

AUTHENTICITY PARADOX: AN EXAMINATION ON LOCAL GASTRONOMY

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Abstract

Local gastronomy offers authenticity, an important element of tourist experience. However, some tourists cannot experience gastronomic products in their exact authentic forms. This issue causes from tourists' typology, importance level of gastronomy, and quest for authenticity. For serving widely varied tourists, producers of the local gastronomic products make changes in the essence of products. Current study aims to investigate changing process of gastronomic products' authenticity which are served in the context of tourism, and to develop an understanding on causes and costs of deterioration. Methodologically, existing literature had evaluated with conceptual inferences. As the findings propose, the changes start with touristic exploration which is followed by tourism-related deterioration. After deterioration, if process of recovery conducted, turning back to the exact form of authenticity does not seem possible. The alternative forms of authenticity are most likely to occur. Additionally, mistaken perspectives like considering recovery preventions as short-term actions can lead the deterioration again, like a loop. Raising awareness for prevent this loop is this study's critical proposition to destinations. Opening new horizons for the phenomenon of authenticity and overthrowing the idea that see tourists as the sole reason for deterioration are the contributions to the literature. The changes that lead deterioration are responsibility of locals, too.

Keywords: Authenticity. Paradox. Gastronomy. Gastronomic Tourism Products. Conceptual Research.

PARADOXO DA AUTENTICIDADE: UM EXAME SOBRE GASTRONOMIA LOCAL**Resumo**

A gastronomia local oferece autenticidade, um elemento importante na experiência turística. No entanto, alguns turistas não conseguem experimentar os produtos gastronômicos em sua forma autêntica. Este problema se deve ao tipo de turista, ao nível de importância da gastronomia e à busca por autenticidade. Para atender a um variado número de turistas, os produtores gastronômicos locais fazem mudanças na essência dos produtos. Este estudo pretende investigar o processo de mudança de autenticidade de produtos gastronômicos, oferecidos no contexto do turismo, e desenvolver uma compreensão das causas e custos da deterioração. Metodologicamente, a literatura existente foi avaliada com inferências conceituais. Como os resultados sugerem, as mudanças começam com a exploração do turismo, seguida pela deterioração relacionada ao turismo. Após a deterioração, se o processo de recuperação for realizado, o retorno à forma exata de autenticidade parece não ser possível. Novas formas alternativas de autenticidade são mais prováveis de ocorrer. Além disso, perspectivas equivocadas, como considerar medidas preventivas de recuperação como ações de curto prazo, podem levar à deterioração novamente, como em uma espiral. Aumentar a conscientização para evitar essa espiral é a proposta crítica deste estudo para os destinos. Abrir novos horizontes para o fenômeno da autenticidade e derrubar a ideia de que os turistas são o único motivo de deterioração são contribuições à literatura. As mudanças que levam à deterioração também são de responsabilidade da população local.

Palavras-chave: Autenticidade. Paradoxo. Gastronomia. Produtos de Turismo Gastronômico. Pesquisa Conceitual.

PARADOJA DE LA AUTENTICIDAD: UN EXAMEN DE LA GASTRONOMÍA LOCAL**Resumen**

La gastronomía local ofrece autenticidad, un elemento importante en la experiencia turística. Sin embargo, algunos turistas no pueden experimentar los productos gastronómicos en su forma auténtica. Este problema se debe al tipo de turista, el nivel de importancia de la gastronomía y su búsqueda por autenticidad. Para atender a una gran variedad de turistas, los productores gastronómicos locales realizan cambios en la esencia de sus productos. Este estudio tiene como objetivo investigar el proceso cambiante de la autenticidad de los productos gastronómicos, ofertados en el contexto del turismo y desarrollar una comprensión de las causas y los costos de su deterioro. Metodológicamente, la literatura existente se ha evaluado con inferencias conceptuales. Como los resultados demuestran, los cambios comienzan con la exploración turística, seguida de un deterioro relacionado con el turismo. Después del deterioro, aún si se lleva a cabo el proceso para la recuperación de la autenticidad del producto, no es posible volver a su forma exacta. Es más probable que ocurran nuevas formas alternativas de autenticidad. Además, perspectivas erróneas como considerar medidas preventivas de recuperación como acciones a corto plazo, pueden conducir nuevamente al deterioro, como una espiral. Concientizar para prevenir esa espiral, es la propuesta crítica de este estudio para los destinos. Abrir nuevos horizontes para el fenómeno de la autenticidad y derribar la idea de que son los turistas el único motivo de deterioro, son las contribuciones a la literatura. Los cambios que provocan el deterioro también son responsabilidad de los lugareños.

