presenting them as credibly and authentically as possible (Healy & Perry, 2000). An interpretive researcher asks himself questions such as (Taylor & Medina, 2011): (1) What is the impact of my own (past and present) values and beliefs in interpreting the thoughts and feelings of others? and (2) What hidden assumptions are limiting the way we understand others? Finally, from a methodological point of view, various inductive interpretive research methods are applied, such as narrative research, observation, interview, and autobiographical and autoethnographic methods (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Richardson, 2000; Taylor & Settlemarier, 2003).

On the other hand, critical theory is at odds with traditional theory, which explores and confirms the status quo (Asghar, 2013), while critical theory challenges it and strives for a balanced and democratic society. Unlike the positivist paradigm, proponents of the critical paradigm assume that social science can never be truly objective or worthless and believe that scientific research should be conducted with the explicit goal of social change as the ultimate priority (Scotland, 2012). Critical paradigm researchers advocate system bias, and this bias is particularly visible in a negative context through the social position of women and marginalized ethnic groups (Scotland, 2012). Also, their research projects aim to encourage positive change in the research participants and the systems being studied, as well as in the collection of important data (DeCarlo, 2018). The critical paradigm not only studies power imbalances but also seeks to change them (DeCarlo, 2018). Critical researchers are not particularly tied to either method, so they use qualitative, quantitative, or a combination of both (Asghar, 2013). The ontological position of the critical paradigm is historical realism, where reality is considered to be shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values. Realities are socially constructed entities that are under the constant internal influence (Scotland, 2012). Accordingly, epistemology is subjectivism based on real-world phenomena and associated with social ideologies. Knowledge is both socially constructed and influenced by power relations within society, more specifically what is considered knowledge is determined by the social and positional power of the proponents of that knowledge (Cohen et al., 2017).

Postmodernism is a paradigm that questions almost every mode of cognition, which many social scientists take for granted (Ghasarian et al., 1996). The postmodern has inherent problems with previous paradigms because the truth is always bound within a historical and cultural context, where there are no universally true explanations (DeCarlo, 2018). Absolute truths, identities, and major human values are criticized. Postmodernism can be defined as a comprehensive paradigm, which refers to a set of assumptions about ontology (realities are created), epistemology (knowledge is fluid and temporary), methodology (interpretive and critical methods are more appropriate to study plural society), and axiology (study of values: no set of values is by definition better than another) (Kroeze, 2012). We can define this scientific paradigm as a widespread and deeply incised cultural movement that changes people's perception of the existence and knowledge of the whole world (Watson, 2012). The combination of philosophy, art policy with changes in the economy, and technological changes are one of the most important

features of postmodernism, and it was brought to the fore by feminist movements (Bačić, 2013). In the era of postmodernism, cultural changes are emphasized, where new forms of production are present, such as ‘lean production’, ‘concept team’, and ‘just-in-time’ production with the use of modern information technologies (Wood, 1997). The presence of skepticism towards certainty and great explanations in the social sciences is characteristic (DeCarlo, 2018).

The last paradigm, transmodernism, is structurally opposed to modernism and postmodernism, where it criticizes them on the one hand and takes the best of them on the other. Thus, it represents a synthesis of modernist (positivism, constructivism, and criticism) and postmodernist paradigms. It is completely future-oriented with the goal of moral liberation of all mankind with the establishment of moral liberal norms, and pragmatic and pluralistic principles (Cojocaru & Sandu, 2011). This paradigm has brought a shift in the value system, and new reflections in global consciousness, which from a historical point of view has not been experienced since the Renaissance. If we look at the assumptions of the transmodernist paradigm, it is possible to notice that the ontology is based on the equality of materials, and experience in creating new visions, where the center of truth is open to all with the existence of the so-called authentic “I”. On the other hand, the epistemology of transmodernism says that current knowledge creates new knowledge, reconstructing reality in order to achieve idealism (Ivanović, 2015). This epoch addresses four core values (Pritchard et al., 2011): gender equality, global culture and ethnic equality, sustainability and survival of humanity, individuality, globalism, and interconnectedness. Transmodernism gives us the necessary political and epistemological position to overcome contradictions and treatments of diversity, providing theorizing that can provide a foundation for coexistence and existence without domination over each other (Ateljević, 2013).

