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PREFACE

The **International Congress of New Generations and New Trends in Tourism**, first organized on 1–3 November 2018 at the Faculty of Tourism of Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, marked an important milestone in creating a platform for sharing emerging trends and current academic developments in the field of tourism. The second congress was held online on 27–28 May 2021 in collaboration with Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, and Siam University, during which a total of 62 papers were presented. The third congress took place on 26–28 October 2023, jointly hosted by Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, Afyon Kocatepe University, and Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, again contributing to the field with 62 scholarly presentations.

The fourth edition of the International Congress of New Generations and New Trends in Tourism was held this year in Sapanca/Sakarya, hosted by Sakarya University of Applied Sciences and organized in cooperation with Istanbul Gelişim University, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Kodolanyi Janos University, the University of São Paulo, and Varna University of Management. With more than thirty international participants from nine countries and over 180 researchers representing fifty universities, the congress continues to expand its visibility and scholarly impact on an international scale. This year, 76 submissions were received, and 71 papers were accepted following a rigorous peer-review process. This outcome indicates the increasing scientific strength of the congress and the growing academic interest in the field of tourism.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all researchers who contributed to the congress, and I hope that the studies included in this abstract book will provide valuable insights for academics, students, and all scholars working in related fields.

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Saruşık

Chair

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A Scale Development Study on Purchasing Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop a scale to measure the purchasing behavior of Arab tourists. In the scale development phase, 56 items were created and submitted for expert review. Following content validity procedures using Lawshe's method 3 items were removed from the scale. The resulting 53-item draft scale was administered to Arab tourists vacationing in Trabzon province. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the construct validity of the scale. As a result of these analyses, a scale consisting of 45 items and 10 factors (Political, Religious, Marketing, Socio-Cultural, Economic, Service, Security, Communication, Activity, and Geographical) was obtained. Additionally, to assess the suitability of the data for factor analysis, it was examined whether the assumptions of normality were met, whether the sample size was adequate, and whether multivariate normality was ensured. To test whether the assumption of normality was met, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were examined. Based on the findings obtained, it can be stated that the developed scale is consistent with the empirical data used in the analysis and is statistically valid. As a result of the analyses carried out, it was concluded that the Purchasing Scale, consisting of 10 dimensions and 45 items, can be used as a data collection instrument.

Keywords: Scale Development, Arab Tourism, Karadeniz, Trabzon

Consumer Reviews of Restaurants in Bolu on Digital Platforms: The Case of TripAdvisor

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ABSTRACT

Bolu, a significant destination for gastronomy tourism, stands out with its regional flavors and deep-rooted culinary culture. In this context, user reviews shared on TripAdvisor regarding restaurants operating in Bolu were evaluated using content analysis. This analysis, conducted within a qualitative research design, systematically assessed the themes around which user experiences focused and the dimensions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Based on a total of 2013 words, the analysis revealed that delicious food, friendly service, hygiene standards, and local flavors were the primary determinants of customer satisfaction. However, service disruptions, hygiene deficiencies, and price-performance imbalances experienced in some restaurants were the primary reasons for negative feedback. The findings suggest that restaurants should maintain their strengths and improve their service quality. This study highlights the impact of online user reviews on potential customers and provides significant contributions to providing strategic recommendations to enhance the customer experience for gastronomy businesses in Bolu. The research results contribute to both destination marketing and gastronomy tourism literature at theoretical and practical levels.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Tripadvisor, Gastronomy Tourism, Bolu

Culinary Tourism Destination Planning with ChatGPT: Izmir Culinary Tourism Case

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ABSTRACT

The advent of artificial intelligence has precipitated the realization that these tools have the potential to be utilized within the tourism industry, with a variety of different implications. The study presented here was designed with a focus on the planning of culinary tourism destinations, with recommendations derived from the ChatGPT model. In contrast to the conventional resource-based paradigm, which incorporates the recommendations of stakeholders from the tourism industry, there has been an emerging transition towards the integration of artificial intelligence. The conversation theory was employed to formulate a plan for the development of Izmir as a culinary tourism destination, utilizing ChatGPT to implement a series of questions in the form of a dialogue. ChatGPT was constructed on a five-dimensional plan for Izmir in the context of culinary tourism. The emergent culinary identity, enriched by immersive and bookable culinary experiences, was emphasized in the planning stage. The strategy is also oriented towards the integration of women with a view to sustaining the economic development of rural areas.

Keywords: Culinary Tourism, Conversation Theory, Izmir Culinary Heritage, Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT

From Local to Global: Digital Maturity of Turkish Hotel Websites

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has significantly increased competition in the hospitality industry. Hotel websites have become a crucial tool for promoting services to potential customers and gaining a competitive advantage. This study aims to evaluate the digital features of Turkish hotel chain websites and compare them with international hotel chains which are facilitating in Turkey. The research examines the extent of digital transformation of Turkish hotel chains' websites to report and discuss the level of applicability of digital features on their websites by comparing them with international competitors. This research is important as it examines how innovative digital features and AI-driven technologies enhance hotel chain websites, providing insights into their role in improving marketing strategies and strengthening competitive positioning in the hospitality industry. As digital transformation reshapes the global hospitality industry, hotel websites have become essential tools for customer engagement, branding, and competitiveness. This study evaluates the extent of digital feature adoption among hotel chain websites operating in Turkey, comparing Turkish hotel groups with international chains to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in their digital presence. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on digitalization in emerging hospitality markets and provides practical recommendations for improving digital competitiveness. By identifying underdeveloped areas and benchmarking against global practices, the study offers strategic insights for hotel managers, digital marketers, and policymakers aiming to enhance the digital transformation journey of Turkey's hospitality sector.

Keywords: Hotel Business, Hotel Websites, Content Analysis, Hotel Chains, Hospitality Management

Food Waste and Sustainability in Azerbaijan’s Hospitality Sector

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ABSTRACT

Food waste has become a critical global sustainability challenge, with profound economic, environmental, and social impacts. The hospitality sector, particularly restaurants and hotels, is a major contributor due to structural inefficiencies, overproduction, oversized portions, and buffet-style service practices. This study examines food waste in five restaurant and hotel enterprises in Azerbaijan between 2022 and 2024, aiming to analyze waste patterns and propose mitigation strategies. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with chefs and waitstaff, focusing on the quantity of discarded food and their explanations. Findings indicate significant variation among enterprises: some achieved gradual reductions through enhanced resource management, staff training, and operational improvements, whereas others experienced continuous increases, reaching critical levels in 2024. Cultural norms emphasizing abundance and hospitality, together with limited storage and transportation infrastructure, were identified as major drivers. The study highlights the importance of food agility, promoting adaptive and resource-efficient strategies in food supply chains. Practical recommendations include improved demand forecasting, portion control, logistical investments, and consumer awareness initiatives. By linking local findings to the global sustainability agenda, this research demonstrates that reducing food waste in the hospitality sector is not only a managerial responsibility but also a vital strategy for advancing food security, climate change mitigation, and sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Food Waste, Sustainability, Hospitality Sector, Azerbaijan

Evaluating the Role of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Tourists' Decision-Making Processes Using SWOT Analysis: The Case of ChatGPT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to reveal ChatGPT's potential for providing personalized tourist recommendations. In this context, the current study systematically analyzes the opportunities and risks associated with ChatGPT, one of the artificial intelligence tools. In the current study, conducted using an archival review method, data obtained by examining existing academic publications and sectoral reports related to the subject were evaluated within the framework of a SWOT analysis. The analysis reveals that ChatGPT is strong in terms of quick access to information, user-friendly interface, and personalization potential; however, it has limitations such as recommendation accuracy, consistent updating issues, and lack of cultural context. Additionally, the visibility of sustainable destinations and lesser-known alternatives in recommendations stands out as a positive opportunity. For tourists, ChatGPT is an effective digital tool that saves time in travel planning, expands alternatives, and guides users based on their personal interests. However, users should verify the timeliness and reliability of recommendations with different sources before implementing them. To enrich the travel experience, tourists can use ChatGPT not only for popular destinations but also to learn about undiscovered routes and local events. In addition, to strengthen the cultural context and reduce misdirection, recommendations within the application should be supported by local sources and integrated into pre-travel planning.

Keywords: Tourist Experience, Artificial Intelligence, Artificial Intelligence In Tourism, ChatGPT, Swot Analysis

Proposed Göbeklitepe Diet: Reflections of Humanity’s Earliest Dietary Practices on the Present

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to develop a dietary approach inspired by the archaeological findings of Göbeklitepe, one of the earliest known human settlements. To achieve this aim, the study employed qualitative research methods and utilized the analysis of secondary data. Göbeklitepe (9600 BC), recognized as the world’s oldest temple complex, represents not only a milestone in belief systems but also a cultural turning point in terms of dietary practices. In this context, a nutritional model that can be referred to as the “Göbeklitepe Diet” has been conceptualized. This model combines the protein-based dietary habits characteristic of the Paleolithic Age with the cereal- and legume-based dietary patterns introduced with the advent of agriculture in the Neolithic Age. It is anticipated that this study will pave the way for the emergence of new trends in gastronomy, contribute to the adoption of more environmentally friendly approaches in modern gastronomic practices, and provide an original perspective that may serve as a foundation for future research.

Keywords: Göbeklitepe, Göbeklitepe Diet, Diet Development

Social Media and Halal Gastronomy: A Qualitative Analysis on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze halal food content shared on social media and to construct a user profile based on these analyses. To achieve this aim, the study employed the document analysis method, one of the qualitative research techniques. Specifically, Instagram posts shared with the hashtag #halalfood were examined. The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. Considering the commonly used “constructed week” approach in content analysis research, posts were selected to represent different days and time intervals within the period from July 30, 2025 to August 19, 2025. As a result, a total of 504 posts were included in the sample. Findings revealed that the most frequently featured food category was fast food, while the theme analysis indicated that the notion of satiety was predominant. Furthermore, the analysis of likes and comments demonstrated that halal gastronomy has gained significant visibility and engagement on social media.

