



WHAT CAN GEN Z TOURIST EAT ON VACATION?: THE FOOD CHOICES OF GEN Z

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Abstract

While the number of international tourists is increasing every day, technological and social developments are leading to significant intergenerational differences, including in terms of eating and drinking behaviors. In this context, understanding Generation Z, who have grown up with technology and are now reaching a working age, is very important for destination competitiveness. Literature review used as a method. In innovation and diversity, authentic experience and prestige, interpersonal and culture, price/value and assurance, health problem, familiarity, eating habits, and sensory and contextual pleasure play a role in the Z generation food choices behavior on vacation, respectively. In this study, the food choices of Generation Z while on vacation were examined and their importance for destinations discussed.

Keywords: Food Choices, Food Choices Theory, Gen Z, Vacation, Tourists.

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DOI: 10.33083/joghat.2021.79

1. Introduction

Each generation is shaped by the social, economic, political, technological, and environmental factors of the era in which they grow. New technology and social media, multiculturalism, and an increased diversity of family structures have affected Generation Z (Seemiller and Grace, 2019). This generation is global and diverse and come from a broader range of backgrounds with different experiences and ideas (Robinson and Schänzel, 2019). It is one of the fastest generations that was born at a time of rapid social change (Seemiller and Grace, 2019). Generation Z is accustomed to advanced technology and multimedia sources bombarding them with information from all sides, and cannot imagine life without the internet. This generation values originality and ‘reality’ and is probably the most creative generation (Stillman and Stillman, 2019). Differences between generations in terms of lifestyle and attitudes are translated into different needs, preferences and expectations when it comes to food choices and accommodation.

Food is part of daily life, not only as a determinant of health but also as a reflection of social activity and cultural identity (Hoogstins, 2017). Food is not only something we physically need; it is also a psychological and sociological phenomenon. Eating includes the discovery of delicacies, time shared, and moments celebrated as well as the relief of hunger. Food, which is an integral part of the travel and tourism industry, is the most delicious way of satisfying tourists’ search for enjoyment in terms of physical, psychological, and social aspects, away from home (Björk and Räsänen, 2016; Mak et al., 2017; Rozin, 2006).

People do not usually eat indiscriminately during their travels. While many people plan what to eat at their destination, some will go further and research what and where they can eat and drink. Some people will even plan their visit based around the local cuisine (Kumar and Smith, 2018). Generation Z accounted for 23% of international tourist arrivals in 2017. This generation tends to stay longer and spend more than typical, traditional tourists. Gen Zs are reported to have stayed for an average of 6.6 days during their last trip and have the second longest average length of stay compared to other generations (Millennials: 6.2 days; Gen X: 6.4 days and baby boomers: 7.8 days). They also prefer to visit cafes and restaurants, historical sites and to go shopping at destinations. Therefore, in terms of destinations to be competitive, they must consider the food choices of this cohort (Wyse Travel Confederation, 2018).

Demographic changes can affect tourism behavior (Grimm et al., 2009). Tourism managers deviate from their strategic decisions without clearly identifying changing traveler needs and lose their competitiveness. The growth of tourism in the coming years will depend on how this industry perceives the social, psychological, and demographic trends that affect tourist buying behavior. The purpose of this study is to determine the food choice behaviors of Generation Z during their travels and to draw attention to the importance of this generation for destinations and businesses. With this in mind, this paper attempts to explain the theories that address food choice, food choice on vacation, and the behaviors of Generation Z when it comes to choosing food on vacation.

2. Literature review

2.1. Socio-Psychological Theories That Affect Food Choices

Food is crucial and interacts with almost all human activities (entertainment, art, sleep, sex etc.). Due to the richness and complexity of the human choice of food, it is impacted by many disciplines such as biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, history and medicine (Andersson et al., 2016; Björk and Räsänen, 2016; Hall and Mitchell, 2007; Lai et al., 2019; Mak et al., 2012; Özdemir and Seyitoglu, 2017). Food describes a social process and offers opportunities for social interaction. It is also an important feature of celebrations such as weddings. In modern Western societies, sharing food is an activity that is crucial for social communication, including meetings and business dealings. Just like with turkey on Thanksgiving Day and chocolate on Valentine’s Day, food becomes an expression of love and attachment. Sharing food is a sign of intercultural intimacy. It can define the dining group or lifestyle, as a distinctive cuisine can distinguish between, for example, Chinese and Indian people (Rozin, 2006).

