

Factors Determining Culinary Tourism Visits: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract. This article conducts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to identify key factors determining visit and revisit intentions in culinary tourism. Guided by PRISMA 2020, Scopus is used to select Q1 journal articles (2020–2025) that examine culinary/gastronomy tourism, ambidextrous leadership (AL), entrepreneurial orientation (EO), digital promotion, and virtual reality/virtual tours (VR/VT). Ten eligible studies are synthesized into three clusters: (1) AL and EO as internal strategic capabilities, (2) VR/VT and digital promotion as experiential and technological drivers, and (3) culinary experiences and local wisdom as core cultural assets. The review presents a comprehensive framework incorporating managerial capabilities and digital experiences.

Keywords: Ambidextrous Leadership; Digital Promotion; Entrepreneurial Orientation; Gastronomy Tourism; Local Wisdom.

Abstrak. Artikel ini menerapkan metode Systematic Literature Review (SLR) untuk memetakan faktor-faktor utama yang memengaruhi niat berkunjung dan niat berkunjung kembali dalam konteks pariwisata kuliner. Mengacu pada pedoman PRISMA 2020, penelusuran dilakukan melalui basis data Scopus dengan penyaringan artikel jurnal bereputasi Q1 terbitan 2020–2025 yang membahas pariwisata kuliner/gastronomi, ambidextrous leadership (AL), entrepreneurial orientation (EO), promosi digital, serta virtual reality/virtual tour (VR/VT). Sebanyak sepuluh artikel yang lolos kriteria seleksi kemudian dianalisis dan dikelompokkan ke dalam tiga klaster utama, yaitu: (1) AL dan EO sebagai kapabilitas strategis internal, (2) VR/VT dan promosi digital sebagai penggerak pengalaman dan inovasi teknologi, serta (3) pengalaman kuliner dan kearifan lokal sebagai aset budaya sentral destinasi. Berdasarkan sintesis tersebut, kajian ini mengajukan sebuah kerangka konseptual terpadu yang menegaskan bahwa kapabilitas manajerial, pengalaman digital, dan penyajian kuliner autentik secara sinergis membentuk keberlanjutan kunjungan pada destinasi pariwisata kuliner.

Kata kunci: Kearifan Lokal; Kepemimpinan Ambidextrous; Orientasi Kewirausahaan; Pariwisata Gastronomi; Promosi Digital.

Article Info:

Received: December 27, 2025

Accepted: January 14, 2026

Available online: January 16, 2026

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30588/jmp.v15i1.2543>

BACKGROUND

Although data shows positive tourism sector performance, including growth in the first half of 2025 (Sofiana et al., 2022), increasingly intense market competition requires businesses to adopt adaptive and innovative business approaches (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021). Long-term success is not only measured by the increase in the number of temporary visits, but also by the destination's ability to implement the principles of sustainable tourism, which demands a balance between economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects (Maraña et al., 2024). The culinary industry, particularly those managed by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), operates in a business environment characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and volatility (VUCA). This situation demands a strategic framework that balances current efficiency demands with future innovation needs.

However, most culinary tourism studies still focus on the consumer experience dimension and do not integrate organizational and leadership factors such as ambidextrous leadership and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (Zhu et al., 2024), as well as promotional transformation through digital marketing and virtual reality/virtual tours (Suder et al., 2026). Not many SLRs have explicitly mapped how ambidextrous leadership and EO drive gastronomic innovation, how digital and VR promotions shape visitation intentions, and how all these elements interact with local wisdom within a framework of determinants of sustainable culinary tourism visits (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).

This research specifically seeks to fill the academic gap by integrating four crucial factors that are rarely studied synergistically in the context of culinary tourism visits, namely: Ambidextrous Leadership, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Digital Promotion, Culinary tour (Food/Gastronomic Tourism) and Integration of Local Wisdom. Ambidextrous Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation represent strategic internal managerial dimensions (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021). Meanwhile, Digital Promotion, Culinary tour and Local Wisdom Integration represent the operational dimensions and marketing assets (Juniarta & Suta, 2025). The majority Culinary tourism studies still focus on the consumer experience dimension and do not integrate organizational and leadership factors such as ambidextrous leadership and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (Zhu et al., 2024) and promotional transformation through digital marketing and virtual reality/virtual tours. Not many SLRs have explicitly mapped how ambidextrous leadership and EO drive gastronomic innovation, how digital promotions and VR shape visitation intentions (Suder et al., 2026) and how all these elements interact with local wisdom within a framework of determining factors for sustainable culinary tourism visits (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).to maximize tourist visit intentions.