3. METHODOLOGY

Relevant scientific literature was searched on the online databases Google Scholar and Emerald insight by keywords: “gastronomic experience”, “restaurant experience” and “food experience”. The following elimination criteria were used in the selection of publications: (a) papers written in English, (b) papers published only in the period from 2008 to 2021, and (c) papers examining the tourist’s gastronomic experience. In addition to respecting the elimination criteria, 59 papers were downloaded from the aforementioned online databases into Mendeley software (available for free at: <https://mendeley.en.softonic.com/>) for reference management. In the further process of selecting papers in the Mendeley software, all abstracts of the downloaded papers were read, in order to determine the correspondence with the researched problems. Out of a total of 59 papers taken, 55 were selected for the final sample. After the sample was established, data on its publication year, geographical scope, and research type were collected for each paper, which was later analyzed by descriptive statistical methods in Excel. In the analysis of papers according to the appropriate paradigm, content analysis was used as a scientific research method (Tkalac Verčić et al., 2010). After pragmatic selection, the papers are presented in tabular absolute and relative frequencies.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

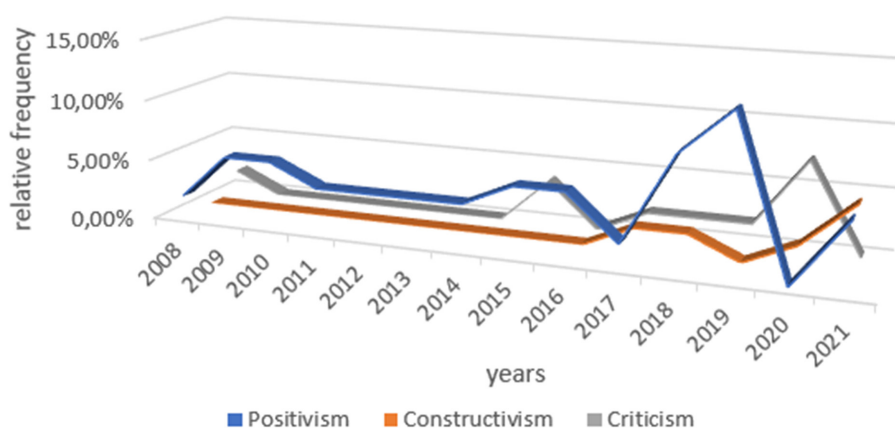
For the purposes of this research, descriptive statistics methods were applied, based on which results were obtained for paradigmatic analysis (Table 1), frequency analysis by year (Figure 1), geographical analysis (Figure 2), and analysis by research type (Table 2).

Table 1. Paradigmatic article analysis on tourist's gastronomic experience

Type of paradigms	Source	f	%
(Post) positivism	(Bekar, 2017; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2015; Campbell & DiPietro, 2014; Canny, 2014; Cao et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2021; Githiri, 2016; Gracia et al., 2011; Ha & Jang, 2012; Ha & (Shawn) Jang, 2010; Hanks & Line, 2018; Horng et al., 2013; Horng & Hsu, 2021; Hyun & Han, 2012; Kiatkawsin & Han, 2019; Kim & Moon, 2009; Lee et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2016; Lee, 2015; Liao & Fang, 2019; Liu & Tse, 2018; Liu & Jang, 2009; Mahalingam et al., 2016; Marković et al., 2021c; Namkung & Jang, 2010; Ouyang et al., 2018; Richardson et al., 2019; Ryu et al., 2012; Ryu & Shawn Jang, 2008; Sipe & Testa, 2018; Sthapit et al., 2019; Sulaiman & Haron, 2013; Sunghyup Sean Hyun, 2010; Tang & Bougoure, 2011; Wardono et al., 2012; Wu & Liang, 2009; Yaris, 2019; Yoon & Chung, 2018; Zhang et al., 2019)	39	70,91%
Constructivism	(Marković et al., 2021a, 2021b; Park et al., 2021; Sthapit, 2017; Stone et al., 2018; Tsaur & Lo, 2020)	6	10,91%
Criticism	(Ding & Lee, 2017; Horng & Hsu, 2020; Hussein, 2018; Kala, 2020; Moon et al., 2020; Paakki et al., 2019; Ryu et al., 2008; Tsaur et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2020; Wu & Mohi, 2015)	10	18,18%
Postmodern	-	-	-
Transmodern	-	-	-
In total		55	100%

Source: Authors' research

With a paradigmatic analysis of 55 papers, it was determined that almost three-quarters of the papers are (post) positivist (70.91%). The authors in these post (positivist) articles turn to realism, an objectivist view, applying a quantitative deductive research approach. On the other hand, induction was used in the articles of the constructivist view which is represented in the sample with 10.91%. Constructivist research is relativistic and subjectively oriented, nurturing a qualitative research approach. Furthermore, although the critical paradigm is focused on power relations in society, no research of such applicative value has been present in this study. However, in 18.18% of the research, a mix of inductive and deductive research approaches was used, which seeks to see a broader picture in examining the perception of gastro tourists. For this reason, these 10 studies are categorized into a critical realism worldview. Postmodernism and transmodernism were not represented in any of the studies in the sample. In order to understand the research topic in more detail, several more analyzes were presented, and the analysis of the article by year follows below (Figure 1). Since the paradigmatic analysis established that the study of postmodernism and transmodernism was not represented in the sample, further analyzes will be performed exclusively for the modern period.


