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textul lucrării:

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL FOOD CONSUMPTION AND INTENTIONAL LOYALTY Abstract In the pertinent literature on tourism supply, the relative importance of local food tourism has been subject to considerable discussion. Despite the breadth of such literature,

30 **there is a general lack of research on** role **of** local **food** in **tourism in the**

Middle East, in general and Jordan, in particular. Therefore,

37 **the aim of** this study **is to explore the** local food consumption **motivations and**

their relationship with intentional loyalty for international tourists. The study indicated that the cultural experience is the central motivation for respondents to experience local food.

1 **In addition, it showed that the** excitement **motivation was the**

high significant predictor of the behavioural intention (loyalty). On the basis of the findings, tourism management in Jordan should add local food to its tourism discourse and improve the nature and scope

42 **of the current marketing and promotion** strategies **of** local **food.**

Key words: Gastronomy, food consumption, motivation, repeat visitation, intention, Jordan ;2 JEL

Classification: Z390 I. INTRODUCTION It is acknowledged that

2 **the role of food in tourism has** increasingly **received** much consideration and **recognition (Hall et al., 2003).**

Nowadays, several countries are dynamically promoting their local food tourism to boost their destination competitiveness (Lan, Wu & Lee, 2012). Moreover, food has always been a significant component of tourism sector, particularly in destinations remarked

19 **for fine food like**, such as **Italy and France (Henderson, 2009).** However, traditional **food can be**

defined as

3a food of a specific feature or features, which distinguishes it clearly from other similar products of the same category in terms of the use of “traditional ingredients” (raw materials or primary products) or “traditional composition” or “traditional type of production and/or processing method”

(EUROFIR, 2009). Up to now, present

20research in gastronomic tourism is scant and is mostly concentrated on wine, and

it is demonstrated that

20“oenotourists” are not necessarily the same people who engage in other, non-oenological Gastronomic activities

(UNWTO, 2012). Generally speaking,

3Islam, the most widely practiced religion in the Middle East, prohibits eating pork, blood and drinking alcohol (Forum, 2009).

Meat (particularly

3lamb) is very important in the diet of the Middle East for families that can afford it. Chicken is usually less expensive (Roger, 2000). More specifically, the

3cooking process in Middle Eastern food normally starts with frying, followed by boiling and fat enrichment

(Roger, 2000). In the context of Jordan,

3'Mansaf' (cracked wheat or rice with a dried form of yogurt

(Jameed)) is considered the popular and iconic food in Jordan (Brittin, 2010). Food tourism sector has grown obviously in Jordan. According to the statistics of

41Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2014) the number of employees in tourism Restaurants was

19. 512 in 2014 which represents 40% of the whole share of total tourism employees in Jordan. Hitherto there is little published data on different issues related to role

34of local food in tourism and hospitality in Jordan. Thus, the present study fills a

gap in the literature by investigating the motivations of local food consumption for the international tourists in Jordan and its relationship with the intention to repeat visitation. II. LITERATURE REVIEW Food consumption in tourism Hall & Sharples (2003, p. 10)

22 **defined food tourism as “the desire to experience a particular type of food or the produce of a specific region”.**

According to Cohen and Avieli (2004), food

19 **consumption in tourism is a distinctive form of eating that happens in foreign or unfamiliar**

contexts. However, There is a large volume of published studies describing

35 **the role of food consumption in the tourism industry in**

different contexts, for example (Boyne et al., 2003; Meler & Cerovic, 2003; Hall & Sharples, 2003; Kim et al., 2009; Forristal & Lehto, 2009; Pestek & Nikolic, 2011, Bjork & Kauppinen-Raisanen, 2014).