The main objective of this article is to synthesize relevant and recent scientific literature (2020–2025) to develop a conceptual model that outlines the causal and synergistic relationships between Ambidextrous Leadership, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Digital Promotion, culinary tour and Integration of Local Wisdom. This systematic re-

view uses the 2020 PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, a framework designed to improve the transparency and completeness of literature review reporting (Kieanwatana & Vongvit, 2024). The structure of this report will follow a strict scientific framework, starting from a theoretical review, PRISMA methodology, synthesis of results, in-depth discussion, to conclusions, limitations, and future research directions.

Despite the growing body of work on culinary tourism, the majority of studies still concentrate on the consumer experience dimension and pay limited attention to organizational and leadership factors such as ambidextrous leadership and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), as well as the transformation of promotion through digital marketing and virtual reality/virtual tours (VR/VT) (Zhu et al., 2024; Suder et al., 2026). Only a small number of SLRs have systematically examined how ambidextrous leadership and EO foster gastronomic innovation, how digital and VR-based promotions shape visitation intentions, and how these elements jointly interact with local wisdom within a comprehensive framework of determinants of sustainable culinary tourism visits (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).

Although recent data indicate positive performance in the tourism sector, including growth in the first half of 2025 (Sofiana et al., 2022), intensifying competition requires businesses to adopt more adaptive and innovative strategies (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021). Long-term success is increasingly judged not only by rising visitor numbers but also by destinations' ability to apply sustainable tourism principles that balance economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions (Maraña et al., 2024). Within this context, the culinary industry especially MSMEs operates in a VUCA environment, making it necessary to develop strategic frameworks that reconcile current efficiency requirements with future-oriented innovation (Maraña et al., 2024).

Against this backdrop, the present research aims to address the identified academic gap by integrating four key factors that are rarely examined synergistically in culinary tourism visits: Ambidextrous Leadership, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Digital Promotion, Culinary Tour (Food/Gastronomic Tourism), and the Integration of Local Wisdom. Ambidextrous Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation are conceptualized as strategic internal managerial dimensions (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021), whereas Digital Promotion, Culinary Tour, and Local Wisdom Integration represent operational and marketing dimensions that shape how destinations and MSMEs position their offerings (Juniarta & Suta, 2025). As highlighted earlier, most culinary tourism studies continue to emphasise consumer experience without adequately incorporating AL, EO, and the digital/VR transformation of promotion, and few SLRs explicitly map how these elements jointly influence gastronomic innovation, visitation intentions, and their interaction with local wisdom within a sustainable culinary tourism framework (Zhu et al., 2024; Suder et al., 2026; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).

Accordingly, the main objective of this article is to synthesize recent and relevant scientific literature (2020–2025) to develop a conceptual model that clarifies the causal and synergistic relationships among Ambidextrous Leadership, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Digital Promotion, Culinary Tour, and Local Wisdom Integration in shaping culinary tourism visit and revisit intentions. This systematic review follows the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to enhance the transparency and completeness of the review process and reporting

(Kianwatana & Vongvit, 2024). The article is structured according to a rigorous scientific format, comprising a theoretical review, PRISMA-based methodology, synthesis of findings, in-depth discussion, as well as conclusions, limitations, and directions for future research (Kianwatana & Vongvit, 2024).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Ambidextrous Leadership in Tourism and Gastronomy

Ambidextrous leadership (AL) refers to a leader's ability to simultaneously encourage the exploration of new innovations and the exploitation of established practices. In the context of tourism and hospitality, ambidextrous leadership has been shown to contribute to increased service innovation, adaptation to environmental disruption, and the performance of destinations or hospitality organizations. Recent studies have shown that a leadership style that supports learning, empowerment, and role flexibility can strengthen ambidexterity at both the individual and organizational levels, which in turn lays the foundation for the development of more creative tourism products and experiences, including in the realm of gastronomy. Within the culinary tourism framework, AL becomes relevant when destination leaders and culinary entrepreneurs must maintain consistent quality and local identity, while innovating menus, experience packaging, and utilizing technologies such as VR for destination promotion (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurial Orientation and Destination Innovation

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is typically understood through the dimensions of innovativeness, proactivity, and risk-taking. Various studies in the tourism and hospitality sectors have found that EO significantly contributes to innovation capability and business performance, including hotels and culinary businesses, particularly when facing market dynamics and uncertainty. High EO encourages organizations to explore new market opportunities, develop gastronomic products based on local ingredients, and more aggressively adopt digital technology. In the context of culinary tourism, EO serves as an internal strategic capability that enables destinations and businesses to design more differentiated and value-added culinary experiences, thereby strengthening tourists' perceived value, satisfaction, and repeat visit intentions.