Palabras clave: Autenticidad. Paradoja. Gastronomía. Productos del Turismo Gastronómico. Investigación Conceptual.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Authenticity is seen as a contributor of tourism experience (Wang, 1999; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017; Zhang et al., 2019; Tiberghien et al., 2020). In tourism literature, many researchers proposed that the idea of authenticity, which associates “traditionality” and “genuinity”, is one of the main motivations of some tourists (Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999; Stankova & Vassenska, 2015; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017; Guerreiro & Marques, 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). Experiencing the values which are not produced specifically for mass market (Cohen, 1988) creates an opportunity to feel unique themselves (Tiberghien et al., 2020).

Although there are tourists who travels with authenticity seeking behavior actively, the fact that, there are also the ones who experience authentic features just because of their spontaneous encounter at the destination (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). Furthermore, for some tourists, authenticity may be something to be avoided according to their personal traits and perceptions.

But regardless from the typology of tourists; the objects, locations, and products, which are called as “authentic” in the context of tourism, already exist in a destination as a part of the everyday life of local people. For residents, these are routine and ordinary “localities” which reflects their way of living. And offering these localities for tourist consumption may cause some problems like deterioration accordingly (Kırlar Can et al., 2017).

One of the main concerns of the destinations that are popular among mass of tourists is protecting authentic features from tourism-related deterioration (Cohen, 1988; Getz, 1995; Archer et al., 2004; Butler, 2017; Kırlar Can et al., 2017). More tourists mean more consumption and, for locals, more income expectation consequently (Teixeira & Ribeiro, 2013).

And meeting with higher amount of demand with different wants and preferences requires to leave the traditional ways and become more tourist oriented (Kırlar Can et al., 2017). Thus, local producers may change the essence of the products and deteriorate them with their own hands to get a bigger slice of the cake (Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Ekin, 2018). In this sense, tourism may damage the authenticity inevitably through both tourists and locals.

According to what has been conveyed so far, this study examines the authentic deterioration and ensuing recovery processes of local gastronomic products. Local gastronomy is chosen as the authentic object that reflects the stages due to its link to the culture (Bogataj, 2019), changeable nature with dependency to human (Martin, 2014), and importance in tourism as a tourism product (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017).

Even there are many studies point out the negative effects of tourism on authenticity of gastronomy (e.g., Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Archer et al., 2005; Kırlar Can et al., 2017), there is no study that tries to explain these effects as a holistic process which contains stages of exploration, deterioration, and recovery. It is believed that understanding this process step by step can ease the prevention from authentic deterioration for destinations.

Moreover, in this paper, it is proposed that the deterioration and recovery processes might turn into an authenticity paradox. Deterioration that takes place after exploration triggers the concerns about the danger to lose authenticity in the mind of local stakeholders. Then, the recovery actions may be developed as a reflection of these concerns. However, considering the actions as temporary and short-term preventions can lead to observe the same deterioration process. Thus, a loop named as authenticity paradox takes place in the destination.

This paper is a conceptual research as it evaluated the current literature on gastronomy, tourism, and authenticity topics. Even there is a lack of empirical data in this study, it can open new horizons for future empiric and conceptual research. In this manner, this study will contribute to the field with new research possibilities. Also, developing a model to demonstrate authenticity paradox and its stages is tidying up to general debates about tourism and authenticity.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Tourism & Authenticity

Authenticity is a significant provider of tourism experience (Butler, 2017; Guerreiro & Marques, 2017; Corpas & Castillo, 2019). However, tourists' authenticity-seeking behavior during their tourism experience differentiates from each other according to their personal characteristics (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). Relevant to this differentiation, authenticity context in a destination also has different approaches.

Wang (1999) proposes authenticity has 4 basic approaches in the context of tourism as objectivism, constructivism, existential, and post-modernism. Objectivism approach insists authenticity is the genuine form of an object without any touches on it. However, authenticity has to be reconstructed for harmonization to the tourism spectrum (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

In constructivist view, tourists will not be able to experience objects or events in their authentic forms. So, alterations, which are referred by Maccannell (1973) as staged authenticity, are inevitable in tourism settings.

Wang's (1999) existential authenticity concept connects authenticity to tourist's perception about the activity. Chang et al. (2011) explain this through dining experience during travel. If tourists' participation level to local culture could be endured by dining experience, then positive perceptions about authenticity can be developed (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). For post-modernist, the arguments on authenticity are pointless since there is no way to know what is authentic actually (Wang, 1999).

In tourism literature, it is widely assumed authenticity will appear in the context of constructivist and existential approaches (e.g., Wang, 1999; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Timothy & Ron, 2013; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). Therefore, studies mostly focus on possible effects of tourism (e.g., Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Timothy & Ron, 2013) and tourist's authenticity-related experience (e.g., Tasci & Knutson, 2004; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017).

But yet, there is no study focusing on how tourism-related changes can be observed and, if the changes are negative, how after-deterioration process of authentic objects develops in a destination. The current study aims to examine and explain the process in a holistic view with the objectivist approach to fill this gap. Since the gastronomic tourism products are chosen as "the object", the relationship with gastronomy, tourism, and authenticity should be explained.