Food has also become a shape of aesthetic pleasure (Rozin, 2006). The improvement of the kitchen and of high kitchens in some cultures represents an effort to enhance life and manufacture aesthetic satisfaction (Chang and Mak, 2018). The social and aesthetic functions of food are so common that a visitor from another planet may not immediately realise that food is essentially about survival and nutrition (Genc and Akoglan Kozak, 2020).

Finally, food plays a role in the moral world, for example with cultural and religious diets (Björk and Räisänen, 2017), such as the halal diet laws that determine Muslims' diet and Kosher laws that Jewish people follow (Björk and Räisänen, 2017; Marzuki et al., 2012). While food - as a basic human need - is a part of every person's daily practice (Gross and Brown, 2008), many consumers are concerned about health (Björk and Räisänen, 2017), safety and food ethics, with some being restricted by food allergies. Consequently, food can also be used to target certain market segments (van Putten et al., 2010). There is a need, therefore, to consider food choices from biological (nutrition and evolutionary), psychological, social, cultural, and historical perspectives.

2.1.1. Social Psychological Approaches to Food Choices

Expectancy-value theory

Expectancy-value (EV) theory is a general human decision-making model widely used to understand food choices (Conner and Armitage, 2006). EV theory is based on the assumption that individuals are motivated to maximize the chances of desired outcomes and minimize the chances of unwanted outcomes (Fishbein, 1967). When a choice is made between two objects, individuals choose the one most relevant to the desired outcome (that is, the most positively evaluated). This global assessment stems from the perception of the possibility that the object will have some key features (e.g., the result associated with purchasing a product) weighted by the evaluation of these results (attitude) (Conner and Armitage, 2006).

Perhaps the most effective pioneer of EV theory in social psychology was Martin Fishbein. In the attitude model, Fishbein (1967) argued that individuals could have many judgements about a particular object, but only a subset of these could be apparent at a time. Thus, attitudes towards objects (e.g., behavior, products) emerge with the value added to these specific results (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2000). The probability of the perception of these values is determined by basic beliefs.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) “has emerged as one of the basic theoretical foundations for understanding consumer intentions and behaviors” (Nardi et al., 2019, p. 2250). TPB take place in line with the individual's intentions to perform a specific action (Ajzen, 1991) TPB, this intention consists of three predictors: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (PBC) (Nardi et al., 2019).

In the context of food choices, the TPB has been used to show how motivational factors are decisive in choosing one food over another. Food safety has been used to clearly state how it can reduce the uncertainty of structure, and traceability factors, and increase the intent to purchase. Similarly, previous research has explored attitude as a determining factor in purchasing socially-compromised foods (Nardi et al., 2019).

Beliefs and attitudes of the individual play a role in food choices. Various socio-cultural, religious, or demographic factors will act with the person's attitudes. Therefore, examining the relationship between choice and one's attitudes provides a possible way to better understand the impact of different factors on food choices (Shepherd et al., 1995).

Push and pull theory

It is known that some factors have an effect on the decisions of tourists to buy touristic products; these factors are described in the literature as push and pull factors. While push factors include psychological and internal factors, pull factors consist of external factors related to destination image. Howie (2004) states that eating is a pull factor. Mak et al. (2012) claim that the motivation to travel in order to experience food is a valid structure and that food plays a crucial role in influencing tourism experience and a destination satisfaction. Dann first introduced the push and pull theory in 1977 to examine the changing motivations of tourists. Push factors, according to Dann (1977), are forces that arouse the interest of tourists on vacation. Pull factors, on the other hand, embody different destination characteristics (such as cultural and natural attractions) that evoke the external desires of tourists or the interests of tourists to travel. In short, tourists travel because they are pushed and pulled by these two different forces (Sastre and Phakdee-Auksorn, 2017).

Kim et al. (2010) developed a tool to explore food tourist motivations by applying the push-pull theory to study and conceptualize the behavior of tourists regarding food consumption. As a result, Kim et al. (2009) reported that the driving factors of tourist motivations include escape; relaxation; prestige; health; adventure; social interaction, and family togetherness. However, pull factors are defined as the attractiveness of features, and destinations' own qualities (Kim and Park, 2018).