Keywords: Halal Food, Halal Gastronomy, Social Media

The Role of Local Food Networks in the Context of Regenerative Gastronomy Tourism: The Example of Slow Food Yaveş Gari Bodrum

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine local food networks within the scope of regenerative gastronomy tourism, using the example of Slow Food Yaveş Gari Bodrum. Regenerative gastronomy tourism is a form of tourism where food is integrated with nature and culture, serving as a means of interaction between producers and consumers, and local food systems are supported in a restorative manner. In the study, the activities, reports, and shares of the Slow Food Yaveş Gari Bodrum community were evaluated through document analysis using the qualitative case study method. The findings were supported by interviews with community representatives. Analysis of the data revealed that Slow Food Yaveş Gari Bodrum goes beyond being a sustainable food-based structure, serving transformative goals such as the transmission of local culinary culture, the localization of the economic cycle, and the strengthening of a responsible relationship with nature. Promoting geographically indicated products through events, directly supporting local producers, and ensuring community participation contributes to the regenerative gastronomy tourism. The study suggests that gastronomy destinations in Türkiye should be restructured with a regenerative approach, supported by local networks as seen in the Slow Food model.

Keywords: Regenerative Tourism, Regenerative Gastronomy Tourism, Local Food Systems, Slow Food Yaveş Gari Bodrum, Community-Based Tourism

A Qualitative Study on Gastronomy Students' Perceptions of Their Profession in the Context of the Film Hunger: The Case of Batman University

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the career perspectives of students in the gastronomy and culinary arts department towards the profession of cooking, within the context of media content. Conducted using the phenomenological method, a qualitative research design, the study involved showing the film *Hunger* (2023) to 20 students studying at Batman University who did not yet have professional kitchen experience, followed by an interview consisting of open-ended questions. The data were evaluated using thematic analysis, and it was determined that themes such as motivation, realism, perception of leadership, and media influence were prominent in the participants' perceptions of the profession. The findings indicate that students mostly interpreted the film in a hegemonic or negotiated manner, and that the film made visible both idealised career images and the challenges of the culinary sector. The research highlights the potential of media content to develop professional awareness and emphasises the importance of film-based pedagogical approaches in gastronomy education. Consequently, the film *Hunger* is considered not only a visual narrative for gastronomy students but also a learning tool that strengthens elements such as ethical questioning, class awareness, and psychological resilience in career planning.

Keywords: Gastronomy, Career Perception, Media Influence, Cooking Profession

Comparative Analysis of Common Foods in Turkish and Egyptian Cuisines

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to compare Turkish and Egyptian cuisines by examining their shared dishes, ingredients, and cooking methods. Both Turkish and Egyptian cuisines are rich culinary traditions that have evolved over time, influenced by various regional and historical factors. This comparative study focuses on highlighting the similarities and differences in their food cultures, emphasizing the ingredients used, cooking techniques, and cultural contexts. By comparing these recipes, the study helps to understand how both cuisines utilize similar ingredients in distinct ways to create unique dishes. The findings reveal the cultural exchange and shared gastronomic values between the two countries while also addressing the unique characteristics of each cuisine. The limited number of comparative studies on these two cuisines in the literature enhances the contribution of this research.

Keywords: Turkish Cuisine, Egyptian Cuisine, Comparative Gastronomy, Culinary Traditions, Food Culture

From Electrodes to Experiences: The Evolution of Taste Perception through GTS and Multisensory Integration

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the potential of electrically induced taste perception through Galvanic Taste Stimulation (GTS) and its integration with immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), thermal modulation, and multisensory design tools. With the advancement of digital interfaces, researchers have sought to expand the boundaries of flavor perception beyond the chemical composition of food. The paper examines historical foundations of electrical stimulation in taste research and evaluates recent innovations enabling users to experience sensations such as saltiness, bitterness, sweetness, and umami without consuming actual compounds. The methodology includes an extensive literature review of current technological developments, experimental prototypes, and sensory science research on taste manipulation. Findings suggest that GTS, especially when combined with other sensory cues such as visual and auditory inputs, can significantly modulate taste perception and enhance food-related experiences. Applications include medical dietary interventions, immersive dining formats, and entertainment-based food simulations. However, the study also highlights ongoing challenges including calibration discrepancies, device usability, and user comfort. The conclusions underline the growing significance of digital taste as a promising area within gastronomic innovation and suggest future directions where neuroscience, design, and culinary practice intersect to create novel eating experiences without altering the food itself.

Keywords: Digital Taste, Galvanic Stimulation, Immersive Dining, Sensory Perception, Food Technology

Does SocialWOM Really Work? Conceptualizing a New Marketing Approach through the Case of the Cappadocia Balloon Festival

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to introduce SocialWOM as a new sub-concept of digital word-of-mouth marketing in tourism and to examine its functioning through the social media posts of participants in the Cappadocia Balloon Festival. SocialWOM is a conceptualization that encompasses both the sharing of individual experiences by users and their interactions with other users through social media communities. A qualitative research method was adopted in the study; within this scope, content analysis and text-based sentiment analysis were carried out. Ten posts shared on Instagram with the hashtag #cappadociaballoonfest during the 2025 Cappadocia Balloon Festival were selected and coded into four categories: type, features, sentiment, and prominent theme of SocialWOM. The findings indicate that festival participants' posts mostly reflect positive experiences, while negative content stems from factors such as weather conditions and crowding. The study shows that positive experiences shared through social media enhance the digital visibility of the Cappadocia Balloon Festival and strengthen user engagement, whereas negative or mixed experiences may turn into complaints, affecting the destination's reputation and the perceived quality of the event. In this context, it can be stated that the obtained data may serve as a guide for developing strategies applicable to social media users in terms of the visibility and promotion of the destination, for the tourism sector, content creators, marketing and social media experts, destination management organizations, and related stakeholders.

Keywords: Word of mouth (WOM), eWOM, SocialWom, Conceptualization, Sentiment Analysis

Socio-Cultural, Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism from the Perspective of Local People: A Field Study in the Context of Sustainability

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the perceptions of local people living in Rize and Trabzon provinces in the Eastern Black Sea Region towards sustainable tourism development. Based on stakeholder theory, the study analyzes how local people perceive the environmental, socio-cultural and economic dimensions of tourism and how these perceptions are related to demographic variables. Likert scale questionnaire was used as a data collection tool in the study, and the data obtained from 360 participants reached by convenience sampling method were evaluated with SPSS 24 program. The findings show that local people strongly embrace the economic benefits of tourism but are more cautious about environmental and socio-cultural impacts. The findings also indicate that the participation of local people in decision-making processes is limited. No significant differences were found according to gender and place of residence; however, significant differences were found in perceptions according to age, marital status, education level and income groups. It was determined that the perception of economic sustainability increased as the level of education and income increased. The research emphasizes the necessity of considering the perceptions of local people for the success of sustainable tourism policies and contributes to the development of applicable strategies at the regional level.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Local Community, Stakeholder Theory, Tourism Perception

An Analysis of Ali Şîr Nevâî's Muhakemetü'l Lugateyn in Terms of Elements Related to Gastronomy

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ABSTRACT

Ali Şîr Nevâî is one of the rare figures in our history who left his mark on Turkish Literature and appeared as a statesman as well as a poet and thinker. Nevâî wrote Muhâkemetü'l-Lugateyn (Comparison of Two Languages) in 1498 to show that Turkish was richer and superior to Persian. In this work, Nevâî compared the reasons why he considered Turkish to be superior to Persian by giving examples from both languages and showed that Turkish was a superior language by giving examples against the dominant understanding of his time. This work of Nevâî, in which he compared Turkish and Persian languages, is also accepted as one of the first Turkish Persian dictionaries in terms of vocabulary. In this study, the names related to food and drink in Muhâkemetü'l-Lugateyn, which reflects the vocabulary of fifteenth century Turkish as an indicator of the continuity of cultural elements, and the status of these names in today's Turkey Turkish are questioned. Whether the names of food and beverages have survived to the present day in the past six centuries, the names of food and beverages in the 15th century, the words used during their production and consumption, the names in the content of the culture related to food and beverage and gastronomy in the unwritten oral part of folklore, and their meanings in today's Turkish are processed with the logic of creating a dictionary; the importance of this work is intended to be shown.

Keywords: Gastronomy, Ali Şîr Nevai, Muhakemetü'l- Lugatey

The Relationship Between Cognitive Flexibility and Adaptive Performance in Hotel Businesses

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of cognitive flexibility on adaptive performance in hotel businesses, as employees with high levels of cognitive flexibility can adapt more effectively to global dynamics and thus improve the adaptive performance of businesses. The study was conducted on employees of 4- and 5-star hotels in Istanbul. The scale developed by Üstün and Büyükbaş (2020) was used to measure adaptive performance, while the scale created by Martin and Rubin (1995) was used to measure cognitive flexibility. The study examined the relationships between hotel employees' cognitive flexibility and adaptive performance (emergency adaptation, creativity, interpersonal adaptation, and training efforts) sub-dimensions. A high level of positive and significant relationship was found between cognitive flexibility and adaptive performance. Similarly, moderate levels of positive and significant relationships were found between cognitive flexibility and emergency adaptation, creativity, interpersonal adaptation, and training efforts. Cognitive flexibility explains 40.2% of adaptive performance, and its effects are also seen in emergency adaptation (33.8%), interpersonal adaptation (19.8%), creativity (26.4%) and training efforts (17.3%). In conclusion, cognitive flexibility plays an important role in adaptive performance and positively affects adaptive performance in hotel businesses. These findings indicate that cognitive flexibility should be given greater importance in order to adapt to global dynamics and improve adaptive performance in hotel businesses.

Keywords: Hotel Businesses, Cognitive Flexibility, Adaptive Performance

Dynamics of Scientific Research in Tourism: Global Bibliometric Analysis and National Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the evolution of scientific research in the field of tourism through a bibliometric approach, using data extracted from the Web of Science for the period 1975-2024. The purpose of the research is to highlight the main thematic directions addressed at international level, but also the contributions of Romanian researchers in the field. The methodology used consisted in applying the co-appearance analysis of keywords, conducted with the help of the VOS viewer software, to identify the publications with the theme of tourism, their evolution, and the identification of relevant thematic clusters. The research results highlight the dominant clusters, focused on topics such as sustainability, economic impact, innovation, or consumer behavior, at the same time identifying, at national level, the authors with the most contributions in this field, as well as academic collaboration networks. The conclusions of the paper underline the increased interest in the field of tourism in the context of globalization, but also the need to strengthen international collaborations among Romanian researchers. The study provides a solid basis for understanding the scientific dynamics of tourism and for guiding future research in the field.

