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Gastronomy as an effect of visitor loyalty: the peruvian (Lima) case

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Gastronomy as an effect of visitor loyalty: the peruvian (Lima) case

Abstract

Purpose:
This study primarily analyses Peruvian cuisine in the context of visitors' overall experience, focusing on the loyalty of tourists in terms of gastronomy, their satisfaction with the destination and the overall image.
Design/methodology/approach:
Data were obtained from tourists who visited Lima (Peru). Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to verify the hypothesized relationships.
Findings:
The results obtained confirm that satisfaction and appreciation, such as quality, have a positive influence on tourists' loyalty and, therefore, they recommend and express their desire to come back to this destination. The traditional gastronomy of Líma stands out as a prominent factor on Overall experience
Research limitations/implications:
This paper helps the managers of cities in their decisions to improve the satisfaction and seek loyalty of those who visit a city, emphasizes the role of gastronomy
Practical implication:
The results obtained in this research can be used for the establishment of new strategies for the promotion of the destination in terms of tourism and traditional food.
Originaliy/Value:
The gastronomy in Lima, (Peru) is recognized worldwide. , as well as a stimulus for tourism because it increases the number of visits to the destination. Several studies carried out in these types of destinations have shown the existence of a relationship between satisfaction, overall image, satisfaction and loyalty. However, there are no previous studies carried out Lima that sustain this relationship. This work makes a contribution that completes the academic literature on the study of the emotional bonds between peruvian gastronomy and the tourist who visits it and its behaviour.

Keywords: Management cities, Gastronomy, Loyalty, Peru, Lima.

1. Introduction

Peruvian cuisine is the result of a long process of evolution and miscegenation that began in pre-Columbian times and is still on-going, offering widely recognised exquisite dishes to the entire world (Staller, 2021). Peruvian gastronomy has taken advantage from ax extraordinary ecological biodiversity and a full of complexity culinary history involving crops and methods resulting from the convergence of pre-colonial heritage and the legacy of centuries of immigration from diverse European, Asian and African regions (Matta, 2021). This gave rise to the enrichment of the Peruvian cuisine as centuries went by. Such is the case that the country has been regarded as a regional leader, considered as the Best

Culinary Destination and the Best Cultural Destination in 2021 by the World Travel Awards (Mincetur, 2021). Peru has become a widely recognised culinary destination, being awarded the World's Leading Culinary Destination for eight consecutive years by the World Travel Awards (Osorio et al., 2021).

Moreover, Lima, the capital city of Peru, has been recognised as the gastronomic capital of South America (Grey & Newman, 2018), becoming the new ideal destination for food lovers, according to the Washington Post (Markowitz, 2012; Khalip, 2007), while the prestigious journal National Geographic included Lima as one of ten culinary destinations to visit worldwide (National Geographic includes Lima as one of the world gastronomic destinations for 2016: Mincetur, n.d.). As for the renowned head chefs, as part of this recognition, Maido del Chef Mitsuharu Tsumura, and Central del Chef Virgilio Martínez, located in Lima, have been ranked among the 10 best restaurants worldwide by the World's 50 Best Restaurants (The World's 50 Best Restaurants | The best restaurants in the world, n.d.). Simultaneously, Pía León was considered as the world's best chef this year, 2021 (The World's 50 Best, 2021). Considering these international acknowledgements, Lima (Peru) became a valued destination thanks to its culture, history and, currently, its gastronomy.

The search for the satisfaction of the needs of both tourists and visitors is the priority of tourism service providers who are making substantial efforts to meet the needs of their customers (Chen & Rahman, 2018). During their stays, activities conducted are oriented towards enjoying the history and culture that the destinations offer (Rahman et al., 2019). Visiting Peru can be motivated by material or cultural heritage reasons, or both. Promperú (2021) states that the main reasons why visitors travel to Peru in their holidays, in addition to the gastronomic ones, involve learning about its history and culture. Similarly, one of four tourists in this segment is motivated by the desire to visit Machu Picchu, as it was inscribed in the 1993 World Heritage List. Machu Picchu is considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World so, besides being part of the List, it has been recognised as South America's leading tourism attraction in 2021 (Promperú, 2021). Consequently, this study is appropriate as it contributes to the material heritage value of Peru in addition to its cuisine as an intangible value, given the importance of assessing the satisfaction with gastronomy as part of its heritage (Huete-Alcocer and Hernández Rojas, 2022).

