# THE IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ON THE QUALITY OF GASTRONOMY IN THE REGION OF FERIZAJ

**Besarta Rexhepi**
University St Kliment Ohridski, Bitola, North Macedonia, besartarexhepi5@gmail.com
**Gabriela Rakicevic**
University St Kliment Ohridski, Bitola, North Macedonia, gabrielarakic@yahoo.co.uk
**Mirjana Sekulovska**
University St Kliment Ohridski, Bitola, North Macedonia, mirjana.sekulovska@uklo.edu.mk

**Abstract:** In recent years, the tourism industry has experienced a radical change in terms of the demands and expectations of tourists. Culinary tourism, the development and promotion of gastronomy as an attraction for visitors, constitutes a new alternative, but with great development opportunities. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is to create and improve the quality of services provided by hotels and restaurants in services and gastronomy in the region of Ferizaj and the importance for tourism, hoteliers and the impact of human resources in the tourism sector. Due to the complexity of the subject, the goal determines the concept of quality and vice versa, the development of tourism and hospitality and other industries related to this field are strongly linked and mutually dependent on quality. The quality of services in the tourism sector in Ferizaj is an important factor that affects the success of any business. Gastronomic tourism has been taken for granted for a long period of time, since the consumption of food and local products is considered part of the activities of daily, without any special interest for tourists. Food is an important part of the cultural wealth of any people. Additionally, destinations are slowly recognizing the benefits of culinary tourism, and research is being conducted on consumer behavior, marketing strategies, branding, and creating partnerships between the government, the tourism industry, and culinary tourism products. Alternative tourism can bring direct and indirect income to tourist destinations. The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the importance of eco-gastronomic wealth in the level of satisfaction of tourists visiting the Ferizaj region and to identify the role played by the restaurant sector in the promotion of traditional local cuisine, based on local production. The data to realize this paper has been provided by a wide and contemporary literature also from primary sources, using quantitative research through questionnaires and qualitative research through in-depth interviews with chefs of kitchens of restaurants and hotels operating in the Ferizaj Region and the Directorate of Economic Development and Tourism. This paper is focused on a specific market of the product, the gastronomy and the influences closer connection possibilities of the development of gastronomic tourism. The purpose of the survey conducted was to examine the travel behavior of tourists as well as to simultaneously study other actors of the value chain, such as the restaurant sector, for its role as a leader in the spread of a given style of cooking and cooperation with local producers for the production of local gastronomic products of the region.
This resulted in the creation of four dimensions of gastronomic tourism development that are named as: "Local organic production", "Restaurants and hotels", "Environmental conditions" and "Destination image and ecology".
**Keywords**: Gastronomy, restaurant, destination and ecology, traditional food, staff motivation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the development of technology, different companies have changed their policies to be leaders in the country where they operate. Everywhere in the world, personnel costs and expenses must account for at least 50% of the entire budget. It is important to manage human resources for the recruitment, selection, evaluation and training of employees. So, regardless of how sophisticated the organization's systems, processes and technology are, the ones that guarantee its success are the skills and dedication of the employees, especially in this period of Covid-19, where the Gross Domestic Product BpV in Q3 fell by 7.25% in 2020 compared to with the previous year the ethical reasons are much bigger and more complicated than simply expressed through satisfaction, but the importance of motivation should not be underestimated. Motivation cannot be seen, but what is seen is behavior. The motivating process is the identification of people's needs, where the need is the lack, which causes the behavior to remove those deficiencies, which can be physiological, psychological and social. During the last years, the tourism industry has experienced a radical change in terms of demands and expectations of tourists. Culinary tourism, the development and promotion of gastronomy as an attraction for visitors, is a new alternative, but with great development opportunities. Culinary tourism has been taken for granted for a long period of time, since the consumption of food and drinks is considered part of daily activities, without any special interest for tourists. Food is an important part of the cultural wealth of any people. Knowing the gastronomic wealth is an important element of tourist trips,

considering culture, economy, art and history. This tourist alternative can bring direct and indirect income to tourist destinations.