Keywords: Tourism, Bibliometric Analysis, Scientific Research, Academic Collaboration

Seeing is Believing: The Impact of Presence from Travel Reality Show on Destination Image and Travel Intention

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, travel reality shows have gained widespread popularity and emerged as influential platforms for destination marketing. Understanding how these programmes shape audiences' perceptions of tourist destinations and influence their travel intentions is crucial for tourism businesses and destination marketers. This study investigates the relationships among presence evoked by travel reality shows, destination image, travel constraints, and travel intention. An online survey was conducted with audiences of travel reality shows, and the data were analysed using structural equation modelling in Mplus. The findings reveal that different dimensions of presence—scenic presence, cultural presence, and social presence—significantly enhance audiences' perceptions of destination image, which subsequently influences their travel intention. Furthermore, travel constraints, including time, cost, interpersonal, and intrapersonal factors, significantly moderate the relationship between destination image and travel intention. Theoretically, this study contributes to tourism literature by evaluating the influence of presence. Practically, the results offer insights for destination marketers and media producers seeking to leverage reality shows for tourism promotion.

Keywords: Presence, Destination Image, Travel Intention, Travel Constraints, Reality Shows

Flavor Engineering

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ABSTRACT

Flavor engineering has emerged as a significant interdisciplinary field that combines biotechnology, chemistry, food sensory science, and data science to design and optimize flavor profiles in food products. With consumers' increasing demand for delicious, healthy, and natural food options, modern techniques such as microbial fermentation, enzymatic reactions, encapsulation, and synthetic biology are increasingly being used to enhance flavor complexity and stability. Advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning are enabling the prediction of flavor profiles and the discovery of new natural compounds, while digital flavor technologies and augmented reality are opening new horizons in the sensory experience. Understanding the multisensory nature of flavor (integrating taste modalities such as sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami, as well as new dimensions such as oleogustus and kokumi) and integrating aroma perception through retronasal olfaction are critical to effective flavor design. Industry leaders such as Givaudan, Firmenich, and Kerry Group are driving innovation toward cleaner-label, healthier products that balance health and pleasure. However, challenges remain in reducing sugar, salt, and fat without compromising flavor, ensuring naturalness, addressing individual sensory variability, and scaling biotechnological applications. Consequently, new trends in flavor engineering necessitate technological advancements and future directions. In this context, the integration of artificial intelligence, personalized nutrition, and sustainable production methods is gaining importance to meet the dynamic needs of the global food and beverage industry.

Keywords: Flavor Engineering, Gastronomy, Artificial Intelligence, Clean Label, Synthetic Biology

Tourists' Trust in Digital Tourism Applications and Its Demographic Determinants

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ABSTRACT

Digital tourism applications play a critical role in travelers' processes of searching for information, making reservations, and planning their experiences at places of interest before traveling. The trust placed in these applications is shown to be an important factor affecting the success of tourism marketing and tourist satisfaction in general. The aim of this study is to examine the level of trust domestic tourists have in digital tourism applications, taking into account various demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, education, and income. Survey data were collected from 150 domestic tourists randomly selected through convenience sampling at popular tourist destinations in Istanbul. Independent samples t-test results show that male tourists scored significantly higher than female tourists in terms of basic trust and trust derived from user reviews. In terms of marital status, married participants were found to have significantly more trust in user reviews than single participants. ANOVA results showed significant differences between different age groups. Tourists in the 35-44 age group trust user reviews more than younger age groups. While no significant difference was found between different education levels, the differences recorded between different income groups were not statistically significant in the post-hoc analysis. This study makes original contributions to the literature by examining trust in digital tourism applications using demographic variables and has high practical importance for tourism marketing, destination management, and digital transformation strategies.

Keywords: Digital Tourism Applications, Trust Perception, Demographic Characteristics

Analysis of Visual Stimuli in Tourism Promotion Using Eye Tracking Technique: An Investigation of Artificial Intelligence-Generated Images of Istanbul

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of AI-generated visuals in tourism promotion through eye-tracking technology. In the study, visuals reflecting Istanbul's natural, cultural, historical, and man-made tourist attractions were designed using AI-based visual production tools. The main objective of the study is to objectively reveal the effects of these images on potential tourists' visual attention distribution, focus duration, and interest intensity. During the data collection process, participants' eye movements, areas of interest (AOI), and attention intensity maps were recorded; the findings were evaluated through statistical analysis. The findings revealed that Istanbul's historical and cultural symbols (e.g., Galata Tower, mosques, and the Grand Bazaar) strongly attracted participants' visual attention. Furthermore, it was determined that attention spans were longer in images featuring human figures, suggesting that incorporating human elements into visual materials for tourism promotion could increase their appeal. Furthermore, it was observed that the color contrast and composition used in AI-generated images played a decisive role in participants' attention distribution. This finding demonstrates that AI-supported visual design has the potential to strategically shape attention orientation, not just aesthetics. In this context, the study contributes to the literature by focusing on the transformation of visual marketing in tourism promotion, the attention-grabbing nature of AI-based images, and the objective measurement power of eye-tracking technology.

Keywords: Tourism, Tourism Attractiveness, Eye-Tracking, Artificial Intelligence

Digital Twin Technologies in Tourism from the Perspective of Green and Digital Transformation

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ABSTRACT

The environmental, economic, and social challenges facing the tourism sector on a global scale increase the strategic importance of sustainability, digitalization, and innovative management. This study aims to examine the positioning of digital twin technology within the tourism sector, the extent of its alignment with policy documents, and to reveal its applications within the industry. In this context, the targets set for tourism within the scope of Türkiye's Twelfth Development Plan (2024–2028) were systematically examined using policy documents. Themes such as sustainable tourism management, development of environmental standards, preservation of cultural heritage, and strengthening of the digital ecosystem were found to be at the forefront. The research was conducted using document analysis and descriptive content analysis methods, and digital twin applications in international cities were evaluated comparatively. The findings reveal that digital twins make significant contributions in areas such as visitor density management at tourism destinations, preparedness for disaster and crisis scenarios, infrastructure optimization, energy efficiency, and the preservation of cultural heritage. In conclusion, digital twin technologies support the environmental sustainability goals of the green transition and strengthen data-driven decision-making processes in digital transformation. This study emphasizes that digital twin technology should be considered a strategic tool for enhancing the competitiveness of Turkish tourism and achieving the 2053 vision.

Keywords: Digital Twin, Tourism, Green Transition, Digital Transformation, Development Plan

The Impact of QR Code Menus on Customer Behavior: A Conceptual Assessment from the Perspective of the Technology Acceptance Model

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary era, technology is regarded as a necessity rather than a mere tool, as it facilitates interaction among individuals and shapes modern lifestyles. Rapid technological developments have not only altered consumer expectations but have also redefined the service standards demanded from businesses. Within the food and beverage industry, especially after the emergence of global health crises, the use of QR code menus has shifted from being an alternative to becoming a fundamental requirement. These applications provide consumers with a fast, practical, and hygienic ordering process, while simultaneously enhancing operational efficiency for restaurant businesses. This study examines the impact of QR code menu applications on customer behavior in restaurant settings by adopting the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as a theoretical framework. Through a document analysis approach, the research evaluates how QR code menus influence perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and customer behavioral attitudes. The findings reveal that both benefits and drawbacks exist for businesses and consumers. Additionally, customers with higher levels of technological adaptation demonstrate more favorable perceptions regarding QR code use. In conclusion, QR code menus can be considered an effective digital tool that improves the dining experience, increases customer satisfaction, and supports efficiency in business operations.

Keywords: QR Code, Technology Acceptance Model, Digitalization, Customer Behavior, Innovation

Evaluating Senior Tourism in the Context of Disengagement Theory

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ABSTRACT

Disengagement Theory proposes that aging individuals gradually withdraw from social roles, relationships, and activities, often as a natural adaptation to the aging process. This research evaluates senior tourism through the lens of this theory and assesses how travel experiences may either align with or prevent the patterns of social disengagement. Relying on existing literature and secondary data, the research highlights that while some seniors may reduce participation in certain activities, tourism offers opportunities. Senior-oriented tourism products, characterized by accessibility, comfort, safety, and cultural enrichment, may facilitate continued social involvement and psychological well-being. The findings emphasize that senior tourism products and services that designed with physical, mental, and social needs in mind, function as a valuable tool to mitigate the isolating tendencies predicted by Disengagement Theory.

Keywords: Senior Tourism, Disengagement Theory, Accessible Tourism

The Role of Tour Guides in Safe Tourism: An Assessment of Occupational Health, First Aid, and Emergency Management Competencies

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ABSTRACT

The tourism sector's dynamic, multi-actor, and risk-prone nature makes safety and crisis management essential. In this context, tour guides play a dual role: they convey historical, cultural, and social values of destinations while ensuring tourists' safety and managing emergencies. Competencies in occupational health and safety (OHS), first aid, and emergency management are critical for preventing individual and group risks. This study examines the occupational hazards faced by guides in high-risk tourism settings, including nature walks, cultural tours, and visits to museums or historical sites. It also evaluates their OHS knowledge, first aid practices, and emergency planning skills. Furthermore, tour guides' responsibilities in safety and crisis management are analyzed within the framework of Turkish legislation and National Vocational Qualifications Authority (MYK) standards, identifying gaps in the literature and education. Findings indicate that tour guides should be viewed not only as cultural interpreters but also as "guarantors of safe and sustainable tourism." Strengthening guides' OHS, first aid, and emergency competencies enhances crisis intervention, improves group management, elevates tourist experiences, and supports the reliability and positive reputation of tourism destinations.