Therefore, the studies conducted on cultural tourism have focused on world heritage cities, as their huge potential link to culture and gastronomy, including satisfaction, appreciation, loyalty and gastronomic aspects in various locations, such as Spain (Hernández et al. 2021), Mexico (Rojas-Rivas et al. 2020) and Indonesia (Babolian, 2016). Specifically, from this perspective, multiple studies have concluded that the tourism activity connected to cultural heritages provides a unique tourist experience that people look forward to (Dibb & Simkin, 2016). In this regard, the gastronomic market orientation is crucial for managers, from the loyalty, satisfaction or expected value perspective. This research studies this concept in terms of management of the cities, as it helps improve tourism (Battour & Ismail, 2016).

The model employed to achieve the proposed objective was the American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), corroborated and commonly used in the literature (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996), which shows strong and trustworthy antecedents that can be successfully adapted to different contexts aimed at learning about users' satisfaction from and loyalty to a given good or service (Andreassen & Lindestad,

1998; Eklöf, 2000). This model has been thoroughly used to study the tourism industry (Bezerra & Gomes, 2019).

Besides deepening the knowledge on the loyalty of a destination with a strong heritage component through its local cuisine, this study contributes to the existing literature in two ways: firstly, by conducting a bibliographic review, followed by suggesting ideas on the administration and management of heritage sites with a strong culinary component. Setting these goals helps us enhance the available information on the complexity of the Peruvian gastronomy, both inherited by indigenous and Spanish communities, through the development of a theoretical model with a case of study that focuses the loyalty of tourists. Visitors' assessments of the tourism destination regarding its gastronomy, overall experience, satisfaction and subsequent loyalty serve as a basis for the recommendations that may be useful for both public and private entities with interest in promoting, disseminating and improving this type of tourism.

2. Bibliographic review

2.1. The Peruvian cuisine

The cuisine of Peru is recognised worldwide, considered as a National Cultural Heritage, and awarded with South America's Leading Culinary Destination for the eighth consecutive year (The World Travel Awards, 2021). Said gastronomy has a food-associated magical and religious meaning that has been inherited from the Incas, a legacy that lasts to date (Guardia, 2000). Nowadays, it is still based on an acknowledgement to mother Earth, the *Pachamama* during the sowing, harvesting and preparation of traditional foods, and folkloric festivals. Peru is a multi-cultural country made up of 14 language families and at least 44 ethnic groups (Congress of the Republic of Peru-Commission on Foreign Trade and Tourism, 2004). Peru is acknowledged as the only country in the world where food is the most important thing. Other countries in the region, such as Brazil, are more closely connected with football, while Colombia is usually associated with music, but one understands that, in Peru, food is the most important source of pride (Anderson & Benbow, 2017). Lima, the capital of Peru, is a representation of all the country's gastronomy. Peruvian (Lima) cuisine is the result of the miscegenation of the different cultures that settled in Peru; the combination of these leads to the great diversity of ingredients and dishes, which are the emblem of said cultural mixing (Cox Hall, 2020).

2.2. Gastronomy and satisfaction with the destination

Satisfaction is the assessment an individual gives to a product or service; in the tourism sector, satisfaction has an impact on the intention to return to the destination. Gastronomy becomes a crucial factor in understanding and choosing the place to visit, as it is part of the destination's cultural heritage (Gálvez et al., 2020). When it comes to satisfaction with a visit to a given destination, besides the natural, cultural and artistic resources, the experience creates important expectations for the tourist and, thus, gastronomy becomes an additional tool contributing to overall satisfaction. Ignatov and Smith (2006), identified that the experience with gastronomy at a destination could represent a valuable source of satisfaction for tourists, and this is why gastronomy is increasingly linked to the search for new experiences through a visit to the traditions and culture of a particular

destination (Hendijani, 2016). This is why gastronomy is an integral part of the traveller's behaviour (Carvache-Franco et al. 2021).