Lifestyle Segmentation Theory

Lifestyle segmentation theory (LST) suggests a relationship between an individual's lifestyle, purchasing behavior, interests, and personal preferences in the social and consumer groups to which they belong. LST is an important basic market research tool for individuals' lifestyles (Levitt et al., 2019; Scott and Parfitt, 2005). Middleton and Clarke's (2001) purpose of travel identified several ways of segmenting customers through lifestyle factors, such as tourist motivations, customer needs, benefits from travel, and psychography. Nie and Zepeda (2011) also used LST to develop food-related lifestyle models.

Expectancy-value theory, the theory of planned behavior, push and pull theory, and the lifestyle segmentation theories put forward in this context play a role in explaining the food choices of Generation Z tourists, as well as tourists of other generations.

2.2. Food Choices on Vacation

Food and beverages are vital for all living creatures. Eating and drinking has changed and has become more "experiential" and about higher quality food, rather than just meeting the hunger needs of tourists (Mitchell and Hall, 2003; Kim et al., 2010). The research emphasizes that providing tourists with positive, memorable experiences is important for the tourism industry. One of the most important features of a destination is its food (Okumus et al., 2007).

Food contributes to the tourist experience of a destination. Tourists' food experiences are considered an important part of their daily routine and travel expenses during their vacation (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000). In this context, Quan and Wang (2004) proposed a model that defines tourism experiences according to two factors: peak and supportive. Peak experiences are the basis of the daily experiences of tourists, while supportive experiences are the extension or intensified forms of normal daily routines such as sleeping, eating and traveling. In other words, food (and beverages) has recently become the primary reason for travel (Park et al., 2008). Therefore, the travel motivations of tourists to a particular destination affect their dining experiences (Özdemir and Seyitoğlu, 2017). This means that although not all travelers are looking for culinary-gastronomic experiences, every traveler is likely to be influenced by their food and beverage experiences.

In recent years, the number of people traveling to experience new, different, local, high quality or rare foods has increased significantly. The tourist is in a position to affect both the eating and drinking habits of local people, and to influence local food and local cultures (Hall and Mitchell, 2007). In some places, if tourists have a strong desire to taste local food, it becomes a crucial component of tourist experiences (Kim et al., 2009; Özdemir and Seyitoğlu, 2017). It has been shown that the quality of perceived gastronomic experiences in a destination has a strong influence on tourists' revisit intention (Kim et al., 2011).

