

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GASTRONOMY EXPERIENCE-SCAPE AND MEMORABLE GASTRONOMY TOURISM EXPERIENCE FOR GASTRONOMY TOURISM

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INTRODUCTION

As the level of tourists continues to rise, the pleasures and experiences they want from travel are diversifying. Due to this trend, the food experience at the destination is also given meaning as an essential element to enjoy the trip, not simply as a tool of physiological desire to satisfy hunger (Hsu et al., 2022). Food is essential in tourism because when tourists go on tour to other regions or overseas, they can easily experience the unique and new culture of the region through food. These food experiences can leave vivid memories of the tourist destination (Lee & Kim, 2022). In other words, food has become a critical asset that draws tourists to a particular destination, providing an engaging and memorable experience (Richards, 2021).

Food in tourism destinations goes beyond routine practices to provide emotional stimulation and act as a centerpiece of the tourism experience (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016b), leading travelers to share their food experiences or to link food experiences to the place of consumption (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019), which in turn positively affects the satisfaction of a memorable tourism experience (Vada et al., 2022). A study by Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016a) on tourists' perceptions of destination food found that food is a significant factor in choosing a destination and an essential contributor to vacation satisfaction. As the importance of food in tourism increases, and tourists' needs for food experiences in tourist destinations diversify, the demand for gastronomy tourism, where food is the central theme of tourism, is growing, and gastronomy tourism products are emerging that

focus on unique local food experiences.

Gastronomy tourism is a branch of special-purpose tourism that utilizes experiences related to storytelling about local history and culture through food as its main content (Lee & Kim, 2022). It is not just a gastronomy tour but a process of learning about and experiencing the food resources of a particular region, which helps to develop an integrated understanding and experience of the new and unique culture of the region (Yo & Lee, 2020; Batat, 2021). In particular, local food plays a vital role in the perception of a destination's image, as local food reinforces the destination's image (Jandala et al., 2015). It has also been suggested that in gastronomy tourism, enjoying unique and memorable food experiences beyond simply eating food can enhance the authenticity of the destination and improve tourists' well-being (Batat, 2021).

A review of past research on gastronomy tourism resources reveals that many studies have focused on the primary resources needed for gastronomy tourism, such as categorizing food-related tangible resources, exploring food-related personalities, and determining the characteristics of areas suitable for gastronomy tourism. In addition, studies exploring the relationship between tourism and food have focused on how tourists experience destinations and cultures through food activities, focusing on the physical environment and the scope of food activities, such as restaurants and well-equipped services in controlled environments. However, food experiences can also occur in the street or on the beach, and making food together with other tourists can provide unexpected and unique experiences (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019). For example,

watching food deliveries or encountering street food in tourist destinations can be an enjoyable experience (Tsai & Wang, 2017). Food storytelling and food photography by local guides also might be memorable points that enhance food experiences (Batat et al., 2019). In this context, positive food experiences, both planned and unexpected, can make tourists feel special about their time and mark it as a memorable experience, strengthening their attachment to the destination and significantly influencing their behavioral intentions (Sthapit, 2017). In other words, tourists gain memorable tourism experiences (MTE) through various interactions with food experiences during gastronomy tourism in a specific area (Yoon, Kim, et al., 2017). Through such participatory gastronomy tourism, they feel happiness and enjoyment, which can influence their well-being values (Vada et al., 2019).

As tourists' demand for gastronomy tourism is increasing and various programs are being planned, it is necessary to extend the research on memorable tourism experiences (MTE) to research on memorable gastronomy tourism experiences (MGTE). In addition to the existing gastronomy tourism resources for MGTE, it is necessary to explore additional resources needed to enhance the actual gourmet tourists' experience factors and establish a suitable resource classification system that can be used for gastronomy tourism planning.