The culinary experience in the destination may represent a significant source of satisfaction for tourists (Hendijani, 2016). Carvache et al. (2021) indicate that gastronomy is a great attractions in a trip; modern tourists appreciate the traditional food cooked in a burner or wood-burning stoves, the cultural roots and the symbolism of a culinary expression. At the same time, Erkmen (2019) showed evidence of the positive effect of the local food on the satisfaction with the destination. For tourists to have an unforgettable experience, they not only need to eat a typical dish but also enjoy the flavours, perceive the aromas and discover the culinary techniques of each location. Widjaja et al. (2020) found that the quality of the gastronomic experience affects both the satisfaction with said experience and satisfaction with the experience in the destination.

2.3 Gastronomy in terms of the destination's image

Cuisine reflects the image of the destination in every dish served, playing an important role in the choice of a given place by visitors (Özdemir et al., 2020). Nowadays, gastronomy is a more natural alternative, showing its ingredients and their origin as well as a product that is visually associated with the bounties of the place. The destination image encompasses a group of definitions, such as tourists' perceptions with regard to the destination they will choose to visit, the ideas and expectations as well as the feelings related to it (Assaker, 2014). Furthermore, destination image may be affected by different sources of information, which can be either induced or organic (Ferreira Lopes, 2011).

Similarly, gastronomy is a very important tool for the development of strategies aimed at increasing tourism in several places, the so-called culinary tourism, which successfully meets the needs of tourists by providing a customised experience and generating a significant and positive impact on the value perceived by the tourists, as well as their perception of the destination image (Lu & Hu, 2021). Gastronomy involves exploring, selecting, grouping and transforming unknown products into high-class recipes (García 2022, page 2). It fosters the traditional dishes, ingredients, culture of each place, region and country, thus leading to the promotion of local products and successful development of a new cuisine capable of changing the negative image of a destination (Castillo-Villar, 2020). Notably, although upscale restaurants are a pull factor for visitors, and even though the local and regional cuisine is not so popular or appreciated by tourists at first, their behaviour after the trip may change upon their arrival to the destination (Carvache-Franco et al., 2021; Cordova-Buiza, Gabriel-Campos, Castaño-Prieto, & García-García, 2021). This is why gastronomy is crucial in the marketing tourist destinations by offering unique local foods and communicating a cultural identity in each place (Chaney& Ryan, 2012), thus becoming a source of new products and tourism activities that help attract tourists (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016; Quan & Wang, 2004).

Nowadays, the local cuisine has been regarded as a distinctive feature to promote a destination (Sio et al., 2021). By the same token, the cuisine, food and regional products are a necessary and important part of a trip that creates a memorable experience, so the food experience is significantly attached to a place and the destination's image (Hsu & Scott, 2020). In that sense, an important increase was observed in traditional street food

over the last several years, given its impact on the choice of destination—as the tourists who have already lived the experience share it by word of mouth—and the satisfaction with life promoted in said place (Lee et al., 2019).

2.4 Image and satisfaction with the destination in terms of loyalty

Loyalty to a destination is directly related to the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists; thus, marketing strategies should focus on relevant factors assessed, such as trip quality, perceived value and tourists' satisfaction (Suhartanto et al., 2020). Therefore, the destination image is considered a significant aspect that has an impact on tourists' behavioural intentions, as well as their subsequent decisions (Kanwel et al., 2019). Thus, both the destination image and the perceived value are two relevant precedents in the tourists' satisfaction and may affect the choice of destination (Sun et al., 2013). In this context, it is important to bear in mind the dimensions that are closely associated with destination loyalty, such as perceived well-being, the services received and the destination's image. Said variables are directly related to the acquired loyalty, what is really relevant when deciding to return to the place (Chen &Tsai, 2007), or sharing positive experiences about it (Ryglová et al., 2018). In addition, the assessment made before the trip, searching for references and decision made to visit the destination and expectations and subsequent experiences are all relevant aspects for tourists' loyalty to the destination (Baloglu, 2001).

3. Hypothesis development

Loyalty is a variable that should be studied in every destination given its close impact with the profitability of products and services (Ahsan, Pratiwi, Nursalam & Efendi, 2019). It includes variables that have a direct relationship with the intention of tourists to travel to a cultural heritage site and the latter promotion to others. With this in mind, the assessment (VAL), loyalty (LOY), satisfaction (SAT) and gastronomy are specifically evaluated (Nguyen, Nisar Tahir, Knox, & Prabhakar Guru, 2018). The model proposed for this study uses four variables to measure visitors' loyalty in Peru, specifically based on its cuisine: 1) The quality perceived in the experience obtained after visiting Peru. Assigning a value to this variable implies that the tourist has visited this place recently. 2) Customer satisfaction is a measurement that considers the number of people who said they would not change or would come back or recommend the destination.