**The meaning and role of the gastronomist**

Since the beginning of the 21st century, various changes have occurred regarding the motivations for travel. Tourists' behavior has changed and nowadays vacations are shorter but more frequent. More and more new destinations and trends are being developed to satisfy this new tourism preference (Lopez-Guzman et al. 2009).

**The relationship between Food and Tourism**

The development of tourism in Ferizaj is part of the strategy for the general economic development and diversification of the country's income sources. On this basis, more attention should be paid to tourism and food by decision makers . The Tourism Development Strategy for the Municipality of Ferizaj 2022-2026 is one of the fundamental documents that identifies what Ferizaj really is, a city symbol of economic development, tremendous tourism potential and an opportunity for citizens everywhere the country, as well as for the locals(Bertan, 2020).

**The purpose of the paper and the objectives**

This study aims to analyze the category of tourists who are interested in the consumption of local gastronomy to highlight the factors that influence the selection of food, the recognition of their importance in building beneficial relationships with customers through the quality of gastronomy, service through hotels and restaurants(Kokkranikal & Carabelli, 2021). The purpose of this study is the method of monitoring and analyzing the quality of services, especially emphasizing the importance of these services is necessary to build profitable relationships(Celebi et al., 2020).

**There were three objectives of the study:**

1.Explains the relationship between a destination's food image and travelers' intention to visit.(Celebi et al., 2020)
2.Examine the influence of information sources on travelers' intention to visit a culinary destination.
3. Education and training of human resources of hotels and restaurants in the gastronomy of Ferizaj(Sormaz et al., 2016).

## 2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a sample of 130 businesses in the Ferizaj region. The questionnaire was developed in 4 hotels and 20 restaurants (random selection) in the Ferizaj region. The questionnaire was created from the SERVQUAL model, the model is evaluated from 1-7 and the questions that have been adapted to you gastronomy in the region of Ferizaj, the questionnaire contains 71 questions and these 12 general questions. The structure of the questionnaire consists of 6 (six) categories which clarify the characteristics of the management of the kitchen, the reception, the characteristics of the work and their adaptation to the workplace. with expectations and perceptions in hotels and restaurants(Meneguel et al., 2019). The second questionnaire that studies the restaurant sector relies on the method of avalanche sampling and data generation, a technique that relies on social contacts between interviewees (Beardsorth and Keil 1992). . Questionnaire questions are built on a 5-point Likert scale with values ranging from 0 (not at all important) to 10 (extremely important)(Bastenegar, 2020).

The questionnaire was developed over a period of three months, where the questions used to measure the variables in the initial study questionnaire were based on an extensive review of relevant literature as well as from pilot group discussions with individuals (i.e. including owners /company managers of client and academic researchers). The method used in the work is the combination of primary and secondary data, so the research itself uses an analytical approach, which first develops a theoretical elaboration of the appearance and development of tourism, with a special focus on the factors that affect that quality(Aydın, 2020).

## 3. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

1. Restaurant staff have time to respond to guests 5.50
2. The restaurant staff is convincing 5.35
3. Restaurant staff organized on time 5.30
4. Attractive materials (web pages, brochures) 4.54
5. quality of typical services for the restaurant category 5.49
6. Convenient location 4.51
7. Space for parking 4.61
8. Performing the service at the promised time 4.90
9. Interest in solving guests' problems 5.30
10. Service without delay 5.20
11. The restaurant staff provides fast service 5.57
12. Willingness to help guests 5.60

13. Modern equipment 4.90
14. Visually attractive physical objects 4.90
15. The restaurant staff is polite 5.50
16. The staff has the knowledge to answer questions 5.20
17. Feeling of security 5.45
18. Flexible working hours 5.20
19. The restaurant staff offers personal attention 5.10
20. Meeting the interests of visitors 5.00
21. Understanding the needs of special guests 5.00
22. Available and clear information in the restaurant 4.80

Statistical analysis is performed with 130 questionnaires, of which 100 were valid and 30 invalid questionnaires for measuring the perception of service quality using SERVQUAL. Where of them 35 women and 65 men, it shows that the male population is still dominant as a result of many factors, but especially of economic development.