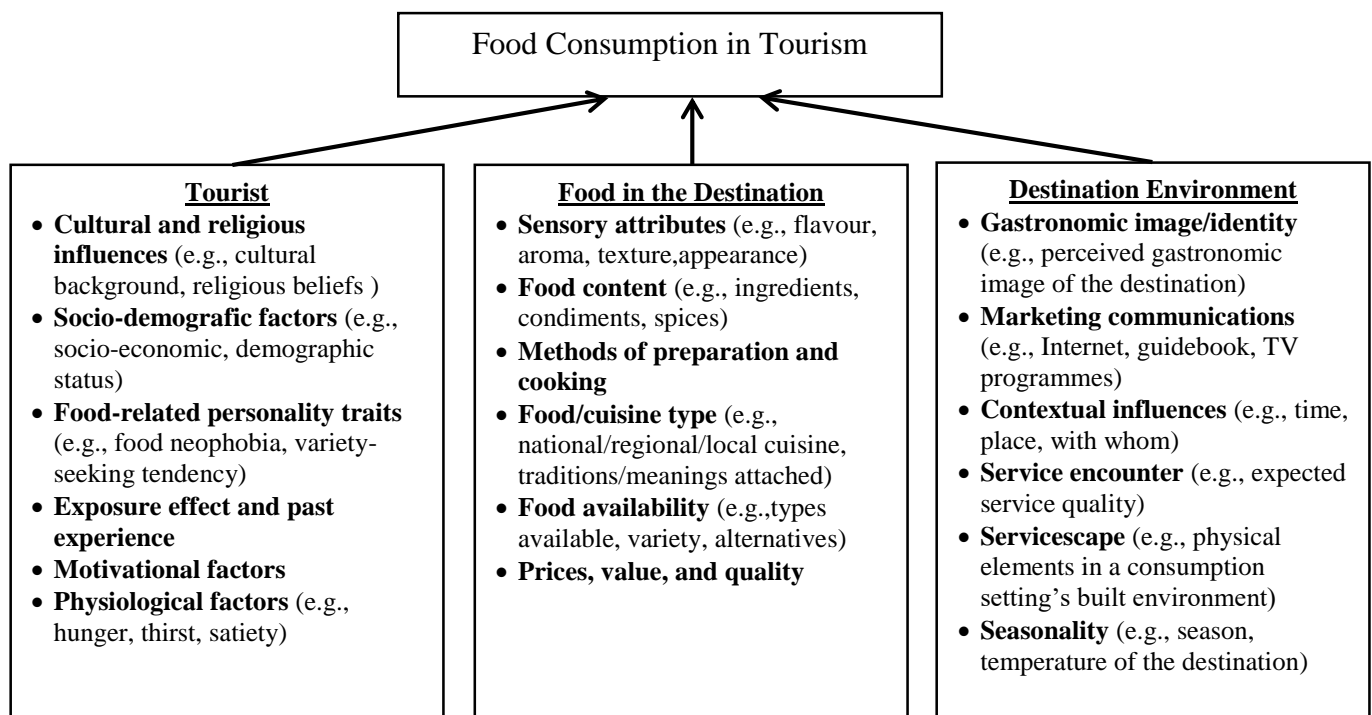


Figure 1. Food consumption of tourists.

Factors Affecting Food Consumption in Tourism (adapted from “A Theoretical Model for the Study of Food Preferences”, Randall & Sanjur, 1981)

When Figure 1 is examined, the consumption of food for tourists can be considered according to three dimensions. These are i) tourists; (ii) food in the destination; and (iii) destination environment (Mak et al., 2012). The first element in the tourist dimension is cultural and religious influences. For example, while halal diet laws determine the food behavior of Muslims, Kosher laws determine that of Jewish people (Marzuki et al., 2012). Socio-demographic factors include generation, gender, marital status, educational level, occupation and household income. For example, Khan (1981) claims that older people tend to display different food choices compared to young people, due to reduced taste and smell sensitivity. For example, Tse and Crotts (2005) have found that older tourists consume a narrower range of food at a destination. Furthermore, female interviewees were more interested about tasting local dishes while on vacation. Interviewees that were older and had higher levels of education were more concerned about health. They had a desire to experience foreign cultures through cuisine consumption (Mak et al., 2012). In addition, these motivations are influenced by various variables that make up the demographic characteristics, behavior, and personal characteristics of tourists. Ryu and Han (2010) found that male travelers are more willing to experience local food than female travelers. According to the social role theory, men are willing to take more uncertainty than women because men are expected to behave this way and because this behavior benefits men in the natural selection process (Powell and Ansic, 1997). However, when the destination is one that has already been visited by the tourist, it is determined that female tourists evaluate the local food more positively than male tourists.

It has been shown that food-related personality traits, including neophobia and the food participation of some tourists may affect their motivation for local food consumption (Kim et al., 2019). Therefore, while strong neophobic tourists may avoid local food, tourists that are characterized as having a high level of food participation and are neophilic.

Exposure effect and past experiences can also significantly affect food consumption behavior (Mak et al., 2012). Studies show that familiarity with certain foods increases the individual’s preference for those foods (Barker, 1982; Björk and Räsänen, 2017). Tourists that have food neophobia often prefer foods that they are familiar with. Exposure to the local food of an area acquired during previous visits can increase familiarity with that cuisine, thereby potentially increasing their desire to eat local cuisine (Mak et al., 2012). Ryu and Jang (2006) found that past experiences were one of the most important determinants of tourists’ intentions to consume local food in vacation. Some tourists prefer familiar foods due to taste, health or cost concerns (Seo et al., 2013).

Motivational factors also affect the food choice behaviors of tourists (Kim et al., 2019). Fields (2002) has outlined a food tourist typology that includes physical, cultural, interpersonal, and status and prestige motivators. According to this typology, the consumption of food can first be driven by physical motivation, because the act of eating involves sensory perceptions that allow the individual to physically appreciate the food (Madaleno et al., 2019). Secondly, food can also be driven by a cultural motivation, because when tourists experience new local foods, they also experience a new culture. Third, there can be an interpersonal motivation as meals eaten on vacation have a social function, such as the building of new social relationships and the strengthening of social ties. Finally, the seeking out of local food can also be motivated by prestige as tourists can improve their knowledge of local food by eating like local people and discovering new foods that they or their friends would not encounter at home (Mak et al., 2017).