7 **Mallon (1995) suggested that traveling to particular destinations solely for food cannot be ignored, and the regional cuisine could be a critical factor when developing or promoting a tour destination.**

21 **Quan and Wang (2004) suggest that food tourism activities are considered a principal activity, attraction, and peak experience that can motivate people to travel to a destination.**

Elsewhere,

2 **Mitchell and Hall (2006) argue that gastronomy shapes the social, cultural, economic, and environmental history of destinations and their people.**

Du Rand, Heath, and Alberts (2003) postulate

25 **that the local food grasps much possibility to boost sustainability in tourism, enhance the authenticity of a destination, support the local economy; and**

offer eco-friendly infrastructure. Crompton and McKay (1997) argue that there have been three related factors

4 **why motivation is central in event research; it is a main concept to create better tourism products and services, it is connected directly to tourist satisfaction, and it is an essential element in better understanding the tourists' decision making**

process.

Similarly Hall et al. (2003) state that

4what motivates food visitors **to travel has** considered **one of the most** significant **topics of tourism**

studies. Therefore, food might be a crucial motivator for some tourists and a secondary side for others (Hall & Sharples, 2003). Following this, motivations of

4visiting food events could **be different from** those of **attending general events or festivals. This difference** might **be** placed **in the** character **of a food event, which is** mainly required **by the desire to consume food and participate in its** different **activities (Kim,**

Goh & Yuan 2010). A search of the literature revealed few studies which indicate why visitors make gastronomy tours, particularly in the context of the Middle East region. Thus, this prospective study was

40designed to investigate the motivations **of** international tourists for **local food** consumption **in Jordan and**

its relationship to behavioural intention to revisit Jordan. III. METHODOLOGY A review of different pertinent academic publications was conducted. A self-administrated questionnaire was designed to measure respondents' demographics, local food motivations and its relationship to repeat visitation construct. The different measurements of the questionnaire were adopted from previous studies and literature review. Thus, the questionnaire items were adapted from the local food consumption motivations scale (Kim, Eves, & Scarles, 2012) and the dimension of intentional loyalty (Zeithaml, Leonard and Parasauraman, 1996). Both sets of scales had been previously validated and applied in many studies and different contexts. The local food consumption scale

1was measured in this study by five Likert scales, which ranged from 'extremely disagree' **to 5 'extremely** agree'. Whilst **the**

dimension of intentional loyalty was also measured

1by five Likert scale, **which ranged from 'extremely unlikely' to 5 'extremely** likely'. **The**

1study used a convenience sample of (120) international tourists. The questionnaire copies **were**

distributed at 3 Hotels, 5 Restaurants, 3 travel agencies, and Foreign Languages Center at the University of Jordan in Amman. The data collection was conducted from November 2014 to May 2015. By the end of the questionnaire period, data had been collected from 107 tourists.

14 Data were analyzed using SPSS 17.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were first used to profile the characteristics of the sampled tourists.

14 Regression analyses were performed to examine the relationships between local food consumption motivations and

loyalty behavioral intention. IV RESULTS Demographics The

38 results, as shown in Table 1, indicate that (53.3%) of the

tourists were male and (46.7%) of them were females. The

1 age category (18-34) was the major age group at (82.2%). The age category,

50-59 (1.9%), represented the smallest age group in this study. The study respondents were characterized by high educational level, thus

1 the largest proportion of the respondents had an undergraduate level education (51.4%), followed by those who had a post-graduate degree (43.8%).

The distribution of the tourists' nationality showed that most of the international tourists came from Bulgaria (12.4%), China (11.4%), and Italy (11.4%).

1 The other respondents were from a variety of countries from Europe, Asia, and North America.

In relation to the question, 'Where do you prefer to have your meal in Jordan?'

11 The majority of the respondents indicated that they

prefer to have their meals at the Restaurants (52.3%). Table 1. Demographics items for the Respondents excitement (M = 3.75, SD = .665), and health concern (M = 3.50, SD = .833). The results indicate that the mean score for the local food consumption scale has ranged from 3.27 to 4.40,

1 whereas, the standard deviations ranged between .665 and 1.33. The Cronbach Alpha for the motivation items was 0.89. The results revealed that the main food consumption motivations for the respondents were the cultural experience (M = 4.12, SD