Therefore, in order to establish a practical gastronomy tourism resource, this study proposes a gastronomy experience-scape that can include various scapes necessary for food experiences and the experience values of gourmet tourists. In addition, this study analyzes the degree of influence of the proposed gastronomy experience-scape on the satisfaction of MGTE to verify the effectiveness of utilizing gastronomy tourism resources based on the gastronomy experience-scape. Ultimately, this study is expected to provide primary data that can help researchers understand the perceptions and behaviors of gourmet tourists and practical guidelines that can be used to plan and develop gastronomy tourism products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gastronomy tourism

Gastronomy tourism refers to the act of

enjoying gourmets at a tourist destination. It has been described as a gourmet journey, gastronomy tourism, food tourism, culinary tourism, and tasting tourism (Park & Hwang, 2018). The International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA) defines it as "the pursuit of unique and memorable food and beverage experiences" (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020). In recent years, gastronomy experiences, which include programs to experience local food in addition to sights and activities, have become one of the essential factors in tourism decisions and play a significant role in overall tourism satisfaction (Jeong, 2021). In other words, local gastronomy experiences are becoming attractive and exciting tourism products through gastronomy experiences that are differentiated from conventional tourism. The reason is that it is a holistic experience that utilizes all five senses, including not only sight but also taste and smell, as it offers a variety of food-related activities, experiences, and events in a variety of spaces and locations (Batat, 2021).

Until recently, research in the field of gastronomy tourism has focused on analyzing the effects of the physical resources of gastronomy tourism destinations and the cognitive image of the destination on tourists' behavioral intentions and revisit intentions. However, the physical environment and service processes alone are insufficient to explain the satisfaction of gourmet tourists. Therefore, this study aims to explore the expanded resources required for the success of gastronomy tourism.

Scape for gastronomy tourism

Food can be an asset that attracts tourists to a particular destination, providing them with an engaging and novel experience (Richards, 2021). It can also be important in obtaining unforgettable memories for tourists (Zhu et al., 2022). These gastronomy tourism experiences are related to the local service and foodscape (Park & Widyanta, 2022). Research on 'scape' is generally attributed to Bitner's (1992) framework of servicescapes, which defines the physical environment in which service processes take place as a 'servicescape'. Many studies have been conducted to demonstrate how the servicescape, which includes the surrounding conditions, space, functionality, symbols, and artifacts controlled by service providers, influences

the cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral responses of customers and employees. It is well known that the servicescape has a significant impact on customer behavior (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019).

In addition to servicescape, the concept of foodscape is a socially constructed concerning food that has received much attention over the past 20 years in various fields such as nutrition, health, urban geography, public policy, consumer research, and food science (Zhu et al., 2022). In particular, in the areas of consumer behavior and culture, foodscapes are helping to understand how people consume and experience food in interaction with their environment and sociocultural context (Richards, 2021).

However, for gastronomy tourism, it is believed that a scape concept that includes differentiated elements for food experiences in addition to the commonly studied service or foodscape elements is needed. When focusing on food experiences, Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2019) define foodscapes as places and scapes that enable a variety of food experiences beyond restaurants and bars, and Mikkelsen (2011) defines them as scapes about food - how people, places, and food are connected and how they interact within the various spaces of the food environment. When considering the definition of a scape based on food experiences, the foodscape for gastronomy tourism should appropriately include both physical and social environments to enhance overall food experiences at the destination based on the concept of experiential scapes (Quan & Wang, 2004).

Exploring integrated scape elements that include food, service, and experiential factors in gastronomy tourism is essential for understanding the diverse food environment characteristics of gastronomy destinations, while also focusing on understanding the behavior of gourmet tourists with an emphasis on experiential value. The current research and practical applications regarding integrated scapes for gastronomy tourism still need to be investigated. Therefore, this study aims to explore an integrated scape necessary for gastronomy tourism and apply it to establish a classification system for gastronomy tourism resources.

Memorable gastronomic tourism experiences (MGTE) and hedonic well-being

Autobiographical memory is the recollection of experiences in one's life, and memorable experiences have a meaning associated with satisfying and special events, which can influence consumer behavior (Wing et al., 2011). It has also been described as an individual's ability to recall events easily based on their subjective evaluation of the experience (Kim et al., 2012).

In this sense, a memorable tourism experience (MTE) is defined as a tourism experience that can be positively recalled and remembered after the trip. People often recall previous tourism experiences when seeking information to make travel decisions and select destinations (Kim et al., 2012). In particular, after COVID-19, the phenomenon of recalling past trips abroad and feeling the emotions of the time has appeared online and offline, and people may choose their next destination by recalling their most memorable tourism experiences (Lee & Lee, 2022). The reason why MTE is important is that it provides tourists with cognitive perceptions and emotional stimuli related to themselves, the place, and time, which remain in their memory and influence their future behavior (Oh & Yoon, 2020).