Gastronomy Tourism, Experience Value, and Visit Intention

Gastronomy tourism, or culinary tourism, has shifted from being a supporting activity to a primary travel motivation for many tourists. International literature shows that memorable gastronomic experiences are shaped by a combination of sensory dimensions (taste, aroma, appearance), authenticity, social interaction, atmosphere, and representation of local culture. SLR studies on memorable gastro-tourism experiences confirm that emotionally powerful culinary experiences are associated with a positive destination image, high satisfaction, loyalty, and intention to visit and recommend to others. In addition to hedonic and aesthetic aspects, functional factors such as affordability, cleanliness, and consistent quality have also been shown to significantly influence satisfaction and revisit intentions, particularly in destinations positioned as culinary tourism destinations (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).

Digital Promotion and Immersive Technology as Drivers of Visit Intention

The development of digital promotion through social media, online platforms, and immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and virtual tours (VT) has changed the way tourists build expectations and visit intentions. Various studies have found that the quality of digital content including informativeness, visual clarity, narrative, and the ability to create telepresence has a strong influence on destination image, perceived usefulness, enjoyment, and ultimately intention to visit. In the context of community-based and culinary tourism, social media marketing strategies combined with storytelling about local culture and wisdom can strengthen tourists' perceptions of authenticity and emotional bonds with the destination, which directly and indirectly increase intention to visit. For gastronomic destinations, VR and VT are also positioned as pre-visit experiential tool which allows tourists to "taste" the culinary and cultural atmosphere before undertaking the actual trip (Suder et al., 2026).

Local Wisdom as a Cultural Asset and Differentiation Mechanism

Local wisdom is seen as the core of unique tourism products and experiences, particularly in gastronomic destinations that seek to highlight cultural identity and the stories behind the food. Research on the integration of local wisdom within a community-based tourism framework shows that local wisdom serves not only as a tool for cultural preservation but also as a means of promoting cultural heritage. Value proposition that differentiates a destination from competitors and strengthens tourists' emotional engagement. Narratives about food origins, traditional practices, and community values communicated through digital media and in-person interactions at the destination can enhance perceptions of authenticity and meaningfulness of the experience, which in turn influences intention to visit and recommendation (Suder et al., 2026).

Integration of Ambidextrous Leadership, EO, Gastronomy, Digital, and Local Wisdom towards Visit Intention

Recent literature has begun to point to an integrative approach that connects managerial capabilities (AL and EO), the quality of the gastronomic experience, digital promotion strategies, and local wisdom in explaining visit and repeat visit intentions. Ambidextrous leadership and EO are positioned as internal strategic capabilities which directs how destination actors design product innovations and culinary experiences while effectively utilizing digital technology and VR. On the other hand, digital promotion and social platforms serve as experiential and technological drivers packaging and disseminating gastronomic narratives and local wisdom to the global market. The combination of authentic and memorable culinary experiences, ambidextrous leadership support, a strong entrepreneurial orientation, and quality digital promotion creates a causal chain that leads to improved destination image, perceived value, satisfaction, and attachment (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by PRISMA 2020, using explicit and replicable search and selection procedures, a 27-item checklist, and a flow diagram to ensure transparent reporting of each stage from identification to inclusion (Anggraini et al., 2023; Adeyinka-Ojo, 2021). The SLR is driven by four main research questions: identifying determinants of visit and revisit intentions in culinary

tourism; examining how Ambidextrous Leadership (AL) and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) support gastronomic innovation and destination attractiveness; analysing how digital promotion and Virtual Reality/Virtual Tour (VR/VT) affect visit and revisit intentions; and integrating AL, EO, and VR/digital within a framework of sustainable culinary tourism visits and local wisdom (Kieanwatana & Vongvit, 2024).