Figure 1. Articles analysis by year

Source: Authors' research

Articles analysis by year, it was determined that the largest number of studies of (post) positivism was published in 2019 (12.73%) and 2018 (9.09%). Constructivism studies are represented in only four years (2017, 2018, 2020, 2021), of which the largest number of studies were published in 2021 (5.45%). Criticism stands out the most in 2020 when 7.27% of studies on the tourists' gastronomic experience were published. The following is a geographical article analysis according to the paradigm to which they belong.

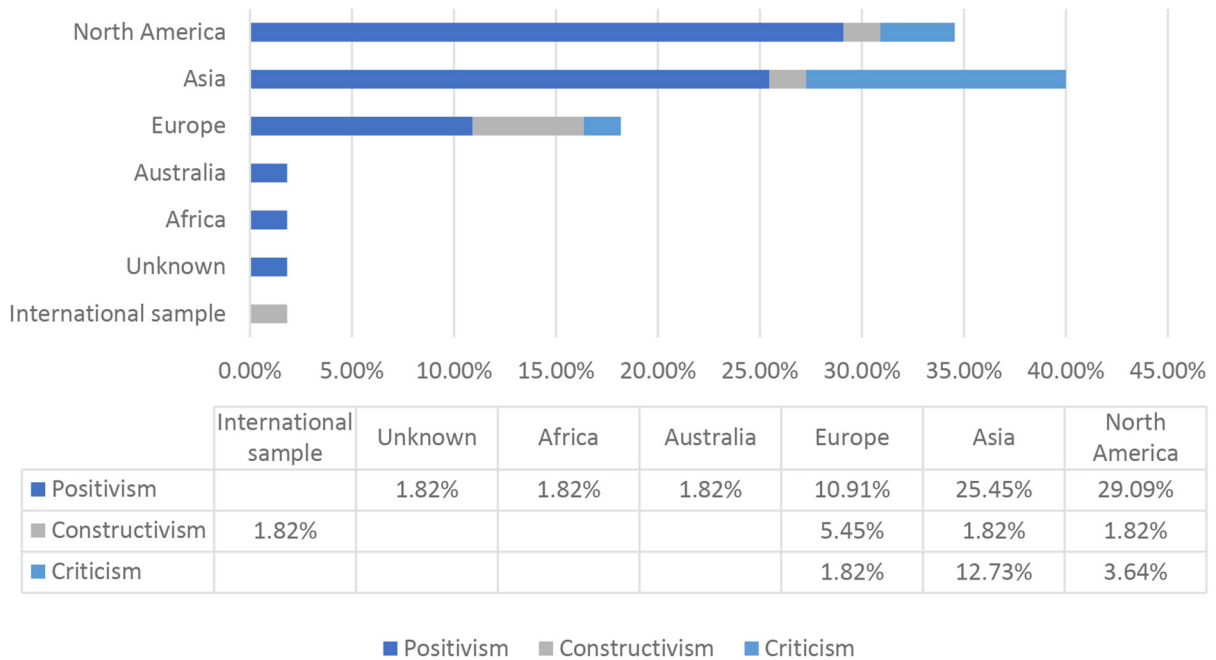


Figure 2. Geographical article analysis
 Source: Authors' research

The geographical analysis of articles on the tourist's gastronomic experience was conducted according to the types of research paradigms - positivism, constructivism, and criticism. The analysis found that the largest number of positivist authors are from North America, specified from the USA (29.09%). This is followed by positivist authors from Asia (25.45%), and from countries such as Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, India, Japan, and Malaysia. In Europe, a total of 10.91% of positivist research were conducted in Turkey, Finland, Spain, and Croatia. In Kenya on the African continent, 1.82% of research was conducted, and the same amount of research was conducted in New Zealand. An unknown location of the study was present only in the Sulaiman & Haron study (2013). On the other hand, as far as constructivist authors are concerned, the largest number of studies was conducted in Europe (5.45%), more precisely in Croatia and Finland, while only one study was conducted in Taiwan and the USA. An in-depth interview at the international level in an online environment was conducted by the constructivists Stone et al (2018). The critical approach was most applied in Asia in the following countries: Taiwan, Indonesia; China, India, and Korea. Asia is followed by critical research in North America (3.45%), while only 1.82% of studies have been published in Europe, Australia, and Africa. The graph also shows that the summation of the obtained values by continents for all three paradigms is led by Asia with 40%, followed by North America with 34.55% and Europe with 18.18%. After the conducted geographical analysis, the following is an article analysis on the tourist's gastronomic experience according to the research type.