*Figure 1. Respondents*
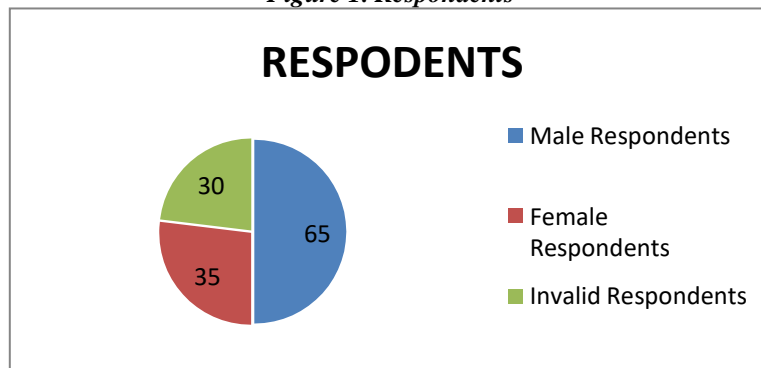


The overall average score for perceptions of the quality of the devices for which the service was provided is 5. This score indicates average perceptions towards higher perceptions.

The lowest average turned out to be the ease of finding a way around restaurants and hotels, it is as a result that we in Kosovo do not adjust street names and addresses in the international network and searching through digital navigation is not easy and often inaccurate. Willingness to help guests is best appreciated by the respondents, and this is a result of the general population of Ferizaj itself is welcoming especially to foreign customers. The respondents appreciate the cleanliness of the restaurant, since in the past we had restaurants that were very clean as a result of the government system, where the control was greater especially on the Kosovo side. From the survey conducted, the respondents noticed an increase in sensitivity of certain regular guests, then individual attention, flexible working hours and the importance of special guest attention.

## 4. DISCUSSION

During data processing, the accuracy required to be achieved for a given sample size is estimated, where this goal is achieved by determining the standard error of the parameter that is estimated by specifying the probability that a given prediction is statistically significant. In this current work, the population is not known, as well as the value of the standard error and in this case the author sees as more appropriate the use of the standard error

conservative p=0.5. in this case $\sqrt{p*(1-p)}/n=\sqrt{0.5*0.5}/n=0.5/\sqrt{n}$ and $0.5/\sqrt{n}\leq0.05$ and $n\geq100$ (box, hunter& hunter, 2005).

In the current study, the hotels, restaurants and tourists surveyed were surveyed or provided with a questionnaire, there are 130, a fact that fulfills the condition of the cluster sample, the fact that the population is unknown, since there is no database of the number of tourists who have visited the region of Ferizaj (Kaqanik Berezovic, Shtime) and one of the conditions under which this technique is used is

the case when there is no valid data on the elements of the population or when the process of their collection is very difficult (shalabh, 2012).

**The dependent variable gastronomic** demand is a construct composed of two other variables. these variables take discrete values that range from 0 to 10, i.e. on a Likert scale with values. These values are the answers to these questions:

(i) how and how much do you consider yourself a gastronomic tourist?

(ii) gastronomy as a tourist attraction?

the values of these variables are first added and then divided by 2 to derive

the dependent variable of this study. values that are close to 2.5 suggest low gastronomic demand on the part of tourists; values near 10 suggest high gastronomic demand.

**The independent variable** ``domestic production" was measured using a unit liker scale the reason for choosing a unit liker scale is because studies show that the more units the liker scale has the more the asymmetry is reduced and a liker scale with units has the lowest level of oppression, close to normal (bryer 2014). The unit Liker scale follows the normal distribution based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests.

Ferizaj with the region is very attractive as it is rich in natural resources that influence the creation of a pleasant tourist experience, with a strong cultural background and gastronomic products, which are also present in this destination.