Mak et al. (2012) determined five factors: symbolic, obligatory, contrast, extension, and pleasure, with tourist eating behavior. The symbolic factor emphasizes motivations that involve uncovering the symbolic meanings of food consumption and includes factors such as exploring local culture and authentic experiences, seeking learning/education, and prestige and status (Mak et al., 2017). Food consumption is also “obligatory” in tourism. This accession emphasizes the importance of “contrast” and “extension” factors in food behavior in vacation. As Quan and Wang (2004) put it, most food behavior in tourism can be seen as a supportive experience for tourists to achieve their vacation goals. Food behavior in the vacation can be conceptually divided into “supporting tourist” and the most “intense tourism” experience. Therefore, “the pleasure” factor may be a characteristic factor in food behavior in tourism (Mak et al., 2012).

One of the most important motivation factors in the food experience in recent years is the search for authenticity (Özdemir and Seyitoğlu, 2017). Authenticity refers to experiences that are like the real experiences of local people and involve the consumption of local dishes prepared with local ingredients. In order to understand the role of authenticity in the gastronomic experiences of tourists, it is very important to examine the behaviors related to gastronomy. The relationships between authenticity and gastronomy can be examined in the context of four important issues: (i) the motivations of tourists to experience cuisine; (ii) the relationship between familiarity and food consumption; (iii) gastronomic experiences and their roles in general tourism experiences; and (iv) tourist typologies based on their gastronomic motivation (Özdemir and Seyitoğlu, 2017). For example, Jang et al. (2012) discovered that the authenticity of the food and the atmosphere of the restaurant allowed customers to develop positive emotions, which resulted in guests' leaving positive reviews and engaging in re-purchasing behavior.

Sensory attributes, food content, preparation and cooking methods, food/cuisine type, food availability and price, value, and the quality of the food at the destination are all factors that affect the food choices of tourists (Zhang et al., 2017). In a study conducted by Heung (2002) in themed restaurants, the most important factor is the quality of the food, then the attitude of the employees, the presentation of the food, the decoration of the restaurant, the variety of food, and portion size. Yüksel and Yüksel (2003) state that the attitudes of employees is one of the factors that affect tourist satisfaction. In addition, they determined that the appearance of the food preparation (cuisine) and the presentation of the food played a role in customer satisfaction. Law et al. (2008) found that the variety of food, the presentation of the food, and the size of the portions affected tourist satisfaction. Ting et al. (2019) determined that ethnic foods affect tourist behavior. In addition, studies have shown that authentic and interesting local foods have the power to influence the decisions of tourists in terms of choosing destinations to visit (Ab Karim and Chi, 2010).

The destination environment also affects the food behavior of tourists. These elements include gastronomic image/identity, marketing communications, contextual influences, servicespace, and seasonality (Mak et al., 2012). Kotler (1973) demonstrated that visual, aural, and touch- and smell-related elements that appeal to the senses contribute to the atmosphere of a service business, and that these can be motivating factors for consumers. Baker (1987) examined the impact of physical evidence, such as ambience, design, and social factors. In the following years, Ryu and Jang (2008) created a scale for dining areas (DINESCAPE) that includes elements such as the facility's aesthetics, lighting, positioning, food-related equipment, employee, and ambience as physical evidence. The facility's aesthetics, according to the DINESCAPE scale, include the decor and design of the business, the colours used in the business, and pictures and furniture (Genç, 2018; Ryu and Jang, 2008). Kim et al. (2016) examined the factors that affect the preferences of mature tourists in terms of eating in different types of restaurant, especially high quality restaurants, and buffet and casual dining restaurants. Rhee et al. (2016) found that food, value, atmosphere and service are seen as very important criteria when choosing a restaurant. Food usually emerges in the form of an "emblem" that can maintain and identify a region and help preserve the cultural significance of a place (Kim and Ellis, 2015; Kim et al., 2019).