Table 2. Article analysis by research type

Type of research approach	Source	f	%
Positivism paradigm			
Quantitative approach			
<i>Survey research</i>	(Bekar, 2017; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2015; Campbell & DiPietro, 2014; Canny, 2014; Cao et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2021; Githiri, 2016; Gracia et al., 2011; Ha & Jang, 2012; Ha & (Shawn) Jang, 2010; Hanks & Line, 2018; Horng et al., 2013; Horng & Hsu, 2021; Hyun & Han, 2012; Kiatkawsin & Han, 2019; Kim & Moon, 2009; Lee et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2016; Lee, 2015; Liao & Fang, 2019; Liu & Tse, 2018; Liu & Jang, 2009; Mahalingam et al., 2016; Marković et al., 2021c; Namkung & Jang, 2010; Ouyang et al., 2018; Richardson et al., 2019; Ryu et al., 2012; Ryu & Shawn Jang, 2008; Sipe & Testa, 2018; Sthapit et al., 2019; Sulaiman & Haron, 2013; Sunghyup Sean Hyun, 2010; Tang & Bougoure, 2011; Wu & Liang, 2009; Yaris, 2019; Yoon & Chung, 2018; Zhang et al., 2019)	38	69,09%
<i>Experimental research</i>	(Wardono et al., 2012)	1	1,82%
Constructivism paradigm			
Qualitative approach			
<i>In-depth interview</i>	(Sthapit, 2017; Stone et al., 2018; Tsaaur & Lo, 2020)	3	5,45%
<i>Content analysis</i>	(Marković et al., 2021a, 2021b; Park et al., 2021)	3	5,45%
Criticism paradigm			
Mixed approach			
<i>In-depth interview and survey</i>	(Ding & Lee, 2017; Horng & Hsu, 2020; Moon et al., 2020; Paakki et al., 2019; Tsaaur et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2020)	6	10,91%
<i>Focus groups and survey</i>	(Hussein, 2018; Kala, 2020; Ryu et al., 2008; Wu & Mohi, 2015)	4	7,27%

Source: Authors' research

The paradigmatic analysis by research type is shown in the previous table. The obtained results of the analysis indicate that only one of the positivist researchers used the experimental quantitative approach (1.82%), while in the remaining studies, the survey was used (67.27%). Of the constructivist researchers, 5.45% conducted an in-depth interview, while the same number applied content analysis (5.45%). A mixed research approach was observed in 18.18% of studies on the tourist's gastronomic experience, led by a mix of tourist's in-depth interviews and surveys (10.91%), followed by a mix of focus groups and surveys (7.27%). Thus, from the methodological point of view, the quantitative approach, more precisely the examination of tourists using the questionnaire as a measuring instrument, definitely prevails in the literature on the gastronomic experience of tourists.

5. CONCLUSION

Understanding different types of paradigms is extremely important for scientific experts, especially in the context of research terms - ontology, epistemology, and methodology. It is the knowledge of ontology and epistemology that directly influences the choice of methodological approach to research. Considering the importance of gastronomy in the development of tourist destinations, gastronomic tourism was chosen as the topic of this research. Therefore, for the purposes of this research, 55 scientific articles on the gastronomic experience of tourists belonging to different types of paradigms were analyzed. A detailed analysis found that each of the authors of selected scientific papers has its own research position that serves as a basis for categorizing the type of paradigm to which it belongs. The results of this research indicate that most of the papers are represented from the positivist, followed by a critical and constructivist scientific research point of view. No research belonging to the postmodern and transmodern was represented in the sample, so further

analyses were conducted only on the example of positivism, constructivism, and criticism. Although this study includes studies in the period from 2008 to 2021, the results of frequency analysis by year indicate that the largest number of studies on the observed topic was published in the last three years. The geographical analysis found that the largest number of studies was conducted in Asia and North America, where the authors mainly apply a quantitative research approach.

Despite the fact that this review provided insight into the current state of representation of paradigms in research on the tourist's gastronomic experience, it also has certain limitations. Given that only papers published in English in the period from 2008 to 2021 have been considered in this literature review, future research should include articles in other languages in the sample, covering a longer period of time. In order to achieve greater representativeness of the results, the proposal for future studies is to use other relevant databases in finding papers, in addition to Google Scholar and Emerald Insight. Furthermore, to gain a more detailed insight into previous research on the tourist's gastronomic experience, it would be desirable to apply a bibliographic analysis according to the journal in the future. Definitely, the biggest limitation in this research is the lack of studies belonging to the postmodern and transmodern paradigm, so it is suggested that researchers direct their future research precisely in the direction of these two research ideologies. The contribution of this research is extremely important for academic experts because based on the analyzed data, one can gain insight into the current paradigmatic structure of articles on the tourist's gastronomic experience. It is different research approaches that can deepen knowledge and insights into the needs of tourists, and the data obtained from different perspectives can serve the management of gastronomic products and services in the long-term improvement of current elements of the gastronomic offer.

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