Keywords: Tour Guiding, Occupational Health and Safety, First Aid, Emergency Management, Safe Tourism

Challenges in Marketing City Restaurants: The Case of Batman

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ABSTRACT

In the study, a holistic single case design from qualitative research methods was adopted and semi-structured interview technique was used with eight restaurant operators. The data obtained were analysed by content analysis method. The main problems encountered by the restaurants in the research are pricing imbalances, lack of staff, instability in the supply chain and lack of professionalism in marketing activities. Although the majority of the participants use social media channels intensively, it was determined that these tools could not be transformed into an effective marketing strategy. However, it has been observed that the businesses attach importance to customer satisfaction, hygiene and product quality. As a result, it reveals that in order for restaurants in Batman to gain competitive power, they need to develop not only in product quality but also in digital marketing, branding, human resource management and supply chain. In addition, restaurants' acting in cooperation with local administrations, universities and tourism institutions, not only through individual efforts, will make significant contributions to the development of gastronomy tourism and the city branding of Batman.,

Keywords: City Marketing, Restaurants, Marketing Challenges, Batman Province

An Examination of the Industry from the Perspective of Future Professionals: A Qualitative Analysis of Critical Success Factors in the Food and Beverage Industries

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ABSTRACT

This constitutes a qualitative research endeavor, with the objective of ascertaining the critical success factors that influence the success of food and beverage businesses, as perceived by students specializing in tourism. The research is grounded in a descriptive qualitative research design. The study group consists of 90 students enrolled in a tourism undergraduate program at a higher education institution in Turkey. The data presented herein was collected through the utilization of a structured group interview process. Participants were invited to consider and respond to the following question: "What factors do you consider to be essential for the success of food and beverage businesses?" Participants were tasked with the identification of these factors within conceptual codes and the subsequent evaluation of each on a scale of 1 to 7, based on their perceived level of importance. After the interview, the students' individual responses were collected via email, and the data obtained was analyzed using content analysis methods. Following a thorough analysis, the factors contributing to success were categorized into ten overarching themes, with the highest mean averages assigned to the following: hygiene and cleanliness, product quality, staff qualifications, sustainability, and social media usage. The findings indicate that individuals with a young consumer profile value traditional quality criteria, as well as contemporary elements such as environmental awareness, digital visibility, and customer experience. The research results provide findings that will guide food and beverage businesses at a strategic level, while also contributing to content updates for tourism education institutions in line with current sectoral needs.

Keywords: Food and Beverage Businesses, Critical Success Factors, Qualitative Research.

Digitalization Policies in The European Union and The Metaverse Implications for The Tourism Sector

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the historical development of the European Union's digitalization policies and their impacts on metaverse-based transformations in the tourism sector. Conducted through a qualitative literature review method, the research chronologically analyses key policy documents such as the Bangemann Report (1994), the e-Europe action plans, the i2010 European Information Society Strategy (2005), the Digital Single Market, the 2030 Digital Compass, and the Declaration on Digital Rights. The findings reveal that the European Union positions digitalization as a critical strategic domain in terms of economic competitiveness, sustainable growth, social inclusion, and the strengthening of digital sovereignty. It has been determined that digitalization has created a significant transformation in the tourism sector through innovative applications such as online reservation systems, augmented and virtual reality implementations, artificial intelligence-based personalized services, and data-driven marketing. Furthermore, metaverse technology has been found to offer strategic potential for the digitalization of cultural heritage, the diversification of destination experiences, the enhancement of customer satisfaction, and the development of new business models. It has also been identified that the European Union supports this transformation through infrastructure and financial mechanisms such as Horizon Europe and the Digital Europe Programme. The study concludes that the European Union's digitalization policies guide the digital transformation process of tourism and provide strategic implications for Türkiye.

Keywords: European Union, Digitalization, Metaverse, Tourism, Digital Transformation

The Dark Side of Menu Variety: A Conceptual Perspective on Food Waste in the Food and Beverage Sector within the Context of the Paradox of Choice

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive food and beverage sector, menu variety has become a critical strategy for enhancing customer satisfaction. Richly designed menus that cater to diverse tastes provide attractive experiences for customers while offering a competitive advantage for establishments. Alongside these benefits, the variety in food and beverage menus also reveals a darker consequence stemming from consumption culture. Food waste materializes as a result of offering numerous alternatives to customers, and the concept of the paradox of choice provides an appropriate framework to explain this waste process. The paradox of choice describes how an increase in options can lead individuals not to greater satisfaction but to decision-making difficulties, dissatisfaction, and inefficient use of resources. The paradox of choice can provide an analytical framework for evaluating the effects of menu variety on food waste from a sustainability perspective. Accordingly, this study conceptually examines food waste in the food and beverage sector within the context of the paradox of choice induced by menu variety. The conceptual analysis demonstrates that menu variety manifests in three main dimensions within the framework of the paradox of choice: decision fatigue, efficient management of resources, and the allure of variety. Based on these findings, practical recommendations for the food and beverage sector have been developed.

Keywords: Food and Beverage Sector, Menu Variety, Food Waste, Paradox of Choice

A Behavioral Approach to Sports Tourism Expenditures: A Comparative Study of the United States and Türkiye

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ABSTRACT

Sports tourism has rapidly developed over the past century due to increasing mobility and the diversification of leisure activities. The aim of this study is to examine the pain of payment experienced by individuals spending on sports tourism as a mental accounting process. In this context, data were collected from a total of 400 participants who either follow the matches of a sports branch, are members of a team, or identify themselves as fans, residing in the United States or Türkiye. The data were analyzed using the Hayes PROCESS V4.0 program. The findings indicate that the type of sport moderates the relationship between country and pain of payment. In particular American participants who follow football and basketball reported higher levels of payment pain compared to Turkish participants. Regarding payment methods (credit card, debit card, cash, digital), no significant moderating effect was found. Conversely, the total amount of expenditure had a differentiating effect on payment pain: while American participants experienced higher pain at low and medium expenditure levels, this difference disappeared at higher spending levels. No significant moderating effect was identified with respect to the purpose of expenditure. Overall, the results reveal that sports tourism expenditures should be evaluated not only through economic indicators but also in relation to cultural differences and psychological processes.

Keywords: Sports Tourism, Pain of Payment, Mental Accounting, Sport Tourist Behavior

Student and Academician Views on Artificial Intelligence Applications in Gastronomy Education

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this research is to determine how artificial intelligence technologies are perceived in gastronomy education and to reveal the opportunities and limitations offered by these technologies for both students and academics. This qualitative study employed a phenomenological design. Semi-structured online interviews were conducted with 10 academics employed at higher education institutions offering gastronomy and culinary arts education in Turkey and 10 undergraduate students studying in the same field. The data obtained were analyzed using MAXQDA software, and the findings were visualized by creating subthemes and themes. The analysis revealed that academics generally viewed AI applications as a means of efficiency and technological transformation in education, but emphasized the indispensability of the human factor. Students, however, expressed positive opinions regarding practicality, speed, and ease of access, while also expressing criticism regarding misleading information, excessive dependence, and the inhibition of thinking. The general consensus of both groups is that AI is an important transformational tool in gastronomy education, but cannot replace human creativity and sensory experience, especially in applied fields. This study offers important implications for the digital transformation of gastronomy education and reveals that it should be positioned as a complementary tool.

Keywords: Gastronomy Education, Kitchen Applications, Artificial Intelligence Applications

The Role of Service Production in Shaping Customer Experience in a Five-Star Hotel

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry, especially the hotel part, plays an important role in shaping the economic, social, and cultural landscape of numerous countries, in particular those with rich tourism potential such as Lebanon. Within this specific sector, customer experience stands out as a major factor of organizational success, influencing guest loyalty, brand reputation, and lastly financial performance. In the 21st century, where customer expectations are evolving, hotels must focus not only on the tangible aspects of service but also on the emotional and experiential dimensions that define a guest's overall satisfaction. This paper shows the intricate relationship between customer experience and service production in the industry of hospitality. It is focusing specifically on Grand Kadri Hotel, a five-star hotel located in Zahle, the heart of the Bekaa Valley, in the Republic of Lebanon, a small country in the Middle East, neighboring not only two other countries, but also the Mediterranean Sea.

Keywords: Hospitality, Tourism, Customer Experience, Service Production, Middle East

The Interaction of Generation Z with Intangible Cultural Heritage through Digital Platforms and Their Participation Intentions

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ABSTRACT

Generation Z, born into the digital age, differs from other generations in their views on future generations, communication styles, and online consumption habits. They see technology as an essential part of daily life. Digital environments that transfer, preserve, and make cultural heritage values accessible encourage young people to engage with these values, allowing them to pass them on to future generations and reach a wider audience. Another factor supporting cultural heritage sustainability is tourism. Generation Z, whose consumer habits are shaped by digital technologies, becomes a key tourism market segment. It is believed that transforming intangible cultural heritage elements into digital media could increase Generation Z's curiosity and interest in cultural heritage tourism. Therefore, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) values will be handed down to future generations, and conservation plans will be created. This research conceptually explores the potential impact of Generation Z's interaction with digital ICH components on their intention to participate in cultural heritage tourism. Focusing on Generation Z's digital engagement with ICH within the context of cultural heritage tourism makes this study unique. Accordingly, it is recommended that the TPB model be used to examine how interactions with digital ICH influence Generation Z's intentions to engage in cultural heritage tourism. This study could serve as a basis for further empirical research.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage, Generation Z, Cultural Heritage Tourism, Digitalization

The Role of Female Vendors in Consumer Perceptions of Street Food

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ABSTRACT

The concept of street food and street vending, which emerged to meet the basic human need for food and drink, has existed throughout human history for many years. It is observed that the value placed on street food is gradually decreasing and that consumers have negative perceptions of street food. This study aims to reveal whether consumers' negative perceptions of street food will change with women taking an active role in street vending. In this qualitative research study, a structured interview form was used as a data collection tool, and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 20 participants using a form consisting of 12 questions. The interview data were evaluated using thematic analysis, and meaningful statements were coded to create sub-themes and main themes. The findings revealed that street food is not only a practical nutritional solution for participants but also meaningful in nostalgic, cultural, and economic terms. Perceptions of female vendors highlighted feelings such as hygiene, meticulousness, trust, appreciation, and empathy, revealing that different evaluation criteria could be applied based on gender. In this context, the study offers original contributions that question gender perceptions and consumer attitudes in the context of street foods.