= .750), sensory appeal (M = 4.02, SD = .670), Demographic Items Gender Age Educational level Nationality The place of food Your accommodation Other Value Male Female 18-34 35-39 40-49 50-59 +60 Primary Secondary/ school Diploma Undergraduate Post-graduate Bulgarian Chinese Italian Russian

American German Ukrainian Polish Turkish Dutch Finnish Japanese Indian Uzbek Thai Philippine Korean Taiwanese Kyrgyzstani Kazakhstani English Spanish Restaurant Hotels Coffee-Shop high Percent (%) 53.3 46.7 82.2 5.6 6.5 1.9 3.7 0.0 4.8 0.0 51.4 43.8 12.4 11.4 11.4 7.6 6.7 5.7 5.7 4.8 4.8 4.8 2.9 2.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 1.9 52.3 5.6 5.6 27.1 9.3 In relation to the individual items measuring the food consumption motivations for the respondents, the item, 'it offers unique opportunity to experience local culture',

1 which is related to cultural experience, **was the most frequent, its mean score being (M = 4.30, SD**

=.905). Whereas the item, 'keeps me healthy,

1 which is related to health concern, **was the least frequent of the motivation items (M = 3.27, SD= 1.33). Table 2. The Results of the**

food consumption Measures Cultural experience To discover

33 what this local food taste like it offers unique opportunity to experience

local culture discover something new

11 see the things that I don't normally use see

how other people live A special experience

8 to increase my knowledge about different cultures

8 An authentic experience Excitement experience local food in its original location makes me excited

helps me to relax feel exhilarated have an expectation that it is exciting Interpersonal relationship

8 talk to everyone about my local food experience having local food increases friendship or kinship

8 give advice about local food experience to people who want to

Motivation Measurement Mean 4.12 4.14 4.30 3.91 3.89 4.15 4.24 4.19 4.02 3.75 4.30 3.40 3.46 3.75 3.87 3.74 3.67 4.01 SD .750 .984 .905 1.14 .994 1.07 .938 1.07 1.05 .665 .828 1.17 .883 1.06 .725 1.01 1.23 1.01 Number of responses (n = 107) 96 103 103 105 104 103 105 107 107 103 107 105 103 105 103 107 105 107 travel

29 enables me to have an enjoyable time with friends or /and family **4.**

28 .750 105 Sensory appeal 4.02 .670 103 smells nice 3.65 1.05 105 tastes good 4.36 .921 105 looks nice 3.90 .995 103

8 is different to the taste of same food in my country

4.22 .944 107 Health concern 3.50 .833 100 it is nutritious 3.59 1.26 100

31 contains a lot of fresh ingredients produced in a local Area 3.

86 .930 105 keeps me healthy 3.27 1.33 105 Intercept 2.51 2.36 - Cultural Experience .26 .072 .13 Excitement .73 .217 .72 Interpersonal Relationship .02 .170 .03 Sensory Appeal .33 .166 .38 Health Concern -.76 .265 -.61 F-statistic (df) F(5.34)=9.52 p-value .000 R .77 Adj. R .52 N 40 Tourists' intentional loyalty

1 The Durbin-Watson (DW) test was employed to check

Note: Bu = unstandardised beta coefficient; S.E. independence and autocorrelation for the current data. = standard error of beta, $\beta\alpha$ = However, the

1 independence assumption was satisfied standardised beta coefficient in this data, DW values being between 1.5 and 2.5

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (Prusty, 2010). Additionally, the

1 results showed that the collected data had a normal distribution in the

V. DISCUSSION current study. A series of linear regression analyses Overall, the current study found that the local were conducted to test the relationships between food food consumption tourists in Jordan were consumption motivations for tourists and their male and female, mostly young and middle behavioural intentions to revisit tourism destination in aged, well-educated and from a variety of Jordan. The dimensions of behavioural intention, that countries. Furthermore, the results indicated is, loyalty, served as the dependent variables, whilst cultural experience, excitement, interpersonal that most of the research cohort prefers to relationship, sensory appeal, and health concern were have their meals at the restaurants in Jordan. the independent variables