This section sets out the hypotheses of empirical research, the main objective of which is to identify the significant factors that have an impact on the loyalty of tourists to culinary destinations, proposing a methodology that analyses six hypotheses based on the literature, which was previously evaluated. Therefore, based on the bibliographic review conducted, our research hypotheses are as follows:

H1. Peruvian cuisine is significantly and positively related to the satisfaction with the destination visited.

H2. Peruvian cuisine is significantly and positively related to the destinations overall experience.

H3. The overall experience in Peru is significantly and positively associated with the loyalty to the destination.

H4. The satisfaction with Peruvian cuisine is directly related to loyalty.

The associations between the various factors that can be observed in the model are shown in Figure 1 (Model proposed).

Figure 1. Proposed research design.
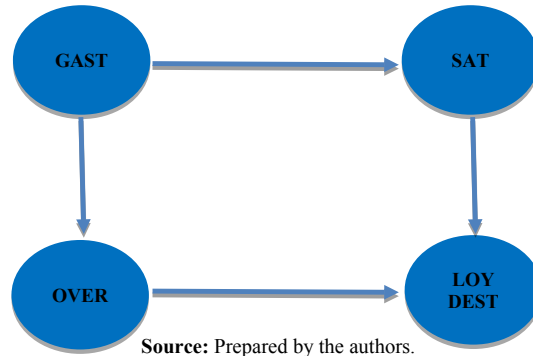
Source: Prepared by the authors.

3. Methodology

Information was collected through a questionnaire completed by each tourist after visiting Peru (Lima) and having a local culinary experience, from September to December 2021. The appropriate validation of this survey and question wording is based on items corroborated from prior research. Once the items were obtained, a refining process was conducted in two phases. First, the items proposed were analysed by a researcher, followed by the test and verification of the final survey by the research manager in Peru. During this procedure, the proper validity of the items making up the constructs of the theoretical model designed for this study was checked twice.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections: The first gathers information about the tourists' demographic profile, while the following sections focus on their assessment of the destination, its quality and their loyalty to it, entailing their intention to come back or recommend a visit to the destination and/or Peru. The different variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1: Totally disagree to 5: Totally agree. The questions previously asked in other studies, as shown in Table 1, were adjusted and used in this research.

During the second phase, the survey was conducted both in English and Spanish. Before starting, the interviewer asked tourists for their cooperation and informed them of the research objectives. Tourists completed the survey in an anonymous and autonomous manner. The questionnaire was made up of the four sections from the theoretical model designed (Figure 1): Gastronomy, Quality, Satisfaction and Loyalty. Items concerning the socio-demographic profile were included at the end of the survey. A total of 23 items were used in our model, after undergoing the item removal process through an estimate of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct. Fieldwork was performed from September to December 2021, using a simple random sampling of the visitors of Lima

(Peru). A pre-test including 20 surveys was performed and, overall, there were 190 valid questionnaires.

Table 1. Scales used

Authors	Dimension	Indicators
Ghanbari, A. et al. (2021); (González Santa Cruz, F., et al. 2020), (Hassan, H., et al. 2020); Adzovie, D. E., & Jibril, A. B. (2020); (Su, D. et al. 2020); (Chen, Q., & Huang, R. 2019)	Gastronomy (GAST)	(GAST1) Renown (Well-known abroad), (GAST2) Tradition and attachment, (GAST3) Liking, (GAST4) The environment of the establishments visited was pleasant, (GAST5) Satisfied with the cuisine of Lima, Peru
Goncalves, O et al. (2022); Saneva, D., & Chortoseva, S. (2020); Yin, S., & Dai, G. (2021); Ali, M., et al. (2019); Agyeiwaah, E. et al (2019)	Loyalty (LOY)	(LOY1) I will recommend it to my family and friends, (LOY2) I will come back to Lima, Peru, (LOY3) I will recommend others visit Lima - Peru, (LOY4) My next trip will probably include some of the tourist destinations of Peru (LOY5) I will visit a culinary destination in my next trip
(Rogerson, C. M., & Rogerson, J. M., 2021); (Davras, Ö., & Özperçin, İ. 2021); (Deng, Y., & Tang, Y. 2020); (Yasami, M., et al. 2020); Hsu, F. C., & Scott, N. (2020)	Overall experience (OVER)	(OVER1) Peru's overall image is positive, (OVER2) Visiting Peru was worthwhile, (OVER3) Peru is a great place to visit, (OVER4) Peru is renowned/appreciated for its gastronomy, (OVER5) Peru is a place I would recommend
((Hernández-Rojas RD, Huete Alcocer N, 2021); (Mora, D. et al. 2021); (Rodríguez-Gutiérrez, P. et al. 2020); (Widjaja, D. C. et al. 2020). (Perles-Ribes, J. et al. 2020); (Carvache-Franco, et al. 2020); (Özdemir-güzel, S., & Baş, Y. N. (2020)	Satisfaction (SAT)	(SAT1) Easy access from other regions and great infrastructure, (SAT2) Good value for Money in accommodations and restaurants, (SAT3) Its inhabitants are kind and hospitable, (SAT4) A good place to visit with your family, (SAT5) It features great and useful tourist information offices, (SAT6) Comfortable climate, (SAT7) This is a safe destination, (SAT8) A good place to enjoy/relax