Keywords: Street Food, Consumer Perception, Female Street Vendors

Evaluation of Policy Measures Taken by Countries in Overtourism

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ABSTRACT

The concept of overtourism is considered one of the key factors affecting the sustainability and long-term appeal of destinations. It can be examined alongside concepts such as tourist density, carrying capacity, social carrying capacity, physical infrastructure control, natural and cultural attractions, tourism phobia, and social satisfaction. It plays a central role in tourism planning. Therefore, understanding and managing the effects of overtourism play an important role in both academic studies and the development of strategic policies. This study aims to evaluate the environmental, social, and economic impacts of overtourism and to examine the policy measures and strategies developed nationally and internationally to address this issue. Secondary data sources were used in the research. In this context, news bulletins, reports, and policies of national and international tourism organisations, as well as academic studies related to the subject, were analysed. The findings indicate that measures aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of overtourism generally focus on preserving the carrying capacity of destinations, ensuring environmental and cultural sustainability, and increasing the active participation of local communities in the process. In the case of Turkey, development plans, tourism incentive laws, and current strategy documents include measures aimed at addressing overcrowding. The study offers a comprehensive evaluation of sustainable and effective management strategies for addressing overtourism, both in Turkey and globally.

Keywords: Overtourism, Tourism Policies, Destination, Sustainability

Dimensions of the perceived value of Generation Z train travel: a cluster analysis approach

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceived value of train travel among Generation Z in Romania, a group whose mobility preferences are not yet well understood. The research aims to identify the main value dimensions influencing young people's train travel decisions and to segment them into meaningful traveler profiles. A structured questionnaire was administered to 427 university students who had used train services, and the data were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis and K-Means cluster analysis. The factor analysis revealed five core dimensions of perceived value: ecological, emotional, functional, social, and economic. Based on these dimensions, three distinct traveler profiles emerged: Emotional Explorers, who prioritize relaxation and connection; Relaxed Pragmatists, who value comfort and functionality along with social experiences; and Eco-Frugal Travelers, who focus on affordability and environmental impact. Statistically significant differences were also found across gender and income levels, with female and lower-income respondents being more oriented toward ecological and economic values. The findings contribute to a better understanding of youth mobility behaviors and provide practical insights for railway service providers aiming to adapt their offerings to the expectations of a digitally connected and value-driven generation.

Keywords: Generation z, Train Travel, Perceived Value, Youth Mobility, Cluster Analysis

Comparison of Educational and Occupational Perceptions in Tourist Guidance Across Demographic Groups¹

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ABSTRACT

Tourist guidance is an important profession within the tourism industry and requires a structured educational process. This study comparatively examines the occupational perceptions of associate degree students in tourist guidance programs at state and foundation universities, as well as their views on transitioning to undergraduate education. The research considered university type, gender, and class level, and the sample consisted of 28 first- and second-year students. A semi-structured interview technique, as part of the qualitative research approach, was employed. The obtained data were subjected to content analysis using the MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software. The findings indicate that academic goals positively affect the transition to undergraduate education, while structural differences between associate and undergraduate programs may negatively impact the process. Additionally, some differences were observed based on gender, class, and university type. The study offers recommendations addressing gaps in the literature and suggesting areas for practical improvement.

Keywords: Tourist Guidance, Guidance Education, Occupational Perception

¹ This study is derived from the master's thesis titled "An Examination of the Perspectives of Students Taking an Associate Degree in Tourist Guiding towards Bachelor's Degree Education," which was prepared under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Orhan BATMAN and Asst. Prof. Dr. Zeynep YAMAÇ ERDOĞAN at the Department of Tourism Management, Sakarya University of Applied Sciences Graduate School of Education, and defended on 02.07.2025.

Evaluating Türkiye in the Gastronomic Identity of the Best Mediterranean Countries: A Comparative Analysis Based on TasteAtlas

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the gastronomic diversity and prominence of various food categories within Mediterranean cuisines, as analyzed by TasteAtlas. The data reveals the dominance of specific food categories in different countries and sheds light on their culinary traditions and strengths. Italy emerges as a dominant force in several categories, particularly in cheeses, pasta, and dumplings, highlighting its central role in Mediterranean cuisine. Türkiye also demonstrates significant representation in various categories, showcasing its diverse culinary traditions and traditional dish diversity. In contrast, some countries such as Spain, France, and Greece show varying levels of representation across different food categories. Additionally, the rankings of cuisines, food regions, cities, legendary restaurants, and cookbooks provide insights into the global recognition and visibility of culinary traditions from these Mediterranean countries. While Italy and Greece hold strong positions in several rankings, Türkiye's representation suggests significant potential for increased international recognition and promotion of its rich culinary culture. Overall, the findings offer a comparative framework for evaluating characteristic features of Mediterranean cuisines and underscore the diverse culinary heritage of these countries. The data also points towards opportunities for enhancing international visibility and appreciation of Turkish cuisine diversity and traditional recipes.

Keywords: Gastronomic Identity, Mediterranean Countries, TasteAtlas, Turkish Cuisine, Comparative Analysis

The Role of Instagram Engagement Metrics in Destination Marketing: The Case of Open-Air Cinemas

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the role of open-air cinemas in destination marketing through Instagram engagement metrics and to reveal the impact of social media strategies on tourist visibility and user behavior. The study quantitatively examined a total of 82 Instagram posts shared with the “open-air cinema” tag between 2024 and 2025. Interaction indicators such as views, likes, comments, shares, and discoverability of the content were evaluated using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses. The findings revealed that the number of likes and comments had a strong and significant effect on viewing performance, with likes being the most important variable. It was also determined that all of the content appeared in the explore section and that a significant portion reached millions of users. The research results show that social media interactions are not only performance indicators in destination marketing but can also be considered strategic tools that strengthen destination image and drive tourist demand. Accordingly, it is recommended that destination management organizations develop data analytics-based content strategies and focus on shareable visual content.

Keywords: Open-Air Cinemas, Destination Marketing, Social Media Engagement, Instagram

AI-Supported Accessibility Solutions for Visually and Hearing-Impaired Tourists

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ABSTRACT

With the advancements in today's technology, artificial intelligence (AI) has become influential in every aspect of our lives. The advantages it offers within the tourism industry are numerous for both service providers and service recipients. One of the most important of these advantages is the AI-powered accessibility solutions developed for visually and hearing impaired tourists in the tourism sector. The participation of visually and hearing impaired individuals, a disadvantaged group, in tourist activities in a comfortable, enjoyable, and humane manner is not a luxury but an important necessity. The purpose of this study is to examine AI-supported solutions that help visually and hearing impaired individuals participating in tourism activities gain equal access to information, services, and experiences, to compile applications mentioned in the literature, and to evaluate developments in this field. This study, which is important in terms of making tourism inclusive for everyone and ensuring the satisfaction of every individual participating in tourist activities, is expected to guide future work in this field. It is also thought that it could provide a practical contribution by offering concrete policy and implementation recommendations for industry stakeholders, planners, and public officials.

Keywords: Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Artificial Intelligence

Bibliometric Analysis of Studies on Tea Tourism in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The production and consumption of tea date back thousands of years. Over time, it has played a major role in interactions between civilizations and influenced many different cultures. The resulting diverse cultures have become part of the identity of countries and have played an important role in promoting the region. Tea tourism is a concept that has existed for many years in countries that are leaders in tea production. Tea tourism, which is a new concept in Turkey, has considerable potential for destination marketing when evaluated from a tourism perspective. This study aims to examine articles and theses written on Turkish tea tourism. To this end, bibliometric analysis techniques were utilized in the research. The analyses conducted in the study revealed that tea tourism is beginning to gain popularity in Turkey. It was found that the first study on the subject was conducted in 2018, and the number of studies increased after 2023. The increase in studies after 2023 indicates that the subject is becoming increasingly popular. Furthermore, the study concluded that the topic of tea tourism has been researched by different academic disciplines. Based on the research results, some theoretical and practical recommendations were made. Some of these include stakeholders in the tea tourism sector should be more active in promotion and marketing, and the number of studies published in international publications should be increased.

Keywords: Tea Tourism, Tea Route, Tea Tour, Turkish Tea

Healthy Choices, Conscious Consumption: A Review on Food Literacy

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the evolving concept of food literacy as a multidimensional competence that influences individuals' ability to make informed, healthy, and sustainable dietary choices. The research aims to synthesize existing definitions, frameworks, and national applications of food literacy, with a particular focus on its relevance to public health, sustainability, and education. Using document analysis as a qualitative method, twenty reviewed articles were systematically examined through a structured literature table. The findings reveal that food literacy encompasses not only nutritional knowledge but also critical thinking, behavioral intention, and ecological awareness. It is closely linked to sustainable eating behaviors, including food budgeting, label reading, and waste reduction. National initiatives such as the Türkiye Food Literacy Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2028) and school-based programs demonstrate growing institutional support for food literacy education. The study concludes that food literacy serves as a foundational tool for promoting conscious consumption and shaping resilient food systems. It recommends the development of unified theoretical models and inclusive educational strategies that integrate functional, interactive, and critical domains of food literacy across diverse populations and age groups.

Keywords: Food Literacy, Sustainable Eating, Nutrition Education, Public Health, Conscious Consumption

Does Gastronomy Tourism Course Motivate Students to Attend Gastronomy Tourism Events? An Investigation into Students of Istanbul Arel University

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ABSTRACT

As it is mentioned in the AIDA model of marketing, in order for people to demand and buy something, they must first have knowledge about that product. Students are informed about food and culture of various destinations in gastronomy tourism classes. In other words, the “A” of the AIDA is actualized during the classes. It is observed that gastronomy tourism courses (GTC) increase students’ interest in the destinations underlined in the classes. This study aims to prove whether the observation is true or false. To investigate this hypothesis, a questionnaire examines how GTC affects the level of willingness to participate created in the students. The data was obtained from 53 students and the findings are given with descriptive analyses and Mann Whitney U Test. The findings show that there is no significant difference in willingness to attend gastronomy tourism events between the students that have taken GTC and haven’t taken the course ($p>0,05$). On the other hand, it should be expressed that the data in this study was collected during the summer school; thus the sample size is arguable.

Keywords: Gastronomy Tourism, Motivation to Attend Gastronomy Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism Participation.