*Figure 2. Gender and Gastronomic Demand*
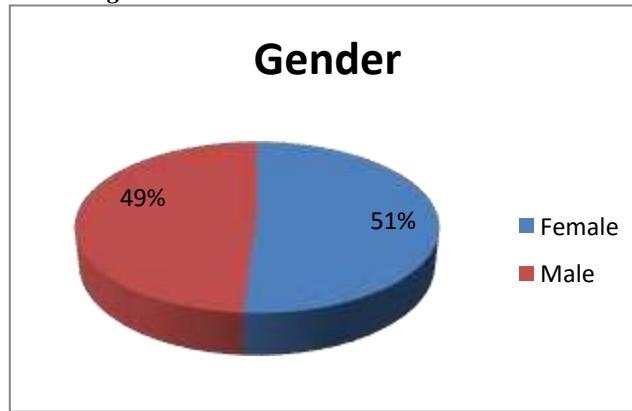


In our sample of 130 tourists, it was stated that women have the highest percentage in gastronomic demand, almost 51%, while men represent only 49% women are more likely to be involved in gastronomic tourism activities, food and beverage related activities than men (ignatov & smith 2006)women show more tendency to try new foods than men.

*Figure 3. Age and Gastronomic Requirements*
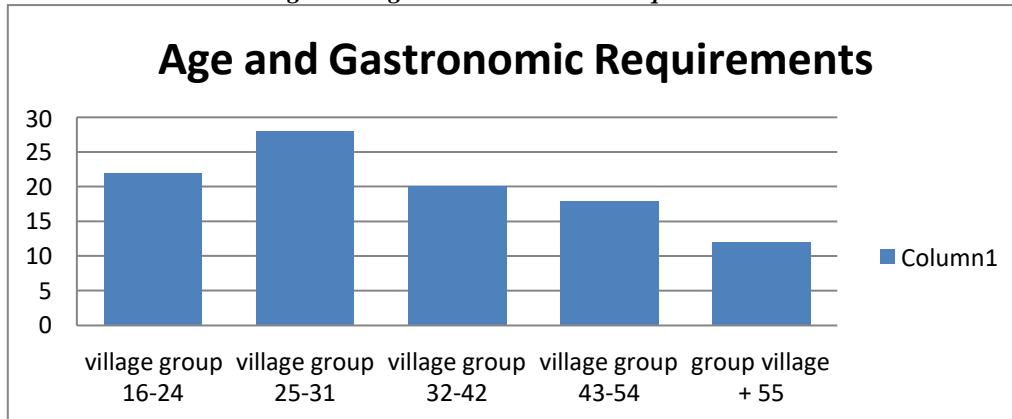


In this sample, all categories are well represented, but the category of the 25-31 age group is with 28% as the category with the greatest interest in drinks and food. Age is also an indication of the performance of the bar.

Gastronomic demand depends on local production, restaurants, environmental conditions, image of the

Q1: I eat depends on local production,

Q2: I have lunch in popular restaurants,

Q3: The destination depends on environmental conditions, ecology,

Q:4 I get information about the restaurant and it depends on the image of the destination,

Q:5 The hotel staff gives individual attention.

Another important element that was determined by the factorial analysis is the restaurant sector, even starting from the regression equation, this element is defined as the element with the highest impact on the gastronomic demand in the Ferizaj region.

**In the forest**, local food is perceived as better quality compared to other products

The TestiFishera test value =8.280* indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between user groups and the perception of the quality of local production.

The other variable studied is the taste variable, where also in this variable we observe statistical differences between groups of users and the perception of the quality of local products.

**In the forest**, local food is perceived as tastier compared to other products. The test value TestiFishera =9.278* proves that there are significant statistical differences between user groups and the perception of taste.

**In the forest**, restaurants cooperate with local producers for the provision of raw materials, test F 6.524* The factors price and availability of products in the market present differences between the analyzed categories of restaurants. The value of the test F= 6.724* shows that there are significant differences between group means classified by level of use and variable cooperation with local producers. If we compare their averages, users of high level also have the highest average. (F-test values are significant at the .05 level). the price is considered to be less Fisher's test tests the null question of homogeneity between the groups in relation to the tested variable therefore it should be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper is focused on a specific market of the product, the gastronomy and the influences closer connection possibilities of the development of gastronomic tourism.The purpose of the survey conducted was to examine the travel behavior of tourists as well as to simultaneously study other actors of the value chain, such as the restaurant sector, for its role as a leader in the spread of a given style of cooking and cooperation with local producers for the production of local gastronomic products of the region.