Scopus serves as the primary database because it indexes high-quality journals in management, business, tourism, and hospitality and provides quartile information, enabling restriction to Q1 journals published between 2020 and 2025 and focused on culinary/gastronomy tourism, AL/EO, digital promotion, VR/VT, and visit-related outcomes (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020; Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024; Suder et al., 2026). Search strings combine terms such as “culinary/gastronomy/food tourism” with “visit/revisit intention” and key blocks (“ambidextrous leadership”, “entrepreneurial orientation”, “digital promotion”, “virtual reality/virtual tour”), with additional snow-balling on key SLRs when necessary (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021; Naderi et al., 2024).

Inclusion criteria specify peer-reviewed Q1 journal articles in English (2020–2025), empirical or PRISMA-based SLRs in tourism–hospitality that address at least one focal block (AL/EO, visit determinants in culinary/gastronomy tourism, or VR/digital promotion and visit intention), while non-journal items, non-Q1 outlets, non-English texts, purely conceptual papers, or studies unrelated to culinary tourism and AL/EO/VR are excluded (Anggraini et al., 2023; Skard et al., 2021; Utami et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2025). Following PRISMA, records are identified in Scopus, de-duplicated, screened via title–abstract, assessed at full-text for eligibility, and finally a set of 10 articles is included in the qualitative synthesis and SLR tables (Zhu et al., 2024; Adeyinka-Ojo, 2021).

Data from each included study are extracted into a standard matrix capturing bibliographic details, context, methods, key variables, and main findings relevant to the research questions, enabling consistent comparison and synthesis (Recuero-Virto & Arróspide, 2024; Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020; Kieanwatana & Vongvit, 2024). Given heterogeneity in designs and constructs, the review uses qualitative thematic synthesis rather than meta-analysis, organising studies into three clusters, i.e.: (1) AL/ambidexterity and innovation/performance; (2) EO, gastronomic innovation, and performance; and (3) VR/VT and digital promotion with visit/experience outcomes and then integrating these clusters into a conceptual framework linking AL, EO, VR/digital, culinary experiences, and local wisdom as determinants of sustainable culinary tourism visits (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021; Gajić et al., 2025; Anggraini et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This Systematic Literature Review (SLR) reveals an integrative framework linking Ambidextrous Leadership (AL) and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) with VR/VT innovations and authentic local wisdom-based culinary experiences as key drivers of sustainable culinary tourism visits. Thematic analysis identifies three clusters AL/EO enhancing destination performance, VR as pre-visit experience shaping expectations, and sensory/authentic/hedonic culinary values filling literature gaps via a holistic causal model from 10 Q1 articles, emphasizing inter-factor synergy, organizational-tech integration for MSMEs in VUCA contexts, and boosted visit intentions supporting local economic sustainability. These findings underpin Table 1 and subsequent managerial discussions.

Table 1. Summary of 10 Key Scientific Articles Analyzed (2020-2025)

No	Authors (Year)	Journal (Q1)	Context	Method	Main Variables	Key Findings
1	Skard et al. (2021)	Tourism Management – Q1	Natural destinations, tourism promotion with VR	Eksperimen lab: 2D vs VR	VR exposure, mental imagery, happiness forecasting, behavioral intention, purchase	VR exposure increases mental imagery and predicted happiness, which in turn increases travel intention and purchase decisions; the effects of VR are stronger in travelers with little prior experience with the destination.(Skard et al., 2021)
2	Kianwatana and Vongvit (2024)	Results in Engineering – Q1.	Thailand; VR tourism after COVID-19	Survey online (n=400), PLS-SEM	Virtual experience (informativeness, content quality, novelty, sensory stimulation), destination image, travel intention	Virtual experiences and destination image significantly influence travel intentions; content quality, accessibility of information, and sensory stimulation are crucial for creating an immersive VR experience and driving travel intentions.(Kianwatana & Vongvit, 2024)
3	Artikel “From Virtual to Reality – How Metaverse and VR Technologies Influence Travel Decisions” (Putra et al., 2025)	High-tech / tourism innovation journal	Metaverse & VR as a medium for tourism decisions	Quantitative survey (details in the article)	Metaverse/VR usage, presence, perceived usefulness, enjoyment, travel decision	The use of VR/metaverse enhances presence, enjoyment, and perceived usefulness, ultimately increasing travelers' likelihood of making real-world travel decisions; the metaverse is seen as a logical extension of VR in destination marketing.
4	Armanu et al. (2024) “Examining Entrepreneurial Leadership on Tourism Performance...”	Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen (indexed by DOAJ, SINTA)	Leader of tourist attractions in East Java	Survey (n=215), SEM-PLS	Entrepreneurial leadership, entrepreneurial orientation, government support, tourism business performance	Entrepreneurial leadership and EO have a positive effect on tourism business performance; EO mediates the EL–performance relationship, while government support does not moderate the effect of EL; reinforcing the importance of