Digitalization in the Hospitality Industry in Romania. A Qualitative Longitudinal Study on Managers' Views

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the views of managers in the Romanian hospitality sector on digitalisation by drawing on two sets of interviews carried out in 2021 (28 participants) and 2024 (24 participants). The study highlights four main areas related to digitalisation: the meaning attached to the term “digitalisation”, the reflection of digitalisation in activities, the attitudes of employees and the barriers to a wider adoption of digitalisation. The findings show a gradual shift from understanding “digitalisation” in abstract terms such as “future” or “technology” to a dominant emphasis on tangible benefits, associating it with “efficiency”. Similarly, while in 2021 the most salient activities impacted by digitalisation were various and dissipated, in 2024 they consolidated - most respondents specify reservations, online promotion and management systems. Perceptions on employees’ attitudes also evolved from initial receptiveness to a more differentiated view, where openness exists alongside hesitation and the need for training. Lastly, the number of barriers cited increased, with the financial resources remaining top of mind and being supplemented by training time and implementation time. Noteworthy, while in 2021 the need for human interaction was still perceived high, in 2024, this challenge had almost vanished from the area of concerns. Thus, digitalisation emerges as an ongoing process - moving from anticipation toward practical outcomes and probably to strategic integration in the future.

Keywords: Digitalisation, Hospitality Industry, Managerial Insights, Technology Acceptance, Barriers to Digitalisation

Attitudes Of Gastronomy and Cookery Program Students Towards Artificial Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence has the potential to shape the future in many fields, including gastronomy. This study aimed to determine the attitudes of gastronomy and cookery program students, who will be the future professionals of the food and beverage industry, towards artificial intelligence. Quantitative methods were used in this study, which was conducted with 175 gastronomy and cookery program students studying at various universities in Turkey. The analyses revealed that, in terms of demographic characteristics, male students had a more positive attitude towards artificial intelligence than female students, while female students had a more negative perspective. Income level was found to influence attitudes, with students in the 20,001-30,000 TL income group scoring lower on both positive and negative attitude scales compared to other groups. Conversely, variables such as age, educational status (associate's degree-bachelor's degree), and university type (public-foundation) were not found to create a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward artificial intelligence. The study presents important findings regarding perceptions of artificial intelligence in creativity-focused fields such as gastronomy and culinary arts and is expected to contribute to future educational programs and sectoral integration efforts.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Food and Beverage Sector, Gastronomy, Cookery

Storytelling in the Marketing of Local Cuisine: An Examination on the Sustainability of Cultural Heritage

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ABSTRACT

Local dishes stand out as intangible cultural heritage preserved and transmitted from generation to generation, reflecting the identity, memory, and lifestyles of a society. With the impact of globalization, changing lifestyles threaten food heritage and lead to the loss of values. The study aims to reveal the functionality and potential of local food narratives in terms of cultural identity, social solidarity, economic development, and environmental sustainability. This study examines academic research published in international journals between 2018 and 2025 on the storytelling of local cuisine. A review of the literature indicates that story-based studies on marketing, destinations, and products emphasize inimitable aspects, thereby providing an advantage and positioning storytelling as an innovative method. Accordingly, storytelling stimulates consumers' emotions, shaping their perceptions, desires, and attitudes, and influencing purchasing behavior. In addition, local food narratives support the sustainability of cultural heritage, strengthen destination identity, enhance awareness of the destination, and facilitate the establishment of emotional bonds with visitors. As a result of the literature review, it has been concluded that local food narratives can be sustained through proper planning and appropriate policies. This study is expected to contribute to the literature on the sustainability of local cuisine by utilizing storytelling. In addition, recommendations have been made to the sector and researchers to enhance the sustainability of local food narratives. The consideration of local food narratives within the dimensions of social, economic, and environmental sustainability underscores the study's original value.

Keywords: Local Cuisine, Storytelling, Cultural Heritage, Sustainable Tourism

The Green Restaurant Effect: Reducing Carbon Footprint and Enhancing Gastronomy Tourism

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of green restaurant approaches in reducing carbon footprints and their impact on gastronomy tourism. The environmental pressures created by climate change on a global scale are directing the food and beverage sector toward sustainability-oriented practices. Processes such as menu design, supply chain management, energy utilization, and waste governance constitute significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Within this framework, green restaurants mitigate environmental impacts and raise consumer awareness by local and seasonal products, the adoption of energy-efficient equipment, the recovery of waste, and the inclusion of carbon footprint information on menus. The findings indicate that green restaurant practices not only contribute to the reduction of operational expenditures but also enhance the destination's brand equity and strengthen the foundations of sustainable gastronomy tourism. Furthermore, the environmentally informed preferences of tourists have facilitated the proliferation of carbon-labelled menus, thereby affording enterprises a distinct competitive advantage. In conclusion, green restaurant approaches function as strategic drivers in aligning gastronomy tourism with the principles of environmental sustainability and play a pivotal role in the sector's long-term advancement.

Keywords: Carbon Footprint, Green Restaurant, Gastrotourism, Sustainability

Culture or Compensation? How Generation Z Evaluates Organizational Culture Types Against Financial Incentives in Career Choice

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Generation Z individuals evaluate organizational culture types, based on the Competing Values Framework, against high financial compensation when making career choices. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional design, 584 Romanian young adults aged 18–26 completed scenario-based choice experiments comparing companies offering high salaries with companies characterized by Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, or Market cultures. Binary logistic regression models tested how culture preferences, along with demographic factors, predicted employer choice. Results show that Clan culture preferences most consistently predict choosing culturally defined employers over high-salary alternatives, with odds ratios ranging from 1.06 to 1.15 across scenarios emphasizing mentoring relationships, human resource development, and concern for people. Hierarchical culture preferences significantly influenced choices across all culture types, suggesting Generation Z seeks integration of supportive environments with clear organizational structures rather than viewing them as competing values. Employment status emerged as a critical moderator, with employed respondents showing 2.07–2.47 times higher odds of prioritizing cultural attributes, while gender and income showed selective effects on specific culture dimensions. The findings reveal that Generation Z makes sophisticated, context-dependent trade-offs between culture and compensation, challenging simplistic narratives about this cohort's career priorities and providing practical guidance for organizational talent attraction strategies.

Keywords: Organizational Culture Preferences, Career Choice, Generation Z, Competing Values Framework, Compensation Trade-Offs

Universities as Drivers of the Green Transition: Circular Economy and Sustainable Innovation in Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The findings highlight the pivotal role of higher education institutions as catalysts for innovation in climate action and regional sustainability transitions. At the same time, advancing the circular economy (CE) within the green transition remains complex, constrained by financial, technological, and systemic barriers. In tourism, overcoming these challenges requires a fundamental shift from short-term profit orientation toward long-term sustainability objectives. Evidence suggests that businesses adopting CE principles benefit not only from enhanced competitiveness but also from improved profitability, underlining the strategic value of sustainability practices. Ultimately, reducing waste, reusing resources, and promoting recycling are central to building resilient systems that support regeneration and balance. Embedding CE principles in tourism offers pathways toward a sustainable future where environmental stewardship, economic growth, and social equity are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The case of USV's Innovation Laboratory for Climate Changes demonstrates how universities can integrate technical skills with environmental ethics, equipping future leaders to address pressing climate challenges. This model, anchored in regional realities, provides a replicable framework for innovation-driven climate education.

Key words: Climate Action, Circular Economy, Green Transition, Higher Education, Innovation-Driven

Vertical Farming as a Driver for Gastronomy Tourism: Creating Unique Culinary Experiences in Urban Destinations

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on vertical urban farms, which play a significant role in providing ecosystem services within many cities. Considering climate change, environmental degradation, and the loss of agricultural lands, vertical farms are being considered as a safe alternative to conventional agriculture. This review aims to explore the potential of vertical farming and rooftop gardens as catalysts or drivers for Gastronomy Tourism and creating unique culinary experiences. It seeks to highlight the opportunities and challenges for Turkey to implement this system as a sustainable and new tool to create unique culinary experiences. The study shows that Turkey has various opportunities of using the urban vertical farming system as a driver for gastronomy tourism and enhances the culinary experience through creating multi-functional and attractive areas for gastronomy events and festivals, establishing rooftop gardens in hotels and restaurants, and in gastronomy education institutions. The article ends with some important theoretical and practical implications for policymakers, food and beverages businesses and tourism operators to integrate vertical farms in multifunctional sites with a focus on the gastronomic and recreational sector.

Keywords: Vertical Farming, Rooftop Farms, Gastronomy Tourism, Culinary Tourist Experience

Salt Routes And Their Role in Gastronomic Tourism: Intersections of History and Culture

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ABSTRACT

Salt, which has shaped civilizations and economies throughout history, serves as a central theme in gastronomic tourism by linking geographical, cultural, and historical factors along traditional trade routes; this review article systematically explores the origins, development, and contemporary significance of global as well as Turkish salt routes, focusing on their role in culinary heritage and tourism branding. The methods for this study included an extensive literature review and comparative analysis of historical records, geographic data, and current tourism practices related to salt production and consumption sites, highlighting the integration of salt-based experiences within heritage destinations and the expansion of experiential travel trends. Key findings demonstrate that salt routes continue to facilitate regional development, cultural transmission, and sustainability in tourism through authentic visitor engagement, economic stimulation, and the protection of intangible heritage, while challenges such as over-commercialization and environmental pressures warrant the implementation of comprehensive management strategies. The article concludes that a collaborative approach involving local stakeholders, educational programming, and sustainable policy initiatives is essential for maximizing the tourism, cultural, and economic value of salt routes, thus securing their ongoing relevance within the evolving landscape of gastronomic tourism.

Keywords: Salt Routes, Gastronomic Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Sustainable Tourism, Regional Development

Determining the Relationship Between Tourist Typologies and Tourist Fatigue Levels

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this study is to examine the relationship between tourist typologies and tourist fatigue levels among visitors staying at five-star hotels. The research population consists of Russian and German tourists accommodated in five-star hotels in Alanya, Antalya, licensed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Convenience and stratified sampling methods were employed. Data were collected from 10 hotels in Alanya that agreed to participate, and front office staff administered questionnaires to international tourists during their stay. A total of 413 valid surveys were included in the analysis. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with SmartPLS 4 software. The findings revealed significant relationships between destination-oriented tourist type and tourist fatigue, between travel service-oriented tourist type and tourist fatigue, and between social interaction-oriented tourist type and tourist fatigue. The results indicate that identifying the potential effects of fatigue across different tourist typologies provides valuable insights for tourism businesses. By highlighting the links between travel service and social interaction tourist types with fatigue, the study contributes to the development of supportive strategies for hotel employees to reduce fatigue and enhance the well-being of guests.