2.2 Authenticity of Gastronomic Tourism Consumption

According to Quan & Wang (2004), tourists' food consumption behavior can be observed in two contexts: peak experience or supporting experience. For tourists, who want to experience food in a destination as the contrast to their everyday life, local gastronomy can be the peak experience. On the other hand, for tourists that refer food as "supporting experience" local food is not the main search and can be perceived as an element to be avoided. Mkono et al. (2013) conducted a netnographic research which supports the propositions of Quan and Wang's (2004) model.

While Quan and Wang (2004) ponder about the context of tourist's food consumption, Hjalager (2004) divides tourists into four typologies in terms of their food quest. These are existential, recreational, diversionary, and experimental. The existential and experimental tourists are willing to consume local gastronomy, however, diversionary and recreational tourists are assumed to not have a desire for gastronomy, and sometimes they even try to stay away (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). For the ones who desire to consume local

gastronomy (existential and experimental), especially local food experience satisfies this desire (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017; Bogataj, 2019; Zhang et al., 2019). And the authenticity is one of the key parts of the local food experience (Chang et al., 2011; Timothy & Ron, 2013; Zhang et al., 2019; Skinner et al., 2020)

Components of local gastronomic identity are the sources of authenticity (Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013; Zhang et al., 2019). So, food-related typologies of tourists also determine their quest for authenticity.

The study conducted by Özdemir & Seyitoğlu (2017) revealed that tourists can be divided into three categories (which are authenticity seekers, moderates, and comfort seekers) according to their quest for authenticity. Authenticity seekers are in an active search for food that reflects genuine authenticity despite the possible risks.

The tourists who are defined as moderates also looking for authentic and novel food but in acceptable level of risk. So, reducing risk to an acceptable level through changing some ingredients is one way to ensure their consumption. But in the third context, the authors conceptualized them as comfort seekers who intend to maintain their comfort and safety and willing to stay in their "environmental bubble", there is an avoidance habit from local authentic foods and search for familiar ones.

It is thinkable that if tourists describe themselves as authenticity seekers, they will hanker to consume local food products that reflect the gastronomic identity of the destination. On the other hand, tourists, who have concerns about food with high-risk perceptions and avoidance habit, are expected to choose restaurants which not reflecting local texture.

It is understood that the literature on gastronomic consumption in tourism and authenticity or locality is mostly focused on the tourist side of the concept. There is a variety of tourists from authenticity-seekers to authenticity-avoiders. A destination can be visited by tourists who are not interested in gastronomy and its authenticity (McKercher et al., 2008; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). As a response to this, there are different types of food service businesses which target different segments of the tourist market (Yılmaz & Özdemir, 2017).

However, no study which proposes a theoretical view on the local gastronomic products' alteration as an authentic object. Further, authenticity and tourism relation is a multifaceted and paradoxical subject since there are negative and positive observations on it (e.g., Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Archer et al., 2005; Teixeira & Ribeiro, 2013; Zhang et al., 2019; Cobb, 2014). Thus, there is a paradox can emerge in the changing process of local gastronomic products.

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Authenticity Paradox and Dilemma Concepts in the Existing Tourism Literature

The relationship between tourism and authenticity of destinations already examined under the name of “dilemma” or “paradox” in several studies (Table 1) but there is not any common definition of the theme. It is possible to say that the authenticity in a destination can be shaped by tourism. Some of the researchers have been thinking this “shaping” process creates a dilemma according to coexistence of positive and negative effects of tourism (Getz, 1995; Archer et al., 2004; Teixeira & Ribeiro, 2013; Cobb, 2014).

On one hand, tourism increases awareness and familiarity of the authentic local products which lead to protection and regeneration of them (Getz, 1995; Grünewald, 2002; Teixeira & Ribeiro, 2013). On the other hand, increasing awareness and demand creates a pressure on the products along with the desire of locals earning more money through meeting the higher amount of demand than before and preferring tourists rather than locals to serve (Getz, 1995; Grünewald, 2002; Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Rickly, 2019). Efforts for supply to this demand and meet with the different preferences cause lower quality and uniformization in products (Cobb, 2014).

Table 1: Authenticity Paradox & Dilemma in the Literature

Paper	Mention	Context	Focus of Conflict
Cohen (1988)	Paradox	Tourism in general	Locals vs. Tourist
Getz (1995)	Dilemma	Event tourism	Destroying vs. Regenerating
Wirth & Freestone (2003)	Paradox	Cultural heritage	Heterogeneity vs. homogeneity
Cohen (2007)	Dilemma	Tourism in general	Before vs. After Popularization
Ashworth (2009)	Dilemma	Cultural heritage	Economic Contribution vs. Locals' Disrelish
Timothy & Ron (2013)	Not specified	Tourism in general	Preserving vs. Commoditization
Cobb (2014)	Paradox	Tourism and digitalization	Preserving vs. Uniformization and Commodification
Martin (2014)	Paradox	Cajun cuisine	Reaching vs. Searching to Authenticity
Ekin (2018)	Dilemma	Emerging destinations	Authenticity Seeking vs. Local Deceptive