Furthermore, to test the possibility that young tourists participate in leisure activities which are defined as culinary tourism activities and examine whether food and beverages are a motive for tourists to travel to a destination.

The results of this survey shed light on the travel profile of young travelers in relation to the number of vacations in years, the source of information used is the empirical analysis of the alternative development of gastronomic tourism, of some factors that influence its development in the Region of Ferizaj.

Focusing on the study of gastronomic demand to gather information about the holiday destination, accommodation and the average amount that a young tourist spent on the last holiday.

The highest interest was achieved for the following activities; eating in a local restaurant, staying in a hotel, guesthouse/resort of the country with a restaurant with traditional food, as well as in restaurants specializing in fish.

In terms of accommodation, more than half of employed respondents indicated that they had stayed in a hotel on their last holiday, while the type of accommodation chosen by students varied, but hotels were slightly the most popular . The average amount spent in relation to a decent salary.The local government should work for the inventory of rural producers with organic products, thus identifying all the opportunities that the country has for production and for covering the market requirements. Likewise, the local government should encourage local producers for the preservation and development of local products through subsidies or other forms of their encouragement and to organize trainings and seminars on agro-tourism, this is an alternative that enables the recognition and use of products.

## REFERENCES

Agreiter, M. (2005). German food as a motive for travel. is that possible? [Nach Deutschland reisen und gut essen. Geht das überhaupt?]. news Zur Deutschen Landeskunde, 2010,79(2-3): 291-293.

Allua, S., & Thompson, C. B. (2009). Inferential statistics. Air MedicalJournal, 2010, 28(4): 168-171.

Aydın, A. (2020). The Strategic Process of Integrating Gastronomy and Tourism: The Case of Cappodocia. Journal of Culinary Science and Technology, 18(5). https://doi.org/10.1080/15428052.2019.1616022

Baumbach, I. (2007). Trends im Tourismus und Freizeitgestaltung und wie man sie zeitlich erkennt. Heidelberg: Redline Wirtschaft.

Bastenegar, M. (2020). From Gastronomy Tourism to Creative and Sustainable Tourism of Gastronomy Case Study: 30 Tir Street Food in Tehran. Manzar, 11(49). https://doi.org/10.22034/manzar.2019.199092.1993

Bertan, S. (2020). Restaurant rankings factors in gastronomy tourism. Tourism, 68(1). https://doi.org/10.37741/T.68.1.3

Bessiere J. (1998). Local development and heritage: traditional food and cuisine as tourist attractions in rural areas. Sociologia Ruralis, 38 (1), 21-34.

Birks, D.F. & Malhotra, N.K. (2007). Marketing Research and applied approach. 3rd ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall.

Boukas, N. (2007). Young visitors' perceptions towards cultural destinations: the case of Delphi. Annals of leisure research, 10 (3-4), 431-453.

Boyne, S., Hall, D., & Williams, F. (2003). Policy, support and promotion for food related tourism initiatives: a marketing approach to regional development. In C.M. HALL, ed. Wine, food and tourism marketing. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press, 131-154.

Dreyer, A. (2010). Wein und Tourismus: Erfolg durch Synergien und Kooperationen. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.

Du Rand, G.E., Heath, E., & Alberts, N. (2003). The role of local and regional food in destination marketing: a south African situation analysis. Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, 14 (3), 97-112.

Flick, U. (2011). Introducing research methodology. A beginner's guide to doing a research project. London

Kokkranikal, J., & Carabelli, E. (2021). Gastronomy tourism experiences: the cooking classes of Cinque Terre. Tourism Recreation Research. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1975213

Sormaz, U., Akmese, H., Gunes, E., & Aras, S. (2016). Gastronomy in Tourism. Procedia Economics and Finance, 39. https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(16)30286-6