Developments in social media have played a major role in tourists' sharing their vacation behaviors. Researchers turn to online resources to capture current tourist behavior affordably and comfortably (Li et al., 2015). Internet technology captures and presents rich information about tourists' food experiences, their preferred cuisine and meals, and their histories. Generational differences among tourists present confusing results, although they do affect behavioral variables (Stergiou et al., 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the differences that impact Generation Z's food choice behaviors.

2.3. Food Choice Behaviors of Generation Z on Vacation

Generation research is based on the premise that different age groups may show certain psychological and behavioral trends as they share experiences under common socio-economic contexts (Bolton et al., 2013). Although there is no single definition, scientists have identified baby boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z generations (Pendergast, 2010). Generation Z is young people who were born and educated in 1995 or later, and are technologically savvy, innovative, and creative. One of the most prominent features of Generation Z consumers is that they are especially technologically durable. Generation Z is considered to be an incredibly important community for the tourism and travel sector (Barnes, 2018).

Food is one of the most important tourist activities during vacation (Mak et al., 2012). It plays an important role in the vacation experience, as all tourists must eat while traveling. Food behavior accounts for about a quarter or a third of the total spending of tourists in a destination (Correia et al., 2008). It is a crucial economic

factor for many destinations (Kim and Ellis, 2015). For some tourists, it is the ultimate experience (Quan and Wang, 2004).

Generation Z is accustomed to advanced technology and multimedia sources bombarding them with information from all sides; indeed they have never lived without the internet. Young tourists are often very skilled in computer science and information technologies. Since this group is driven by multiple motivations, it is difficult to make general statements about those motivations. Thus, young tourists are both sensitive to the protection of the environment and enjoy open mindedness. Young people have high expectations when traveling. Their vacation behavior is often hedonistic; tourism is also a time of joy, and an opportunity for socializing, and empowerment. Generation Z value originality and ‘reality’. According to Fast Company, Generation Z will constitute 40% of the world’s population in 2020 (Stillman and Stillman, 2019).

Generation Z accounted for 23% of international tourist arrivals in 2017. In addition, Gen Zs are reported to have stayed for an average of 6.6 days during their last vacation. The latest evidence shows that 75% of travelers act as individuals actively trying to interact with local foods while traveling for a year (Levitt et al., 2019; Wolf, 2014). In addition, Generation Z have a strong impact on family holidays as parents prefer to consult them before booking. Generation Z prefer experiences over ownership, which increases their tendency to travel in search of fun experiences (Robinson and Schänzel, 2019). In this context, it is very important to understand the eating-drinking behavior of Gen Z and to establish a strategy accordingly for destinations and businesses.

Peer acceptance is very important for Generation Z; they need to feel a sense of belonging. Their concept of themselves is partially determined by the group to which they belong. Generation Z is global and diverse and come from a broader range of backgrounds with different experiences and ideas. They value security more than older generations. At their best, they are confident and very optimistic. Gen Z is probably the most creative generation. Young members of Gen Z may not have their own disposable income, but they have a strong influence on family purchasing decisions (Stergiou et al., 2018).

It is important to remember that although many Gen Zs have participated in food tourism, they are not a homogeneous group with standardized demographic characteristics, psychographic values or lifestyles. In fact, a limited number of studies have shown that when on vacation, each person has individual variables, such as the level of desire to fulfil biological and psychological needs and desires, as well as motivation levels, including food participation (Getz et al., 2014; Levitt et al., 2019). In addition, limited research has been done to determine the demographic or generational characteristics of the different food tourism segments (Kline et al., 2015). This was tested by Kim and Eves (2012) that emphasizes five tourist motivation themes in gastronomy tourism. Among the themes that emerged were cultural experiences, sensory attractions, interpersonal relationships, excitement, and health concerns. In addition, Chang (2011) reported similar findings; here, innovation, socializing, family, and the physical experiences of food were the main motivations of gastronomy tourists. Mak et al. (2017) have identified seven motivational factors that are influenced by the food-related personality traits of tourists; these include innovation and diversity, authentic experience and prestige, interpersonal and culture, price/value and assurance, health issues, familiarity and eating habits, and sensory and contextual pleasure. The dimensions revealed in these studies play a role in the food motivations of Generation Z tourists while they are on vacation.