Source: Evaluated from the literature

Also, this pressure may force producers and servers in a destination to create “deceptive” authenticity (Timothy & Ron, 2013; Ekin, 2018). As can be remembered from the MacCannel’s (1973) “staged

authenticity” concept, tourists may never reach a real and genuine authenticity in a destination. Because of the pure authenticity may be too much for tourists, little changes have made to streamline the products to tourist consumption (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

Additionally, sometimes adding more “authentic-like” features can increase tourist attention and financial income (Kırlar Can et al., 2017). Depending on these, authentic products can become too mainstream or, as opposite, too exaggerated. In both cases, deterioration of authenticity occurs.

Cohen (1988) mentioned that if there is a deterioration of authenticity, it will not solely be perceived by locals who knows the “real” form of the authenticity, tourists will also recognize it. Wirth and Freestone (2003) tie this situation to another paradox that is about homogenization of a culture’s heterogeneous values according to commodification of the culture for tourist consumption, but the heterogeneity was the attraction foremost.

Losing this heterogeneity facilitates tourist consumption at first, but with time that pass, tourists will recognize the commoditization and not get attracted by destination anymore. However, Martin (2014) thinks differently about losing tourist attraction. According to him, it does not that matter for tourists if it is real or not unless it satisfies the search for authenticity. Tourists cannot detect the decreased authenticity and, probably, would believe what they experienced is the real.

Nevertheless, unlike Martin (2014), Leong (2016) points out that, Hong Kong has lost her authenticity according to rapid development in tourism which homogenizes uniqueness and distinctiveness of the city’s authentic values and it causes reduction in the number of travelers.

All these research handle authenticity as “paradox” or “dilemma” with somehow close but conceptually different meanings in many different contexts. However, even the local gastronomic products are contributors of authenticity (Sims, 2009; Martin, 2014), no study held the structure of local gastronomic products as the main object.

The current study tries to fill this gap, too by theoretically investigating how these products as contributors of authenticity (Sims, 2009; Martin, 2014) can be shaped and changed according to tourism development. It is thought that the nature of these products may cause sudden changes according to dominant tourist profile in the destination (Martin, 2014).

3.2 Authentic Structure of Gastronomic Tourism Products

As mentioned above, tourists’ gastronomic

experience desire (Quan & Wang, 2004; Hjalager, 2004) and authenticity-seeking behavior (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017) are somehow related (Skinner et al., 2020).

For remembrance, since there are tourists visit a destination with the desire to consume local and authentic gastronomic products, there are also the ones who search for other attractiveness and sometimes avoids (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; McKercher et al., 2008; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017).

This study based on these relationships' effects on the context of the authenticity in a destination (MacCannel, 1973; Wang, 1999). Thus, one of the main goals and contributions of this study to this debate is to concretize how local producers change the structure of their gastronomic products' authenticity to gain all possible income through them. Table 2 summarized the relationships.

Table 2: Theoretical relations of gastronomy, authenticity, and product structure

Food as an Experience	Tourist Types	Quest for Authenticity	Authenticity Context	Products' Authentic Structure
Peak Experience	Existential	High	Existential	Genuine local products
	Experimental	Moderate High	Commodification, Staged Authenticity, Existential	Local products with shows and modified ingredients, techniques etc.
Supporting Experience	Diversionary	Moderate Low	Staged Authenticity, Existential	Local products that streamlined to tourists' desire and needs
	Recreational	Low	Staged Authenticity, Inauthenticity	Products that satisfy tourists without concerning authenticity
Quan & Wang (2004)	Hjalager (2004)	Özdemir & Seyitoğlu (2017)	MacCannell (1973); Wang (1999)	The current study's theoretical contribution

Source: own elaboration.

According to Quan & Wang (2004), tourists' food consumption behavior can be observed in two contexts: peak experience or supporting experience. For tourists, who want to experience food in a destination as oppose to their everyday life, local gastronomy can be the peak experience. On the other hand, for tourists that refers food as supporting experience local food is not the main search and can be perceived as an element to be avoided.

Similarly, Hjalager (2004) divides tourists into four typologies in terms of their food quest. These are existential, recreational, diversionary, and experimental. While existential and experimental tourists are willing to consume local gastronomy, diversionary and recreational tourists are assumed to not have a desire for gastronomy, and sometimes they even try to stay away.

Our main question is what happens to structure of local gastronomic products as authentic objects when different types of tourists visit a destination. For instance, diversionary tourists see food as a supporting experience element, and not in an active search for local gastronomy. It can be thought that they are moderates in authenticity-seeking behavior.