1 This result may be explained by the fact that The results of

examination of beta coefficients there are more than 800 tourism Restaurants indicated that excitement motivation (Bu =.73, $p < .001$), in Jordan with a variety of local, regional and Sensory Appeal (Bu =.33, $p < .001$), and cultural international types of food. Most of these experience (Bu =.26, $p < .001$) were significant and Restaurants were built with a high quality of good predictors for loyalty measure. The overall design and decoration and also high

1 model explained 58% of variance in loyalty, which standards of services. was revealed to be statistically significant, F (5. 34) =9. 52, $p < .001$;

whilst, health concern and Additionally, the study revealed that the main local interpersonal relationship were negative and weak food consumption motivation was the cultural predictors for the loyalty measure. Their beta experience. This finding is congruent with that of coefficients were $-.76$, $.02$ respectively. Frochot (2003) who stated

2that food experience depicts the images of cultural experience, status, and

Table 3. The Regression Analysis Results

2cultural identity. Such cultural characteristic is typically stemmed from the unique aspects of Loyalty gastronomy that can only be detected in that specific tourism destination.

Correspondingly, Kivela, and Independent Variables Crofts (2006) asserted that some tourists are basically Bu S.E. $\beta\alpha$ food novelty seekers; therefore they travel to other destinations to seek new experiences and exciting in satisfying their desires. This view was supported by findings of the current study as most of those surveyed agreed that such food tourism experience 'offers unique opportunity to experience local culture'. Correspondingly, Hearty & O'Mahoney (2001) asserted that eating habits assist travellers to better understanding

36differences between their own culture and a destination culture.

However, Bessiere (1998) states that a local

7food and cuisine can be exceptional tourist attractions in travel destinations because consumption of food takes a role as both an entertaining and a cultural activity.

The study also showed that the tourists' intentional loyalty

1was significantly predicted by the excitement motivation. This finding seems to be

consistent with other research, such as Ross (1993) which found

27that if visitors have a more enjoyable and excited experience than expected, they are more likely to

repeat their experience. Likewise, this result

1was supported by Gitelson and Crompton (1984) who found that most of the repeat tourists were seeking relaxation.

1Li et al. (2008) suggest that repeat visitation is a potential reaction to the

nature of modern life, which stimulates the tourists to seek familiarity and stability with the same destination for aesthetic or utilitarian purposes.

VI. CONCLUSION This study has identified the main local food consumption motivations for international tourists visiting Jordan, and the potential relationship of such motivations with the tourists' intentional loyalty. It is suggested that the cultural experience is the major motivation to experience local food tourism in Jordan for the study respondents. It is also

1 indicated that the respondents' behavioural intention (loyalty) to repeat visitation to experience Jordanian food was significantly predicted by the excitement motivation. However, **the** current findings add **to**

44 a growing body of literature on tourism food in the Middle East, in general

and Jordan, in particular. Moreover, the findings enhance

1 our understanding of the behavioural intention of the Food tourism participants to repeat visiting Jordan and of its relationship with different causal types of their motivation. Tourism

managers, marketers and practitioners should develop the status quo of the tourism marketing and promotion for food tourism in Jordan, because local food could act as a necessity, a novelty or a pull factor in local tourism marketing strategy (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). Thus,

2 a more effective tourism promotion should be customized

due to the fact that

2 different cultures have different perception and assessment frameworks for food (Nield,

Kozak & LeGrys). Moreover, government should encourage the investment in the local food sector to provide a holistic and varied local food tourism experience in Jordan. A limitation of this study is that the

1 researcher was restricted to undertaking the research at a limited number of sites

because of time and cost constrains. An additional limitation is that the

1 questionnaire in this study was written in the English language. A high proportion of the respondents in different sites in Jordan were international tourists who are not native English speakers.

Thus, some language barriers issues could be emerged in this case. Further investigation and

experimentation into local food tourism in Jordan is strongly recommended. Further research might be explored

45 **the role of local food tourism** for local **and**

Arabic tourists. A future study investigating the

13 **local food and beverage in the context of the**

religious tours in Jordan would be very interesting. VII.

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