Undoubtedly, this generation is a community that uses technology the most and is always online. Research findings have shown that smart technologies have a significant impact on the experiences of Generation Z consumers. Therefore, it is not surprising that food-related publications have a strong presence on social media, and that 49% of consumers in the U.S. learn about food through online social networks (Hartman Research Group, 2012). More than a third of Generation Z report that they use technology as much as possible, compared to 27% of Millennials. Those who use wearable technology and networked gadgets, including artificial intelligence and business automation, are said to be ‘fearless of the future’. However, this generation is not utopian in thinking that technology can change the world. For them, smartphones are not revolutionary, rather they are completely normal. Companies will need to adapt to a more pragmatic, tech-savvy generation that is not easily amazed or rewarded. It is not surprising that Generation Z also uses the “iGen” nickname. It has been found that some travelers share positive experiences about food online (Björk and Räsänen, 2014). This is more common in technology-oriented cohorts, especially among Gen Z.

Moreover, Generation Z love to eat out, and have a particular interest in snacks and street food (Nielsen et al., 2002). This is reflected in their eating behaviors while on holiday. They are eager to try new food as they seek different experiences and new trends while on their travels. The pursuit of authenticity is one of the most

prominent food behaviors of this generation on vacation. Generation Z consumers are more likely to seek diversity in their consumption (Savelli et al., 2017).

Generation Z is also looking for gastronomic experiences. In order to experience prestige, interpersonal and cultural experiences, and sensory and contextual pleasure, this generation has a tendency to visit popular restaurants on their travels, and also to look for foods that are line with their values (Mak et al., 2017). In addition, Gen Z prefer restaurants that are transparent in their content as they prefer to know exactly what they are consuming.

Just as daily behavior affects travel behavior in general, tourist eating behavior can play a dominant role in the daily food consumption routines at home (Wang et al., 2019). In fact, eating experiences can be an essential feature of positive and memorable travel experiences (Morgan, 2006) because travelers use cognitive experiences to determine their future travel intentions (Huang and Hsu, 2009). Gen Z are very aware of costs and of health concerns; they prefer cafes and coffee shops to fast-food outlets, and eateries with technology and Wi-Fi. They are less likely to trust fast-food brands because of their image as unhealthy food producers (Taylor, 2017; Wang et al., 2019). However, they may abandon this behavior while on holiday. According to a survey by TripAdvisor (2012), 69% of respondents say that unhealthy food choices while on vacation (Chang, 2017). This figure is higher among those on vacations, such as all-inclusive or AirBnB applications. Generation Z seems to be more inclined to order food online from restaurants at night compared to other generations.

Contrary to expectations, Generation Z is very concerned with eating healthily. In addition, their price sensitivity is higher compared to other groups because they are either not in work or have only just started working. Savelli et al. (2018) first observed the intense interest of Gen Z in prices and sales promotions. However, they are also well informed about the food products that they buy, and they attach great importance to the ingredients, origin, and health qualities of food products. It has been determined that they focus on cost, convenience, variety, and the quality of food when it comes to making food choices. Gen Z is the generation that they are optimistic, but are pragmatic and aware of factors that are beyond their control. They prefer fresh ingredients to processed foods. Concepts such as natural, sustainable and organic echo strongly on product packaging and restaurant menus that appeal to this generation. They are not tempted by top luxury brands, but reward values and personal style over designer labels (Visioncritical, 2019). Although McDonald's is the American teenager's food of choice, it does not appear in the five most popular restaurants of this generation. In fact, there are no burger chains on the list.

Technomic, a food service research and consultancy group, published a report of the top food trends evident among Generation Z. These were hyperlocal sources, chef-oriented, fast, comfortable, natural ingredients/clean menus, environmental sustainability, locally sourced products, locally sourced meat and seafood, the reduction of food waste, dinner sets, a return to simplicity/foundations, and nutrition (AAHAR, 2019). These are food concepts that have emerged in recent decades. Generation Z is inclined to focus on consuming nutritious and healthy foods; 67% look for the nutritional content of the food that they consume, while 60% will look at the list of ingredients on food labels. According to the autumn report of Aramark Dining Styles in 2016, 45% of Gen Z students stated that they want healthy food options on campus and that they are willing to pay for them. Almost one third of this generation reported that they would pay a premium for organic food and more than half would pay extra for fresh food. In addition, 57% stated that they are willing to pay more for sustainable food, compared to 43% of the general population (Seemiller and Grace, 2019). In general, many of those from Generation Z want healthy, specialist and sustainable food, and despite their concerns about spending money, they are willing to pay for such food.