Keywords: Tourist Typologies, Tourist Fatigue, Alanya

Food Waste Management for Sustainable Gastronomy Tourism: The Case of Kemer, Antalya

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is one of the major industries involved in mass food production, generating significant amounts of food waste due to its high guest density. Food waste generated in hotels, resorts, and open buffet restaurants results in both economic losses and significant environmental sustainability issues. This study aims to determine the extent of food waste in the tourism industry. A five-star hotel with a sustainability certificate was selected as an example for the study, and the food waste management implemented in the kitchen, service, and recycling areas was observed on-site. The implementation of methods such as waste separation systems, portion control mechanisms, digital food tracking software, donation chains, staff training, and guest awareness was analyzed. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted as part of the research, and a total of 20 personnel involved in the process were interviewed. The results indicate that the hotel does not separate food waste, and due to the lack of mandatory regulations on this issue, these practices are not being observed. Food waste management in the tourism industry should be addressed with a holistic approach to ensure not only environmental but also social and economic sustainability. In areas with high waste production, such as gastronomic tourism, waste management strategies should be developed specifically for food waste, and environmentally responsible production and consumption behaviors should be encouraged through mandatory regulations and managed in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 12).

Keywords: Food Waste, Sustainability, Tourism Industry, Waste Management, Circular Waste Management.

Bibliometric Insights into New Trends in Tourism Research: Evidence from the Web of Science

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of publications on tourism and emerging trends in the Web of Science database. The aim is to identify the status of tourism and emerging trends research within these publications and to offer a future perspective for literature. The research is exploratory. 210 studies in the WOS database were systematically coded and examined for tourism and emerging trends. The identified studies were analyzed for authors, common keywords, years, index types, subject headings, WOS categories, document types, and co-citations using the VOSviewer program. The research findings reveal that tourism and emerging trends have been a prominent topic in literature for years and predict that interest in these topics will increase in the future. According to the research findings, it can be said that the most prominent type of study in the field of tourism and emerging trends is the article, and the focus of these studies is generally on gaining experience. Other findings of the study include the existence of potential research gaps for authors interested in research on tourism and emerging trends.

Keywords: Tourism, New Trends in Tourism, Bibliometric Analysis, Web of Science

Views and Experiences of Romanian Business Administration Students with Online Learning towards the End of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Although the Covid-19 pandemic has ended and things have returned to normal, a series of its effects remain present. Education was one of the fields strongly affected by the restrictions imposed by authorities and for two years, online education became the new normal. This paper contributes to the scientific literature regarding the experience of online teaching activities in higher education and is based on research conducted sequentially: first, at the time of lifting restrictions and returning to face-to-face education, and later, after 12 months of physical presence in classes. Under these conditions, the 313 valid responses provide a dual perspective of the teaching experience both online and face-to-face. The main results indicate a bidirectional relationship between the students' satisfaction with online education and their preference for this format. At the same time, the key factors that contribute to satisfaction with online education are institutional support and prompt feedback. Additionally, individual technical skills, course design, and teacher preparation play a significant role. The present results highlight the need for better institutional preparation, adequate curriculum design, and providing technical support.

Keywords: Online Learning, Distance Learning, Undergraduate Students, Student Satisfaction, Teaching Methods, COVID-19

Fermented Products and Functional Foods: New Trends in Bakery and Their Effects on Health

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ABSTRACT

Fermented products and functional foods are becoming increasingly important both in traditional dietary habits and in modern health-focused food production. The use of natural fermentation techniques and functional flours in the bakery sector not only enhances the sensory quality of products but also their nutritional value and biological benefits. One of the most widely used fermentation methods from past to present is the use of sourdough in the fermentation of products. Sourdough fermentation, in particular gives breads probiotic properties and increases their digestibility. Functional flours such as buckwheat, quinoa, and einkorn wheat are considered functional foods due to their rich nutritional content. The cholesterol-lowering, antihypertensive, anticarcinogenic, and bone health-supporting effects of fermented products are scientifically supported. Therefore, the production and consumption of fermented products and functional foods will increase in the future, and Turkey has significant development potential in this area. Deepening scientific research and raising producer and consumer awareness will contribute to the development of sustainable and healthy food systems.

Keywords: Fermented Products, Functional Foods, Sourdough, Functional Flours, Healthy Nutrition

The Effect of Electronic Reviews (EWOM) of Green Hotels on Hotel Choices

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ABSTRACT

The serious environmental consequences of global warming and climate change have necessitated increased environmental awareness in all societies in recent years. This has also been reflected in individual consumption behaviors. Tourists who are more sensitive and conscious of nature may tend to prefer environmentally friendly hotels. In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the role of environmental awareness in the impact of green (eco-friendly) hotel reviews on electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) consumers. A 2 x 2 between-subjects mixed factorial experimental design was applied to 216 participants. It revealed that participants were willing to pay more to stay in an green hotel than in a non-eco-friendly hotel. Another important finding is that participants with higher environmental awareness prefer to stay in green hotels. The study is awaited to contribute to the literature in the fields of electronic word-of-mouth marketing (eWOM), green marketing, sustainable tourism, and accommodation services.

Keywords: E-Wom, Sustainable Marketing, Green Hotel, Experimental Design

The 4Ps of Ethnic Culture on the Plate

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the menu, social media, and website content of fine dining ethnic restaurants and conduct a comparative analysis based on the 4P marketing mix. The study, which included ethnic fine dining restaurants serving Asian cuisine in Istanbul, employed a qualitative research method and a multiple case study design. The selection of Asian fine dining restaurants, one of the ethnic restaurants, was based on the global popularity of ethnic Asian restaurants and the predominant presence of such restaurants in Istanbul's Michelin guide. Data for the study were collected between November 3 and 12, 2024, through secondary data sources, including restaurant menus, websites, and social media accounts. The obtained data were coded according to themes derived from the 4P marketing mix elements and subjected to content analysis using the MAXQDA program. The research reveals both similarities and differences in restaurant marketing strategies. It was concluded that restaurants face several limitations regarding their product, promotion, place, and price mixes. The research suggests that fine dining ethnic restaurants should balance diversity with originality in their menus, develop Asian-Turkish fusion with local ingredients, utilize creative naming and experience-based presentations, and enhance their websites while maintaining a strong social media presence. These recommendations also include emphasizing ethnic elements in their décor, openly sharing information about accessibility and valet service, and offering options that cater to different budgets while maintaining a balanced price–value ratio.

Keywords: Ethnic Restaurant, Fine Dining Restaurant, Marketing Strategy, Asian Cuisine

Perceptions of Sustainability in Michelin Green Star Restaurants: A Qualitative Analysis of Instagram Posts

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the sustainability strategies of Michelin Green Star restaurants in Türkiye through their social media content. In the context of gastronomy, sustainability encompasses not only the reduction of environmental impacts but also the promotion of social responsibility, preservation of cultural heritage, and integration with digital communication strategies. Accordingly, the significance of this research lies in its contribution to both academic literature and industry practices by revealing how sustainable gastronomy is represented on digital platforms. A qualitative content analysis method was employed in the study. Instagram posts shared by ten Michelin Green Star-certified restaurants operating in Türkiye between December 6, 2024, and September 1, 2025, were examined. Posts containing sustainability-related themes—such as local sourcing, seasonality, organic agriculture, and community engagement—were identified and analyzed using thematic coding. The findings indicate that these restaurants primarily construct their sustainability narratives around the use of local and seasonal ingredients. However, certain themes, such as energy efficiency and zero-waste practices, were found to be underrepresented in their digital content. This suggests that sustainability communication in the sector is still in the process of institutionalization and remains an area open to development.

Keywords: Sustainable Gastronomy, Michelin Green Star Restaurant, Digital Communication, Instagram

A Bibliometric Analysis of Research on Gastronomic Experience

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to systematically examine the academic literature on gastronomic experience to reveal current trends, the level of academic productivity, and international collaboration networks in the field. The study employed a bibliometric analysis method, and the dataset consisted of 84 articles published between 2002 and 2025 in the Web of Science (WOS) database. The collected data were analyzed using BibExcel and VOSviewer software; seven key parameters were evaluated, including publication year, authors, keywords, countries, citation reports, and journal distribution. The findings indicate that studies on gastronomic experiences have increased since 2013, with a notable acceleration during the 2022–2024 period. According to the Web of Science categories, most publications are concentrated in the field of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism. In terms of journals, the *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science* hosts the highest number of publications, while the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* has the highest h-index value. In country-based evaluations, Spain stands out in terms of both publication and citation counts, whereas Turkey, Portugal, and the People’s Republic of China hold significant positions in the collaboration network. Keyword analyses revealed that the concepts of “gastronomic experience” and “gastronomy” occupy a central position in the literature and are strongly associated with themes such as tourist behavior, satisfaction, loyalty, and destination management. In conclusion, research on gastronomic experiences demonstrates a multidisciplinary structure, with academic collaboration networks strengthening in recent years, and a distinct group of authors, particularly centered in Spain, has emerged.

Keywords: Gastronomy, Gastronomic Experience, VOSviewer, Bibliometric Analysis, Web of Science

The Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resources Processes[†]

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of artificial intelligence integration in human resources processes, analyzing perceptions, advantages, risks, and challenges associated with these technologies. Using a quantitative questionnaire-based study, the research presents the perspectives of a diverse sample, focusing on both younger generations at the start of their careers and experienced professionals. The findings indicate a high level of familiarity with emerging technologies and a generally positive attitude toward AI use in recruitment, onboarding, and automation, provided that ethical standards and human oversight are maintained. However, significant concerns are raised regarding algorithmic transparency, data protection, and potential discrimination risks. The study confirms the hypothesis that trust in AI is closely related to the level of regulation and system explainability, and it proposes strategic directions for responsible and balanced implementation of artificial intelligence in human resources.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Human Resources, Recruitment, Ethics, Automation

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A Bayesian Approach to Employee Turnover Dynamics in Different Food & Beverage Segments

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the high staff turnover rate in luxury hotel Food and Beverage (F&B) departments. The study's main aim is to compare the demographic and occupational profiles of employees leaving utilitarian “Classic F&B” (CFB) and hedonic, experience-focused “Special Area F&B” (SFB) departments within the same hotel group. A quantitative methodology was employed to analyse human resource data from 261 F&B employees who left a luxury hotel group, using descriptive statistics and Bayesian Network (BN) modelling. Key findings revealed significant differences in the profiles of the two groups: those leaving SFB tended to be younger (21–30 years old), have less seniority (one to three years), and be female, while those leaving CFB tended to be older (31–40 years old) and have more seniority. The BN model revealed that structural factors, such as employment type (permanent/seasonal), have a greater influence on turnover profiles than demographic variables. Consequently, it was concluded that these two F&B models generate distinct career cycles, prompting the recommendation that hotel management abandon “one-size-fits-all” HR policies for F&B departments, instead developing recruitment, retention, and career management strategies tailored to each area.