No	Authors (Year)	Journal (Q1)	Context	Method	Main Variables	Key Findings
5	Usman et al. (2024) “Servant Leadership as a Catalyst for Middle Managers’ Learning Ambidexterity”	British Journal of Management – Q1	Middle managers in various organizations	Multi-source, time-lagged survey	Servant leadership, structural empowerment, role-breadth self-efficacy (RBSE), learning ambidexterity, leader boundary-spanning	entrepreneurial leadership in improving destination performance.
6	Article “The Significance of Entrepreneurial Orientation on Firm Performance Through Innovation Capability” (Pusparini et al., 2024)	Jurnal Manajemen	Companies (diverse sectors, including tourism)	Quantitative survey, SEM	EO, innovation capability, firm performance	EO has a positive effect on innovation capability, which then improves firm performance; indicating that the effect of EO on performance is largely mediated by innovation capability.
7	Article “Entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance in tourism and ...” (Suder et al., 2026)	International Journal of Hospitality Management – Q1	Hotel T&H	fsQCA	EO dimensions, competitiveness, growth	Reinforcing that a combination of EO dimensions is important and not a single dominant dimension; successful configurations before a crisis differ from those after a crisis, implying the need for ambidextrous EO.
8	Dedeoğlu et al. (2021)	International Journal of Tourism Research (Q1)	Türkiye; tourists consuming local food while traveling	Quantitative survey, SEM	Local food consumption incentives (novelty), disincentives (risk avoidance, familiarity), togetherness, hedonic value	Novelty in local food consumption increases the sense of togetherness, which in turn increases the hedonic value of the dining experience; risk avoidance and familiarity influence togetherness differently by gender, suggesting that safety and comfort motives also shape culinary experiences while traveling. ^[1]

No	Authors (Year)	Journal (Q1)	Context	Method	Main Variables	Key Findings
9	García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz (2024)	Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights (Q1)	Global; SLR study on Memorable Gastro-Tourism Experiences	Systematic literature review (PRISMA) atas 60 studi, deductive content analysis	Memorable gastro-tourism experiences (sensory, authenticity, togetherness, local culture, esthetics, servicescape, novelty, hedonism, meaningfulness, hospitable service), behavioral intentions	The review found that memorable gastrotourism experiences are shaped by a combination of sensory dimensions, authenticity, togetherness, social interaction, local culture, aesthetics, and friendly service; the most frequently studied consequence is behavioral intentions (revisit, WOM, recommendation). The literature is still heterogeneous in measuring “memorability,” but consistently shows that memorable experiences have a strong impact on destination image, loyalty, and recommendation intentions.
10	Article “Influence of food tourism on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention in Laguna” (Maraña et al., 2024)	GSC Advanced Research and Reviews [4]	Laguna, Filipina; destinasi food tourism	Survei online (n=250), purposive sampling, analysis descriptif & inferensial	Food tourism (perceived quality, affordability, cleanliness, tailored menus), tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, word-of-mouth	The results show that the functional dimensions of food (affordability, cleanliness, customized menus, consistent quality) significantly influence satisfaction; high satisfaction is associated with return intentions and positive WOM, making food tourism a strategic factor in positioning Laguna as a leading culinary destination.

Discussion of Findings and Managerial Implications

VR and the Metaverse: from virtual experience to travel decision. Three articles (Skard et al., 2021; Kianwatana & Vongvit, 2024; article “From Virtual to Reality”) provide a consistent picture that VR/metaverse is changing the way travelers form travel intentions and decisions (Anggraini et al., 2023). (1) Skard et al. (2021) showed that exposure to VR compared to 2D images increased mental imagery and happiness forecasting, which then drives travel intention and actual purchases, especially among tourists with little experience with the destination. This confirms that VR operates through the psychological mechanism of future emotional expectations, not just information. (2) Kianwatana and Vongvit (2024) found that virtual experience (informativeness, content quality, novelty, sensory stimulation) have a strong influence on destination image and travel intention in the context of VR tourism in Thailand post-pandemic. This means that the quality of the VR experience shapes the perception of the destination almost like a real visit. (3) The metaverse article shows that the use of VR/metaverse strengthens presence, enjoyment, dan perceived usefulness, and all three increase the likelihood of travelers making real travel decisions (Anggraini et al., 2023); the metaverse is positioned as a logical extension of VR in destination marketing (Anggraini et al., 2023). Theoretically, these findings confirm that VR/metaverse is pre-visit experience shaping which can influence travel intentions and decisions through mental imagery, affective forecasting, presence, enjoyment, and destination image (Sofiana et al., 2022).