So, to attract them, local producers streamline their products for reducing the risks when they encounter. Changing some of the ingredients which are too "extreme" for tourists to more familiar ones is an example to it (Cohen, 2007). The other side of the coin, experimental tourists desire to experience the show and they are in search for popularity more than everything (Çalışkan, 2013).

From a point of view, authenticity is a popularity

and identity indicator (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). So, it is possible to say that experimental tourists are also the moderate authenticity-seekers (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu). Exaggerated presentations and shows with plentiful ingredients than usual are always on display in social media which attracts this kind of tourists to a destination. Hence, offering exaggeratedly commodified food as authentic can also be found in destinations.

The following idea may come to mind according to what are told so far; if tourists in search for authenticity, like existential tourists that see food as peak experience, then they choose a destination that has strong reflection of local gastronomic identity and authenticity. And the others, the ones who can be called as recreational or comfort seekers, can travel to more suitable destinations for them.

Also, there is not just one type of food or restaurant in a destination (Yılmaz & Özdemir, 2017), they can visit the ones which serve what they want. All these doubts are welcomed and somehow true. But it is also known that a destination cannot be chosen solely by gastronomic tourists (McKercher et al., 2008).

There are the ones with expectations and searches other than local gastronomy and authenticity. Especially in emerging destinations (Ekin, 2018), producers and service providers may try to appeal to every types of tourists with a specific product to earn more money with minimum effort. So, some modifications can be observed that aim to streamline and ease the consumption of moderate authenticity-seekers and keep attracted the main authenticity-seekers at the same time (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

According to these, we aim to understand that how this streamlining process, which includes staged authenticity and commodification, deteriorate the authenticity of gastronomy. These will also be investigated that how the recognition of locals on the negative effects of deterioration takes place and which precautions could be taken for not live a situation like this again. Withal, the point of the paradox that in which circumstances a destination lives these processes as a loop continuously will be discussed.

Furthermore, another struggle that is not a stable concept, in fact, it is a changeable and living phenomena which can be affected by factors like tourism (Martin, 2014; Timothy & Ron, 2013; Tiberghien et al., 2020). If the recovery process applied successfully after deterioration, will the authentic products be the same as they were will also be mentioned. In the framework of all these, this study examines authenticity from an objectivist view by treating local gastronomic products as an authentic object in tourism spectrum (Wang, 1999).

4 METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

This study is a conceptual research that evaluates existing literature on authenticity, tourism, and gastronomy. The authors collected the studies in the literature and linked them to create a theoretical framework for the goals. Changes in the product structure and stages in the model (Figure 1) first discussed separately and individually to prevent orientation to each other. Then the authors met and mutually discussed the subject ones again. The formation of the model was decided with consultation by a professor in the gastronomy field.

Since this study is a theoretical essay, the biggest limitation of the study is the lack of empirical data. Also, the authors might be overlooked some of the papers in the literature. However, it is believed this study creates a remarkable basis for future research as it will be discussed in the conclusion.

5 A CONCEPTUAL MODEL PROPOSAL OF “AUTHENTICITY PARADOX”

Figure 1 shows authenticity paradox as a loop that intends to explain how gastronomic products of a destination may lose their authentic features and gain them back in the context of tourism in the light of the literature. If this loop can be considered as a learning process by destinations, there is no need to worry about a paradox. But if the post-recovery process cannot well managed and similar problems are observed, then a vicious circle may begin, and it becomes a causal paradox. This research aims to

display the stages to help destinations with similar struggles so they can determine if they are in this loop or in a stage of it. It is hoped that this will at least raise awareness of authenticity for practitioners and create new ideas for future research. This study fills gaps in the literature which are mentioned above.

The paradox or loop contains three main stages as exploration, deterioration, and recovery. The exploration refers the gaining popularity as a tourist destination through locals' marketing efforts and pioneer tourist attention. The service approach of destination turns tourist-oriented with this stage. After exploration, if tourists divided variously and local gastronomy producers try to target almost all of them, deterioration of authenticity can be observed.

Deterioration will bring recovery actions thanks to local concerns about authenticity. Recovered authenticity is expected to gain tourist attention back. However, if the recovery actions got stuck with short-term understatement and the same problems observed after re-exploration, a paradox of authenticity occurs. Every loop brings more casualty in the object's authenticity and alternative forms (O_1 and O_2) emerge. Stages will be explained deeper in following sections.