According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), the items' total Cronbach's alpha index was calculated, obtaining a value of 0.911, which is considered acceptable as a scale is considered to be suitable if its Cronbach's alpha is above 0.7. The data obtained in this research has been organized in a table and assessed using the statistical program IBM SPSS 23 (IBM Corporation, Armonk, NY, USA) and the Smart-Partial Least Squares (PLS) structural equation software package. The structural equations model (SEM) is regarded as the most appropriate form of literature to corroborate the hypotheses proposed in the structural equations and confirm the model of complex relationships. Being widely used and validated for scientific research in the tourism industry, the Smart PLS 3.2.9 program for the PLS-SEM is used as a tool to analyse the complex interrelationships between observed and latent variables (Sarstedt et al., 2019; Sarsted et al., 2020).

4. Results

The main findings obtained from fieldwork are described below, differentiated according to the section addressed. First, the results of the descriptive analysis in terms of the socio-demographic profile of the tourists interviewed while visiting Peru are shown in Table 2. Second, the reliability and validity of the model proposed is assessed and, finally, hypotheses are contrasted.

As for the descriptive results of the socio-demographic profile of the tourists interviewed while visiting Peru for culinary reasons, it was found that 52% of them were women, while 48% were men. The surveys were answered by age group: younger than 25 (8%), 40–59 years old (49%) and professionals with university studies (60%).

4.1 Assessment of the model's reliability and validity

The model proposed for this study is the one shown in Figure 1, which suggests the interplay of the relationships between the research elements. With this in mind, the model was evaluated to check for both reliability and validity of the constructs and separate the reflective and formative. From the obtained results, the variables observed measure the theoretical constructs proposed earlier (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011).

Next, the validity and reliability of the means of constructs were assured before making conclusions about the relationships between them (Tompson, Barclay, & Higgins, 1995). The constructs that are formative in the model (loyalty) were evaluated by following the recommendations (Sarstedt et al., 2020). First, according to Henseler (2017), loyalty is considered as a formative indicator in the model proposed, whereas other authors (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001; Mathieson, Peacock, & Chin, 2001) state that by using formative constructs, one can check for the existence of the multicollinearity between the different indicators that make up the construct. Accordingly, positive tests for convergent validity were conducted through the redundancy analyses of these constructs (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). The tests also assessed the collinearity, with the variance inflation factor (VIF) estimation <5. Obtaining a value of 5 or less indicates the lack of a high multicollinearity (Belsley, 1991). The indicators of the formative constructs were evaluated through weighting, thus considering them to be significant (Sarstedt et al., 2020).

Composite reliability (pc)

Therefore, the construct's reliability allows to check whether the indicators actually measure the first. The results show all constructs are reliable, as their composite reliability is >0.7. These are 'satisfactory to good' values, as they range between 0.70 and 0.95 (Sarstedt, Ringle, Henseler, & Hair, 2014). The composite reliability index is similar to Cronbach's alpha, with the only difference that composite reliability is not influenced by the number of scale items. According to Hair et al. (2012), the accepted level of composite reliability is 0.7 and 0.8 in a stricter form. The stricter level (0.8) is exceeded by the four indicators, so the model's internal consistency is validated.