Sthapit (2019) described memorable food experiences that are associated with positive emotions as unique and novel, with emotional responses such as joy and pleasure, and different from everyday experiences. Additionally, Sthapit (2017) stated that memorable food experiences (MFE) are strongly associated with the five senses, such as taste and smell, as well as with the people who enjoy the food with them, and they are also associated with local food that reflects the characteristics of the region and with memorable souvenirs. Therefore, this study aims to define a MGTE by applying the elements of MTE and memorable gastronomy experience and to determine the specific items that can be measured and used in the study.

Hedonic well-being is a concept that measures an individual's happiness, quality of life, and life satisfaction (Sthapit et al., 2022). Vada et al. (2019) found that in the relationship between MTE and hedonic well-being, memorable tourism experiences have a positive value in terms of happiness and

enjoyment, leading to a tendency to engage in activities or visit destinations repeatedly. Therefore, it is believed that memorable gastronomy tourism experiences will ultimately have a positive impact on tourists' quality of life and emotions such as happiness. Therefore, this study aims to develop a gastronomy tourism satisfaction scale using the MGTE concept to determine whether gastronomy experience-scape factors affect tourists' satisfaction and to analyze the impact of gastronomy experience-scape on tourists' perception of gastronomy tourism experience and the impact of MGTE on hedonic well-being.

The researcher formulated the following research questions based on the background described above.

- 1) What components should be included in the gastronomy experience-scape for gastronomy tourism?
- 2) How does gastronomy experience-scape influence a memorable gastronomy tourism experience (MGTE)?
- 3) What is the relationship between MGTE and hedonic well-being?

METHOD

The procedure of this study will be conducted in two phases. First, through an Expert panel survey,

we aim to explore the elements of a foodscape for gastronomy tourism and construct a gastronomy experience-scape-based gastronomy tourism resource that is needed (Phase 1). Second, we would like to conduct a survey phase that aims to analyze the impact of the gastronomy experience-scape on tourists' perceptions of gastronomy tourism experiences (Phase 2).

The Expert panel survey phase aims to define a practical gastronomy experience-scape that can be applied to gastronomy tourism research and practice and to propose a gastronomy tourism resource framework based on this. The Survey phase will be conducted to determine whether the gastronomy experience-scape elements identified in Phase 1 are important in actual gastronomy tourism, and will be conducted among adults who have experienced food tourism in the last five years. Through those processes, this study will investigate the extent to which gastronomy experience-scape elements that consider various aspects of the scape affect tourists' MGTE and hedonic well-being. It also aim to verify the effectiveness of gastronomy experience-scape-based gastronomy tourism resource utilization. To this end, the following hypotheses and research model are developed.

Hypothesis 1. Gastronomy experience-scape will have a significant impact on MGTE.

Hypothesis 2. MGTE will have a significant impact on Hedonic well-being.



Research model

Structural equation modeling will be conducted to test the hypotheses and analyze the influence relationship between factors, which will be based on AMOS and SPSS programs. Specifically, exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis will be conducted to verify the reliability and validity of the factors, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be conducted to check the fit of the model.

THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The expected results of this study are as follows. First, an integrated resource classification for gastronomy tourism is expected to be constructed by exploring and organizing the elements of the gastronomy experience-scape. Second, by analyzing the relationship between the

elements of the gastronomy experience-scape and tourists' gastronomy tourism experience, it is expected that the degree of influence of each element on the gastronomy tourism experience can be identified. Ultimately, by exploring the key factors that influence memorable gastronomic experiences based on the experiential value of gastronomic tourism destinations, this study is expected to help establish and utilize the resources needed to enhance meaningful gastronomic tourism experiences that can leave a positive and lasting impression on tourists.

Specifically, it can be used as primary data for research for various new perspectives necessary to understand the perception and behavior of gourmet tourists by newly constructing the concept of gastronomy experience-scape and identifying the relationship between memorable gourmet tourism experiences. In addition, by utilizing the gastronomy experience-scape based gastronomy tourism resource classification expected to be derived through this study, the local environment and various resources for impressive food-related experiences are effectively used in gastronomy tourism to create an image of the region and attract gastronomic tourists. It is expected that it will be a guideline that can bring out the satisfaction of gastronomy tourists.

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