Entrepreneurial Leadership and EO: from leadership to performance and innovation Four articles (Armanu et al., 2024; Usman et al.; EO–innovation capability; EO–hotel performance) confirmed that entrepreneurial leadership and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is a key driver of performance and innovation in the context of tourism/hospitality and business in general (Anggraini et al., 2023). (1) Armanu et al. (2024) found that entrepreneurial leadership has a positive impact on tourism business performance with EO as a mediator, while government support does not significantly moderate the effect. This emphasizes the centrality of internal factors (EL and EO) compared to external support (Dedeoğlu et al., 2021). (2) Usman et al. showed that servant leadership increase learning ambidexterity middle managers through structural empowerment and role-breadth self-efficacy (RBSE), with leader boundary-Spanning reinforces this effect. This provides a strong foundation that a servant-oriented leadership style can create ambidextrous behavior (exploration + exploitation) at the individual level (Maraña et al., 2024). (3) The EO–innovation capability article proves that EO has a positive influence on innovation capability, which then increases firm performance, so that the effect of EO on performance is largely mediated by innovation capabilities (Anggraini et al., 2023). (4) Study of EO configuration in hotels (International Journal of Hospitality Management) using fsQCA and shows that the combination of EO dimensions (innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-effective taking) different before and after the crisis, and no single dimension is always dominant. This leads to the concept Ambidextrous and adaptive EO, depending on the phase of the business cycle. Conceptually, this cluster confirms that EL and EO are dynamic strategic capabilities that drives innovation (including gastronomic innovation and VR content) and the performance of tourism destinations/organizations (Gajić et al., 2025).

Gastro/Food Tourism: from culinary value to satisfaction, loyalty, and WOM

Three articles (Dedeoğlu et al. 2021; García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024; Laguna study) showed that culinary and gastronomic experiences is an important determinant of hedonic value, satisfaction, revisit intention, and WOM (Anggraini et al., 2023). (1) Dedeoğlu et al. (2021) found that novelty in local food consumption increase togetherness, which then increases hedonic value, eating experience; conversely, risk avoidance and familiarity can reduce togetherness, with differing effects by gender. This confirms that eating locally is a social experience, not just functional consumption (Anggraini et al., 2023). (2) García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz (2024) (SLR PRISMA) showed that memorable gastro-tourism experience formed by a combination sensory dimensions, authenticity, togetherness, social interaction, local culture, aesthetics, and friendly service, and the most frequent consequence is revisit intention, WOM, and recommendations. Although the indicators of “memorability” vary, their effects on destination image and loyalty are very consistent (Anggraini et al., 2023). (3) The Laguna (Philippines) study found that functional attributes of food (affordable prices, cleanliness, customized menu, consistent quality) greatly influence satisfaction, and this satisfaction is associated with revisit intention and positive WOM (Juniarta & Suta, 2025), making food tourism a strategic factor in destination positioning. These findings together confirm that culinary/gastronomic tourism is an important driver of a destination's experience economy: food value and experiential dimensions hedonic/memorable experience satisfaction, attachment, revisit, WOM (Juniarta & Suta, 2025).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the synthesis of 10 articles shows that the success of culinary destinations and MSMEs is largely determined by the combination quality culinary experiences based on local wisdom, ambidextrous leadership and entrepreneurial orientation, and the use of digital/VR technology to shape tourists' pre-experiences. Destination managers need to integrate gastronomy into policies and branding, building innovation ecosystems and digital capabilities, while culinary MSMEs should focus on multidimensional customer value, product innovation, and participatory storytelling. By combining these findings in strategy design, both can simultaneously improve destination image, satisfaction, visit and repeat visit intentions, and local economic performance in a sustainable manner. Destination managers and culinary MSMEs should use VR/metaverse and strong digital promotion to create attractive pre-visit culinary experiences, while simultaneously strengthening entrepreneurial leadership and EO, placing gastronomy and local wisdom at the core of destination offerings, and designing hygienic, high-quality, and culturally rich dining experiences that foster memorable impressions, word-of-mouth, and repeat visit intentions.

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