Discriminant validity

This index shows the way in which a construct differs from others. The positive acceptance range and the values present in the diagonal shall be significantly higher than those in the lines and columns. In the case of this research, the model meets the abovementioned requirements.

4.3. Hypothesis testing

Explained variance (R²)

Upon validation of the sample measurement model, the internal model was assessed, for the purposes of testing the hypotheses proposed for the relationships between constructs. To do so, the R^2 value was calculated, and the significance of the relationships could be successfully analysed (Hair et al., 2011). The explained variance of endogenous constructs was found after assessing the values estimated for R^2, thus obtaining the predictive power of the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Bootstrapping

Next, in accordance with the above, a Student's t distribution with 499 degrees of freedom was conducted (n-1, where n represents the number of sub-samples) to calculate the significance of the *Path* coefficients. This way, values will be obtained with a significance of 0.007, 0.000 and 0.010. In this regard, Table 2 shows the relationship to be studied, effect that said relationship should follow, *Path* coefficient, *t* value and said relationship's support or lack of it. This way, the acceptance of the five hypotheses proposed is confirmed.

Table 2. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Effect	*Path* coefficient	*T* value	*p*-Value	¿Supported?
GAST -> OVER	+	0.829	16.463	0.000	YES
GAST -> SAT	+	0.627	8.770	0.000	YES
OVER -> LOY	+	0.592	5.691	0.000	YES
SAT -> LOY	+	0.315	3.221	0.001	YES

a = 0.001 (***); a = 0.01 (**); a = 0.05 (*); n.s. = not supported
Source: Prepared by its authors

This way, Hypothesis H1 (Peruvian cuisine is significantly and positively related to satisfaction with the destination visited), Hypothesis H2 (Peruvian cuisine is significantly and positively related to the destination's overall experience), Hypothesis H3 (the overall experience in Peru is directly associated with loyalty to the destination) have been supported. Finally, H4 (satisfaction with Peruvian cuisine is directly related to loyalty) is confirmed. Figure 2 presents the causal relationships of the proposed model.

Figure 2. The model's causal relationships
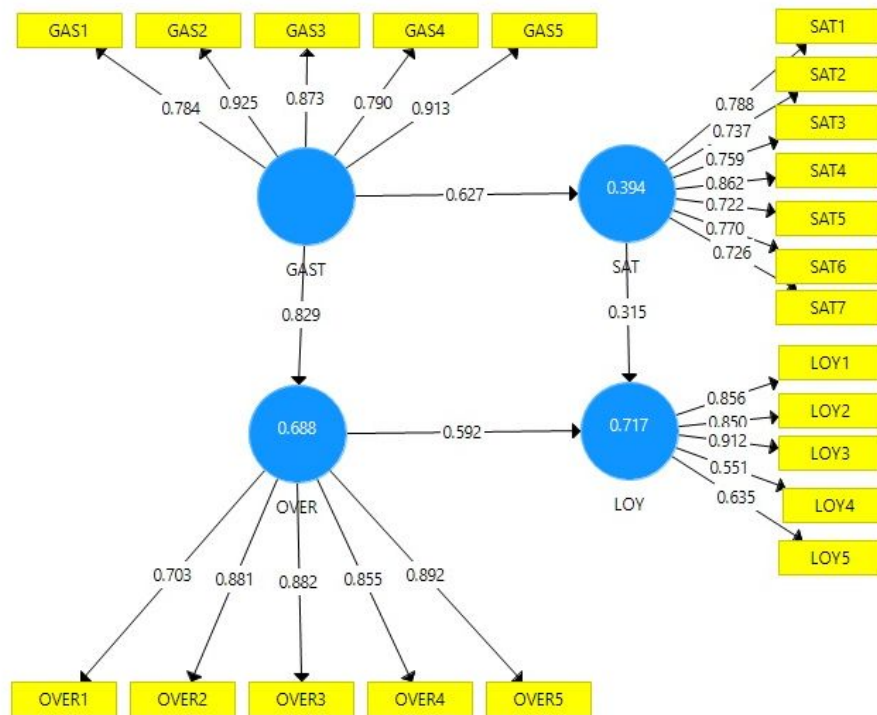
Source: Prepared by its authors.