This generation is especially sensitive to acidic drinks such as cola and soda. It was found that more than 19% of high school students drank at least two sodas a day in 2007, but this figure had dropped to 13% by 2015. Not only do fewer young people drink more soda than is healthy, but there are now many more young people reporting that they never drink soda. In 2007, less than 19% reported that they never drank soda. By 2015, this number had increased to more than 26% (Seemiller and Grace, 2019).

Despite the decline in soda consumption, researchers have found that caffeine intake in children and young people did not change between 1999 and 2010. Although soda consumption among young people has declined, there has been an increase in the consumption of coffee and energy drinks. This is not surprising, as some Gen Zs have been drinking child-sized mocha lattes since childhood. It is worth remembering that Starbucks had 667 stores in 1995 when the first of Generation Z was born. By 2013, when those born in 1995 had turned 18, the number of Starbucks stores had increased to about 20,000 (Seemiller and Grace, 2019).

Although Generation Z seems to be a generation that is conscious of health-related issues, the obesity rate among the general population has increased from 10.6% in 1999 to 13.9% in 2015. Studies have pointed to diets high in calories, fat and sugar, along with large portion sizes and the consumption of fast food and snack foods as factors that cause obesity in childhood. In addition, low levels of physical activity among this generation make it harder for them to burn extra calories (Seemiller and Grace, 2019).

This generation also highly values socializing. Studies have shown that American Gen Zs spend most of their money on food, with Starbucks topping the list, followed by Chipotle, Chick-fil-A, Panera Bread and Olive Garden. However, this list is not just about food, as these are also the places where they prefer to socialize. While this generation is very sensitive to prices while they are on vacation, they also want to have fun (Seemiller and Grace, 2019). Stergiou et al. (2018) found that cost concerns were an important factor when considering the desired wine tourism experiences of Generation Z adults.

Generation Z grew up with YouTube, the center of fun videos, and so the vacation destinations and eating behaviors of YouTubers that they follow have a significant impact on this generation. In this context, it is possible to say that many motivational factors play a role in the eating behaviors of Gen Zs on vacation.

3. Conclusion and Implications

This section reviews the food choices behavior of Generation Z while on vacation. The main benefit of Generation Z's behavior of choosing food while on vacation allows the destination to take the right steps in the business's strategic decisions. The food choices of Generation Z can only be understood by considering biological, psychological, social and cultural perspectives, all of which are handled within the technological context. This young generation, born in the digital age, is likely to transform tourism and tourism destinations as they are more inclined towards international travel (Robinson and Schänzel, 2019). In innovation and diversity, authentic experience and prestige, interpersonal and culture, price/value and assurance, health problem, familiarity, and eating habits, and sensory and contextual pleasure play a role in the Generation Z's food choices behavior on vacation (Mak et al., 2017). Especially in this group's vacation, food choices behavior, innovation, and diversity are the strong motivational source. In addition, social media tools are also effective in this group's vacation food choices. For example, the places where the influencers they love and follow on vacation go and the food they eat is an important source of motivation. Eating healthy food has become very important all over the world due to the effect of the pandemic. It is also very important for this generation. This issue should be given special importance in the marketing of the destination to Generation Z.

Demographic changes offer important opportunities to understand tourist behavior. In this context, generational studies are important to understand the different needs of tourists. For example, recent findings have shown that gamified technological experiences, virtual and augmented reality applications can benefit Gen Z tourist behavior (Robinson and Schänzel, 2019). In this context, tourism marketers should use virtual reality and augmented reality applications and include more technological factors in their menus. In addition, it will be appropriate for the destination's marketing to produce content integrated with these features and add it to the sites promoting the destination.

In order to understand the food choices of this generation, field studies with qualitative and quantitative methods are needed more in future research. This process can be supported by qualitative studies that reveal the eating dimensions specific to this generation. At the same time, this process can be tested with different research models. This study also has some limitations. The food choices of the Gen Z has been discussed in general within the scope of this study. In future research, there is a need to examine the food choices of different vacation processes (culture, 3S, nature-based). In addition, since this study is a literature paper, there is no need for an ethics committee report.

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