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Perceptions of Residents of the North of Portugal on Traditional Gastronomy with a Generalized Q Analysis

Percepções dos Residentes do Norte de Portugal sobre a Gastronomia Tradicional com uma Análise Q Generalizada

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Abstract

Gastronomy is considered a stimulus for the development of the local economy and has been progressively recognized as a main strategy for promoting tourism. Contemporary tourists are increasingly seeking values of authenticity and gastronomy serves as a marker of cultural identity. In this context, the role of residents is essential who, through their knowledge, passion and dedication, ensure that gastronomic traditions are preserved and passed on from generation to generation. This dynamic not only maintains cultural succession but also provides tourists with valuable opportunities to explore and understand local heritage through gastronomy-related experiences. The primary aim of this study is to analyse residents' perceptions from the North of Portugal regarding the recognition of gastronomy as a cultural heritage and its role as a tool for tourism development. To achieve this aim, structured questionnaires were distributed to residents in popular urban tourism areas of Porto. The Generalized Q Analysis on 262 valid questionnaires, with 20 simple responses and 1024 combined statements allowed the identification of 15 robust components. Combination of tradition with innovation, rather than the antagonism between these concepts, shows up as an important condition for the sustainability of culturally rooted gastronomy.

Keywords: Gastronomy, cultural heritage, tourism, regional development, Generalized Q Analysis

JEL classification: R1 - General Regional Economics, Z3 - Tourism Economics

Resumo

A gastronomia é considerada um estímulo para o desenvolvimento da economia local e tem sido progressivamente reconhecida como uma estratégia fundamental para a promoção do turismo. Os turistas contemporâneos procuram, cada vez mais, valores de autenticidade, sendo a gastronomia um marcador de identidade cultural. Neste contexto, o papel dos residentes revela-se essencial, pois, através do seu conhecimento, paixão e dedicação, asseguram que as tradições gastronómicas sejam preservadas e transmitidas de geração em geração. Esta dinâmica não só mantém a sucessão cultural, como também proporciona aos turistas oportunidades valiosas de explorar e compreender o património local através de experiências relacionadas com a gastronomia. O principal objetivo deste estudo é analisar as perceções dos residentes do Norte de Portugal relativamente ao reconhecimento da gastronomia como património cultural e ao seu papel como instrumento de desenvolvimento turístico. Para tal, foram distribuídos questionários estruturados a residentes em zonas urbanas de turismo popular no Porto. A Análise Generalizada Q, aplicada a 262 questionários válidos, com 20 respostas simples e 1024 combinações de afirmações, permitiu identificar 15 componentes robustos. A combinação entre tradição e inovação, mais do que o antagonismo entre estes conceitos, revela-se como uma condição importante para a sustentabilidade de uma gastronomia enraizada culturalmente.

Palavras-chave: Gastronomia, património cultural, turismo, desenvolvimento regional, Análise Q Generalizada

Classificação JEL: R1 - Economia regional geral, Z3 - Economia do turismo

1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a guarantee of cultural diversity and sustainable development, UNESCO (2003) published the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), which aims to protect, ensure respect for, and disseminate the importance of intangible heritage by introducing awareness practices at the national and international levels. Undoubtedly, gastronomy is valued as ICH for its unique forms of expression and rituals that reflect customs, habits, religious beliefs of communities, and orally transmitted knowledge from generation to generation. Gastronomy is also a result of the communities' experience with the natural places where they reside in combination with historical knowledge and historical accumulation of cross-cultural influences. The concept of gastronomy, as defined by the World Tourism Organization, plays a key role in promoting intercultural interactions and multiculturalism (UN Tourism, 2024). Gastronomy, as a cultural heritage, in particular traditional dishes, has initiated a process of integration and differentiation in tourist destinations, being considered one of the most potent drivers of destination choices (Kalenjuk Pivarski et al., 2023). Thus, it is an essential component of cultural tourism, exposing tourists to new flavors and deep-rooted traditions. These experiences not only provide unique flavors but also educate travellers about the region's heritage (Seyitoğlu and Ivanov, 2020). In this sense, gastronomy began to be understood as a significant cultural element of identity and place authenticity. Often, people meticulously research the local gastronomy scene when planning their trips, making gastronomy a crucial factor in decision-making. Consequently, the gastronomic uniqueness of a destination can be an asset in the elaboration of a distinct and appealing proposal (Suna, 2019).