5. Discussion

This study is based on the growing importance of studying the loyalty of visitors in cities, proposing an analysis of Peruvian cuisine, satisfaction and overall experience at the destination. The most differentiating aspects for the development of loyalty in gastronomic tourists are established, in a city where different cultures have settled and coexisted, gifting us with one of the most unique and exceptional cuisines worldwide. The feedback from visitors to these regions helped us identify the factors that have an impact on loyalty, through satisfaction, gastronomy and overall image, for the purposes of identifying the most determinant factors for this study. Hypothesis 1 (H1) proved that Peruvian cuisine is directly related to satisfaction with the destination visited. In other words, good cuisine enhances the destination. For practical purposes, the destination managers must promote its peculiar gastronomy, provided that it is confirmed that visitors to the region find it pleasurable. Variables such as tradition, attachment and the environment at the establishments must be looked after by both the restaurant managers and the public administration agents.

Hypothesis H2: Peru's cuisine has been proven to have a significant and positive relationship with the destination's overall experience, that is, the Gastronomy variable not only adds satisfaction to the visit, but the experience at the country was also enhanced by it. Although these were more limited, authors confirm this fact (Huete-Alcocer and Hernández-Rojas, 2022), this study is regarded as a contribution to literature.

H3: The overall experience in Peru is positively and significantly linked to loyalty to the destination. In other words, for practical purposes, we should take care of every aspect of

a visit, from appreciation to the country image. This hypothesis is consistent with the ones proposed by other authors (Bigné et al., 2001; Chen et al 2007).

H4: Satisfaction with Peruvian cuisine is directly associated with loyalty; the results obtained in other studies in terms of heritage and tourism (Folgado-Fernández et al., 2017; Chen & Rahman, 2018), as well as aspects specific to gastronomy (Hernández-Rojas & Huete-Alcocer, 2020), were validated with those positive factors caused by the satisfaction, gastronomy and loyal image for the intention to come back or recommend the destination. Practically speaking, this entails a responsibility for restaurant and destination managers. First, for the on-going improvement of the business and, second, as public entities should look out for the continuous food-related satisfaction, which eventually affects the destination.

The ACSI model was used in this study to investigate the loyalty of tourists visiting and tasting its gastronomy, which may play a crucial role in the future of the cultural experience in Peru.

6. Conclusion and limitations

Gastronomy may act as a pull effect—as evidenced by the results, factors such as satisfaction with the service, the environment at the establishments and, overall, the enjoyment of the cuisine of Lima give rise to singular values that are perceived by tourists after their visit. This way, Peruvian gastronomy connects tourists with the destination, positively influencing their loyalty to the territory. The hallmark achieved by this heritage, together with the quality observed after the visit, is a sign of the attribute acknowledged for those travellers who wish to learn about the local culture during their trip, through an existing and visitable heritage.

This study has significant theoretical and practical implications for the management of Peruvian cuisine. First, the measurement of satisfaction with the gastronomy of Peru that ultimately aims at increasing the number of visitors returning to the country. To promote the loyalty of this type of tourist, the agents involved need to act accordingly to meet tourists' expectations, the level of quality perceived of the services provided, visitor satisfaction, in addition to their intention to recommend the destination and visit it again. In conclusion, the study suggests how to preserve the cuisine to please the visitor. Promoting visibility and influencing the blending and the most traditional dishes of Peru as an identifying mark of the territory. At the theoretical level, understanding how the ACSI model works in the gastronomic factor may contribute to improving tourists' loyalty. In practical terms, the results confirm the idea that food management may have an impact on the behaviour of whether to visit the country in the future, which means that the tourist sector may take these factors into consideration to improve the tourism loyalty. Policy makers should explore new management methods to provide a memorable experience to tourists every time they visit, experience and taste our cuisine. Proper information, preservation, prestige and security management is also crucial.

This study has potential limitations, such as the sample used. Data were only obtained from tourists visiting Lima, Peru, which may indicate that the information gathered only illustrate one specific tourist area, a circumstance that may be improved in two ways; first, by interviewing visitors from other cities in the country and, second, through a longitudinal survey recording the tourists' emotions over time, allowing for a more accurate measurement of variables. Another variable that was not measured and shows

limitations is the COVID-19 variable, from the perspective of visitor care and perception. In the end, as for the future lines of research, we recommend including other internal and external variables, in addition to a further study of the relationship between a destination, its gastronomy and loyalty.

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