Keywords: Hotel Restaurant Staff Turnover, Classical and Special F&B, Bayesian Network, Conditional Probability

Reconstruction of Culinary Identity in Gastronomy Guiding a Review on Authenticity, Performance, and Cultural Meaning

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the reconstruction of culinary identity within the context of gastronomic guidance through the dimensions of authenticity, performance, and cultural meaning, drawing on existing literature. Culinary identity plays a central role in gastronomic tourism, serving as a medium that reflects the geographical, historical, and cultural elements of a region. Gastronomic tourism, while supporting tourists' pursuit of authentic experiences, also holds the potential to preserve the cultural heritage of destinations and provide a competitive advantage. Tourist guides, by assuming roles as information providers, cultural mediators, and performers, facilitate tourists' emotional connection with the destination and the reconstruction of culinary identity. However, globalization and evolving tourism demands have led to a paradoxical structure of authenticity, making it increasingly difficult to preserve the originality of local cuisines. Based on a review of the literature, this study integrates the concepts of authenticity, performance, and cultural representation to reveal the dynamic nature of culinary identity and to emphasize the role of guides in this process. By addressing the potential of gastronomic tourism to sustain cultural heritage within a theoretical framework, the study also suggests destination-specific field research for future studies.

Keywords: Culinary Identity, Authenticity, Performance, Cultural Representation, Tourist Guiding

The Interactive Role of Managerial Title and Overall Satisfaction on the Job Satisfaction of Hotel Kitchen Staff

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the effect of the managerial title (executive chef, section chief, assistant chef, lower-level personnel) on the job satisfaction levels of 148 kitchen staff working in the hotel management and how this effect changes according to the general satisfaction level were examined. The PROCESS macro-Model 1 developed by Hayes (2022) was used in the analyses and the moderator role of the general satisfaction (W) variable on the relationship between manager title (X) and job satisfaction (Y) was tested. The findings indicate that the interactive effect of overall satisfaction is significant only at certain title levels.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Hotel, Kitchen, Staff, Managerial Title

Development of a Cognitive Dissonance Scale for University Students: Preliminary Findings from a Pilot Study

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ABSTRACT

This pilot study presents the initial development process of a theoretically grounded instrument designed to assess cognitive dissonance among university students. An initial pool of 34 items was created based on the literature and reviewed by six experts and three students for content validity, resulting in a 24-item version. The scale was administered to 77 undergraduate students from a public university in Türkiye. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) revealed a two-factor structure: “Expectation–Reality Dissonance” and “Educational Identity Dissonance.” Although the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) showed an acceptable χ^2/df ratio, most other fit indices (e.g., GFI = .624, RMSEA = .144) did not meet conventional thresholds, likely due to the limited sample size. These findings suggest preliminary construct validity but underscore the necessity for further testing with larger and more diverse populations. The scale, at this stage, should be considered a promising yet tentative tool requiring further refinement.

Keywords: Cognitive Dissonance, Scale Development, Educational Psychology, CFA, Pilot Study

AI-Driven Transformation in the Hospitality Industry: A Comparative Case Study of Marriott RENAI and Hilton Connie

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ABSTRACT

In order to gain competitive advantage in a highly service sector, hotel businesses constantly implement current, rapidly developing innovations. Thus artificial intelligence has gained extensive acceptance particularly in the corporate hotels. This is based on its proficiencies in rapid data analysis, personalized recommendations, and natural language processing. This study aims to evaluate the use of RENAI, Marriott International's artificial intelligence-based application, and Connie, the robot created by Hilton Worldwide. A comparative case study analysis was applied to examine similarities and differences in terms of guests, operational efficiency, image and competitive advantage. This analysis revealed that both technologies enhance the guest experience with up-to-date and rich content, offer seamless, fast and personalized service, and provide instant information. However, these technologies differ in terms of some technical and service characteristics; RENAI being an application, while Connie being a robot. Further, RENAI combines humans and databases to enable tourists to discover many things through original recommendations, while Connie provides guidance based on information obtained from databases. While Hilton views this technology from a marketing and experience perspective, Marriott International emphasizes it as an important foundation of its digital transformation. This study therefore contributes to the body of knowledge on AI-driven transformation in the hospitality industry, thus enabling hotel managers to make informed choices of the suitable AI application.

Key words: Hotel Operations, Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, Technology, Hotel Brands

The Elite-Centric Paradox: A Nietzschean Critique of Sustainable Tourism Through the Lens of the Three Metamorphoses

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ABSTRACT

Despite the majority of studies related to sustainability, no study has investigated this paradoxical and symbiotic relationship from the philosophical approach. In particular, as a critical subset of this global discourse, studies about sustainable tourism have been piled up despite numerous attempts to prevent unsustainable human and sector activities. Some of these actions taken to minimize the impact of touristic affairs can be named as using technology and economic approaches to provide solutions for overtourism and ensuring that the accommodation industry adopts the sustainability principles. The fundamental goal of this research paper is to shed light on the ongoing failure of sustainable tourism, which is not just due to managerial or ideological factors or a lack of advanced knowledge or academically conducted research. Hence, this study examined the paradox of sustainability objectives that facilitated the enhancement of profitability for elite groups while simultaneously deteriorating and depleting finite natural resources.

Keywords: Sustainability, Power Dynamics, Elitism, Neoliberalism, Thus Spoken Zarathustra

Invisible Emissions: The Digital Carbon Footprint of Tourism Businesses and the Power of the Green Economy

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the concept of the digital carbon footprint within the tourism industry and explores its relationship with the approach of green economy. Today, tourism businesses heavily rely on digital operations such as online reservations, digital advertising, social media campaigns, and cloud-based services. These activities, while largely invisible, generate significant energy consumption and consequently contribute to carbon emissions. Using emission coefficients from the literature, the study quantifies the environmental impact of digital activities through illustrative calculations and discusses the role of the green economy in mitigating these effects and strengthening sustainability perceptions in tourism. The findings indicate that the digital carbon footprint constitutes a considerable and often overlooked dimension of tourism's overall environmental impact. When effectively managed, it contributes not only to environmental sustainability but also provides businesses with a competitive advantage through alignment with green economy principles. The study's originality lies in being among the first to quantitatively calculate the carbon footprint of digital operations in tourism enterprises and to integrate these findings into the framework of the green economy.

Keywords: Digital Carbon Footprint; Green Economy; Sustainable Tourism; Environmental Impact; Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The Role of Ecological Art in Creating Sustainability Awareness in Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Ecological art aims to bring together art and ecology, identify environmental problems, and develop solutions, conveying a message about sustainability through metaphors. The purpose of this research is to determine whether ecological art activities can contribute to sustainability in tourism. A mixed design was employed within the scope of the research. Participants were faculty members from the Faculty of Tourism, selected through a convenience sampling technique. A survey was conducted in the first step, and a semi-structured interview was conducted in the second. SPSS and MAXQDA Qualitative Data Analysis were used in the research. Analyses included reliability testing, metaphor analysis, semiotic analysis, and general content analysis. Social Learning Theory was utilized in the interpretation of the research findings. The research concluded that ecological art plays a predominantly positive role in raising sustainability awareness in tourism.

Keywords: Ecological Art, Sustainability Awareness, Tourism, Social Learning Theory, Content Analysis

Esports Competitions Shaping Tourist Flows: Türkiye's Institutional Trajectory

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ABSTRACT

Esports, while lacking a fully established theoretical and practical foundation, remains an intriguing research subject explored from diverse perspectives due to its rapid development. From a tourism perspective, considering that e-sports events can be regarded as tourism products and thus as attractive components of a destination, the primary aim of this research is to present and elaborate on Türkiye's institutional roadmap for e-sports in a comprehensive manner. In this context, the Türkiye E-sports Federation's 2025 Strategic Plan has been subjected to content analysis through LiGRE, a software used for data analysis. As a result of the data-driven coding process, four themes were identified -education, performance, tourism, and institutionalization- which collectively outline the main contours of the institutional e-sports orientation developed at the national level. Consequently, ensuring national legitimacy; achieving standardisation and professionalism by integrating digitalisation into all processes and adhering to international benchmarks; maintaining this progress through educational opportunities strengthened and disseminated with an inclusive approach supported by academic and international collaborations; leveraging the competitiveness thus gained in the branding process; and highlighting the potential of e-sports events as tourism products that enable the field to transcend its own boundaries, stand out as the key findings of the study.

Keywords: Esports, Esports Tourism, Destination Management, Strategic Planning, Türkiye Esports Federation

The Role of the Accommodation Tax in Enhancing Local Fiscal Capacity: A Localization Projection for Sakarya

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the potential of the Turkish accommodation tax—introduced by Law No. 7194 and implemented in 2023 at a 2% rate on lodging services—to enhance local fiscal capacity. While Turkey records the tax as central government revenue under a unified collection system, comparable levies in Europe are typically earmarked to municipal budgets to finance environmental and infrastructure burdens. We propose a semi-decentralized “revenue-sharing” scheme: central collection is retained, but a fixed share (e.g., 50%) of proceeds is allocated to local governments via a rules-based formula reflecting population, lodging capacity, service costs, and environmental load. Our empirical framework develops a projection model for Sakarya and its 16 districts. Despite the tax’s modest aggregate weight in the budget (on the order of tenths of a percent in recent years), simulations indicate it could generate a material, seasonally stabilizing funding stream in tourism-intensive districts, alleviating peak-season service pressures. The model also creates governance incentives for municipalities to register tourists/nights and curb informality. Findings suggest that complementing Turkey’s fiscally oriented design with a transparent, criteria-driven intergovernmental allocation could improve service quality, infrastructure sustainability, and place-based development outcomes. Evidence from Sakarya provides a scalable policy blueprint for nationwide implementation.

Keywords: Fiscal Decentralization, Accommodation Tax, Local Fiscal Capacity, Revenue Sharing, Regional Development