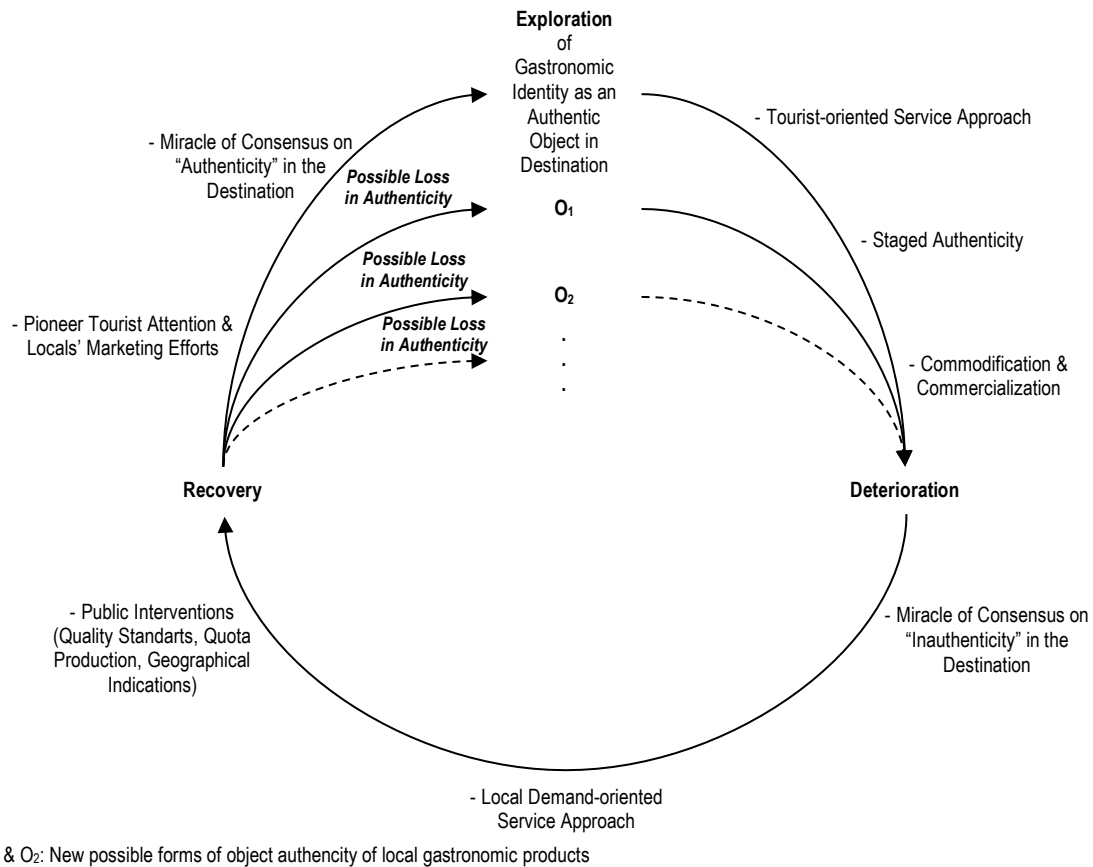
5.1 Exploration to Deterioration

Thanks to the development of communication technologies, a destination which is preferred by a few tourists in a period can become the focus of the tourist masses (Miguéns et al., 2008; Jalilvand et al., 2012; Cobb, 2014). Especially with social media, a small piece of information about authenticity may grow among many users who are also potential tourists (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Oliveira and Baracho (2018) show that in Brazil case, it is possible to assess tourism structure through social media.

Authentic experience indicators can flow between the experiencer and potential experiencer faster. It is even possible to say that there are “social media tourists” who do not care about authenticity but search for popularity and identity through it. For example, “The Eastern Express” in Turkey become popular among mass of tourists thanks to social media with its authentic and social media related shareable features (Çakmak & Altaş, 2018; Doğan et al., 2018; Eryılmaz & Yüçetürk, 2018).

Social media also creates marketing options for locals (Katsikari et al., 2020). Social media's structure which removes time, location, and cultural barriers between societies creates faster, cheaper, and wider marketing opportunities (Oliveira & Baracho, 2018). As Perinotto et al. (2020) verified for Brazil, it is important to have a social media profile for tourism organizations which affects the successful development of

Figure 1: Conceptual Proposal of Gastronomic Products' Authenticity Paradox



Source: own elaboration.

destinations. Because the information in social media shapes expectations and perceptions of tourists about the service providers in a destination (Lima et al., 2020). Thus, authentic tourism experiences a destination offers can be reflected by locals through social media as a marketing tool. Tourists with desire to experience authenticity can reach these marketing efforts as information at the same time thanks to social media.

The paradox starts with when a destination which was preferred by tourists, who can be called as authenticity-seeker pioneer tourists, becomes popular and sit on the focus of tourist masses. There is a need of awareness among tourists about authenticity for creating an attraction through it.

Media and electronic-word-of-mouth are playing enormous role to widen the information about the local gastronomy and create awareness on it (Cohen, 2007; Miguéns et al., 2008; Andilolo & Ranteallo, 2017). Rickly (2019) calls it as "miracle of consensus" which means collective awareness and knowledge on a specific attraction of the destination. With social media, sharing process became easier and faster recently, and popularization of destinations as well.

Higher amount of information flows through internet than before and this situation causes a faster development of tourism (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). We called this awareness and popularization stage as exploration, but it is not just about exploring the destination, it also means exploration of more demand and income chances by locals.

