International Travel and Tourism Dynamics: Overtourism
8-10 Oct 2020, Ankara Turkey
Printed in Turkey. All right reserved
E-ISBN: 978-605-031-445-8

Authenticity Paradox: An Examination on Local Gastronomy

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Abstract

Authenticity is seen as an important element of tourist experience. Local gastronomic identity offers an opportunity to experience authenticity which is novel and unique for tourists with its connection to culture, geography and history. However, it's not possible for some tourists to experience gastronomic products like local foods as the way they are. This situation, which develops depending on food consumption contexts and level of the authenticity seeking behavior of tourists, can push local producers and service providers to change the essence of products. According to these, the aim of the study is examining the changes in authenticity of gastronomic products, which are offered to tourism consumption, with the "exploration", "deterioration" and "recovery" processes. The authenticity of products that are at a destination which discovered by many tourists may deteriorated accordingly rising number and diversity of tourists. At this point, locals' instinct of earning more income with less time and efforts is one of the reasons. Staged authenticity, commodification and commercialization of culture are the problems in this context. On the other hand, it's possible to apply some recovery actions like geographical indications and quota production, after decreased tourist number and raised local concerns tied to loss of authenticity. It's been tried to explain over the model of authenticity paradox that, if the post-recovery process cannot well managed then similar exploration and deterioration stages can be observed, and a vicious circle may begin. It has been also argued with objectivist view if post-recovery authenticity is whether the original or a new and alternative version. For these purposes a literature review has conducted, and new research ideas have been offered.

Keywords: Authenticity, Paradox, Authenticity Paradox, Gastronomy, Gastronomic Identity.

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