In addition to pioneer tourists, local people who want to promote their everyday life as an attraction or just have desire to show their life contribute this consensus also (Tiberghien et al., 2020). Farmers to restaurateurs, many different producers and service providers use media channels to promote the authenticity of their products (Cobb, 2014; Pilař et al., 2016). All these efforts occur because of the awareness among residents that there is an income possibility through localities, and this awareness developed thanks to pioneer tourists.

Of course, exploration cannot happen at once, it is a process that has cumulative sharing and promoting background and expands towards a saturation point. For a while, this expanding leads to increasing number of tourists which causes higher demand and income. In this course, locals, that have higher income

expectations, may become tourist-oriented and focus the wants and needs of tourists rather than locals (Grünwald, 2002; Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Martin, 2014). A staged authenticity is possible to emerge after it. If tourists do not volunteer to consume local gastronomic products as they are, changes and rearrangements occur to ease consumption (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Cohen, 2007).

As mentioned before, adding some “fancy” and “authentic-like” features like shows and ingredients is a way to create extra attractiveness, also. These two ways are the examples of locals’ trial to addressing more types of tourists with same group of products.

Increased volume should be examined also to assess deterioration process. In such a case, amount of production that increases directly proportional to demand pushes locals to find alternative ways to produce more products in a shorter time easily (Wirth & Freestone, 2003; Martin, 2014). It is probably caused by the economic instinct that is about not to lose the opportunity to earn more money in a shorter period.

Another concern is that the tourism product is a product that need brand, package, and shelf life. Depending on these conditions, some changes in ingredients and preparations are inevitable. These commercialization and commodification processes lead loss in the sense of authenticity between before and after the rapid development of tourism in the area (Martin, 2014), and it most likely ends up with cultural deterioration.

5.2 Deterioration to Recovery

Deterioration is not noticeable at first by local businesses. But residents who do not expect money from tourism start to develop an idea on “inauthenticity” in the homeland. Therefore, it is possible to say that prejudice against tourism and cultural concerns of locals will eventually rise (Kırlar Can et al., 2017), and it is possibly will turn to a conflict between residents and other stakeholders. But deterioration of authentic features also will be noticed by tourists eventually (Cohen, 1988; Leong, 2016). Especially the existential and authenticity-seeker tourists would likely to be the first ones.

Then, almost the same process that leads to exploration with eWoM and media channels starts to work opposite way. The miracle of consensus transforms into perception of “inauthenticity” and it brings diminishing in the number of the tourists demand which leads declining of income. At this point, locals who wait for income realize the problem finally.

From another perspective, output of these negative effects causes local producers and businesses focus back to local demand rather than tourists.

Although it is not obviously revealed by evidence in any research, it is most likely to think as local consumers are already willing to eat local foods as they are naturally. So, serving and producing towards local demand may cause to reuse authentic recipes with original ingredients and techniques.

Also, the cultural concerns of locals will develop a need of action among local decisionmakers and administrators of destination. Setting rules that contain quality standards, limited production, and geographical indicators is an example of ways to preserving and recovering local gastronomy (Uslu & Kiper, 2006; Çalışkan, 2013; Ceccarini, 2014).

5.3 After the Recovery: Paradox or not?

In this paper, we thought that the authenticity paradox takes place after the gastronomic products of a destination regain their popularity. Same steps can be observed after the recovery in some circumstances. Pioneer tourists might visit destination again, and their shares and locals’ marketing efforts can make authenticity features visible anew.

Furthermore, recovery process may be interesting and even attractive for tourists, and destinations can build their marketing strategy on this base (Fox, 2007). But when this paradox occurs? In fact, it is not easy to say in one breath, but it takes place if the locals have their greed for earning back without learning from the past.

As we mentioned before, if these losing and recovering stages of authenticity seen as a learning process then there is no need to discuss a paradox or loop. But, if locals see tourism as exploitable opportunity, then living this loop again is almost inevitable.

However, it is worth to note that, some destinations can be owed their existence to commodification (Çokışler, 2018). It is possible to see that commodify the authenticity may regenerate them and make them possible to live longer (Cohen, 1988).

Even some researchers have seen authenticity as a boundary (Cobb, 2014) that restricting cultures. But can a destination, which does not see authenticity as a boundary and try to recover their corrupt culture, gain the original form of authenticity back? It is another dilemma that must be investigated with a case study, but for us, it is not seeming possible.

The recovery process can include the regenerating the products in a way that can withstand the negative effects of tourism. Because putting some standards also mean taking out naturality from the producing process and determining the attitude and creativity of locals (Ceccarini, 2014). It is even thinkable that, the genuine form of authenticity can be already

changed by locals before tourism development for easy using and producing for their everyday life. Thus, from our point of view, some potential losses in authenticity are inevitable after a recovery process.

6 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, & FUTURE RESEARCH IDEAS

This paper aims to reveal the tourism-related structural changing process of local gastronomic products' authenticity. Even there are studies indicate the effects of tourism on these products, no study offers conceptual understanding on the topic. For this reason, this study evaluates current literature to concretize deterioration of the gastronomic products' authenticity and demonstrates this changing process on the theoretical model of the authenticity paradox.

The first gap this study tries to fill is about the focus of the study related to authenticity approaches. In the existing literature, authenticity has mostly been explained with constructivist or existential approaches, and it discussed the effects of authenticity on the tourist's experience.

Unlike previous research, this study adopted an objectivist approach and chose the gastronomic tourism products as the "authentic object". Second, this research demonstrates the paradox that it generates during the changing process of local gastronomic products. And also, it provides suggestions about after deterioration, how the recovery process works and what can happen as a result of this process.

Although this paper has a certain contribution to the literature, it also has limitations. Due to the conceptual structure of the current research as theoretical essay, this study reflects the authors' view on the literature.

So, it lacks empirical data. Another limitation of the study originated from that when comparing the research results of the previous studies. Empirical data cannot be used due to the lack of studies in these fields. But still, this study can offer theoretical and practical implications for the field.

As Cohen and Avieli (2004) already indicated, authenticity of gastronomy will eventually lose some of its aspects according to tourism development. The variation in gastronomic (Quan & Wang, 2004; Hjalager, 2004) and authentic (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017) experience seeking behaviors is the key in this loss.

The gastronomic tourism products' structure in a destination has different forms according to encounter with the types of tourists. According to this, the current study offers four basic structural forms as "genuine local products", "local products with shows and modified ingredients, techniques etc.", "local products

that streamlined to tourists' desire and needs", and "products that satisfy tourists without concerning authenticity" to the literature.

The proposed forms also show authenticity is a changeable phenomenon and controlling this changing process in an acceptable level is a struggle for destinations (Butler, 2017). If the changing expands through deterioration, then the destination's gastronomy will lose its attractiveness (Cohen, 1988; Leong, 2016). After that, with cultural and economic concerns the recovery of local gastronomy will put in operation (Fox, 2007; Ceccarini, 2014).

The study also contributes a conceptual model proposition of authenticity paradox. The authors consider authenticity paradox as a loop, contrary to general understanding. In a scenario which recovery actions cannot be maintained or implemented only in short-term, same struggles can emerge in destination again. And every loop causes some irreversible damages in authenticity. However, for some destinations, observing this paradox at least once might be a positive thing in an aspect. This kind of "calamity" may cause a development of an action plan for preserving authenticity of local food products. But these plans may change the products to "tourism-resistant" or "tourism-related". Thus, determining if the recovered products are the real form of the gastronomy is almost impossible. Alternative versions of authenticity will most likely replace the "old" one.

Furthermore, the authors do not see tourists or locals as the main culprit. Even though a perception that sees tourists as "the guilty" exists in the literature (Ashworth, 2009), this problem also about the respond of the residents to tourism demand. Tourists that are not exact authenticity or comfort-seekers always look food alternatives in the destination (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). Almost every destination offers gastronomic products that can appeal different types of tourists like ethnic, global, or tourist-oriented foods (Yılmaz & Özdemir, 2018). The point is, sometimes, the locals' desire to earn more income and their respond to demand takes place as changing their cultural values for tourist consumption.

The study can open new doors for future research. As it is not easy to say all destinations get in this paradox, destinations which emerge with a well-planned destination management strategy must be staying out. Examining the product structure and the paradox with different destinations empirically is needed to confirm or disproof the suggestion of this research.

Otherwise, a destination can continue its tourism attractiveness even if it lost the authenticity, even some of them can be chosen by tourists thanks to their staged and/or exaggerated authentic features. These kinds of

cases are also worth researching to reveal other sides of authenticity in the gastronomy and tourism literature.

Examining this paradox in a context of a specific destination or a gastronomic product is needed to ensure of applicability of the model. Also, previously mentioned alternative forms of authenticity after recovery process are another valuable research idea to investigate. Nonetheless, this paradox can be observed in any other types of authentic tourism products in a destination also. Other researchers who interested in this subject can adapt and advance this model according to their purpose.

Practically, the study aims to create awareness among locals and decision-makers of destinations. Even local gastronomic products create present income possibilities with its authentic features, alterations that made to ensure production may cause losing the future income. Maintain balance between being tourist-oriented and local-oriented is a critic effort in this manner.

Also, diversifying the food choices for tourists in the destination is important. Offering food choices that match with expectations of non-gastronomic tourists can relieve the pressure on local gastronomy. Next research can focus offering solutions to prevent from this loop for practitioners, too. The interventions for protect authenticity should not destroy naturalness. The structure of interventions and the response of locals to these interventions also worth to investigate for offering better practical implications.

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