In visiting a place, traditional gastronomy, representative of the cultural heritage of a destination, becomes a fundamental asset, contributing to the growth of tourism and forming distinct images of the destination. In the same way, this intangible attribute is essential for tourist satisfaction and motivation as well as a complement that could influence socialization in a deep way (Lima et al., 2023). In the competitive tourism industry, destinations understand the importance of highlighting their unique gastronomic offerings, as part of their cultural heritage. Gastronomy thus plays a strategic role in shaping a destination's identity and attracting target travellers (Seyitoğlu and Ivanov, 2020). For Markovic and Pindžo (2020), the enrichment of the tourist experience involves a diverse set of attractions that collectively create a multifaceted attraction. The integration of traditional

products into the framework of tourism can take many forms, with traditional cuisine finding effective promotion in specialised types of tourism such as mountain, rural, cultural or ecological tourism. By incorporating local dishes, the tourist experience gains authenticity, allowing travellers to engage with the destination's intangible heritage.

The question is to know what is considered traditional cuisine that, associated with cultural heritage, promotes tourism and the development of people and places? To approach this question the paper analyses the literature on gastronomy, culture, tourism, and residents' perception on gastronomy in section 2, proposes a Generalized Q Analysis (Dentinho, Kourtit and Nijkamp, 2023) to analyse 262 valid questionnaires focused on residents of the North of Portugal, in section 3. Section 4 presents a preliminary analysis of the data collected; Section 5 shows the results of the Generalized Q Analysis that are discussed in Section 6. Finally, in Section 7, the main conclusions, and suggestions of further research are presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Gastronomy as Intangible cultural heritage

Every place has its identity, and the culinary heritage is diverse with plenty of secular local alimentary products according to the *terroir* characteristics (Trubek, 2008). Gastronomy has plenty of local history and local agriculture product dynamics that give places special cultural ambiance characteristics. Food and food ingredients express a relationship with societies and nature and contain historical information that can reveal past phenomena, such as community migrations, product exchanges across the world, and acculturation. Throughout history, societies have accumulated vast knowledge and techniques related to the production, storage and preparation of food. These practices, which encompass consumption habits, culinary traditions and gastronomic heritage (Quintero-Angel, Mendoza and Girón, 2022), are a testament to the cultural importance of food. However, in the twenty-first century, the preservation of gastronomic heritage faces significant challenges. According to Quintero-Angel, Mendoza and Girón (2022), the rise of modernity in food, shaped by the choices of contemporary consumers, has contributed to the degradation of the gastronomic heritage. This modernity is characterized by changes in traditional dietary patterns due to mass food production, industrialization, the dominance of monoculture, and population growth, resulting in lasting changes in food preparation, production, and consumption practices.

In this context, the prominence of the gastronomic heritage is on the rise, with an impact on the economic, political, socio-cultural and tourist domains. The transformation of this heritage into a form of preservation emerges as a symbolic response of contemporary societies. In the face of postmodernism and increasing homogenization, preservation emerges as a means of celebrating and differentiating cultural diversity, allowing societies to thrive during globalization (Romagnoli, 2019).

The globalization of gastronomic culture has unleashed a phenomenon known as "authentication," in which chefs seek to revive culinary traditions by highlighting attributes such as local environments, ancestral farming methods, and traditional utensils. However, this approach does not always translate into an authentic culinary heritage, as producers occasionally highlight new or manufactured food characteristics under the guise of 'tradition' (Almansouri et al., 2022). The authors state that this fact can potentially distort the genuine essence of food culture and lead to the spread of this distorted version through tourism, resulting in the proliferation of inauthentic ethnic restaurants around the world. In addition, in foreign locations, restaurant owners often resort to clichéd ethnic themes to evoke culinary culture, employing decorations, music, and costumes to create an "authentic" ambience. While these efforts are intended to enhance the dining experience, they can complicate the task of discerning dishes that genuinely reflect a country's culinary heritage.

Defining what constitutes authenticity is a complex task, given the potential variations in the ingredients, techniques, cooking methods and flavors used in a given dish. Factors such as the availability of seasonal ingredients or the chefs' unfamiliarity with traditional recipes can lead to deviations from the original shape of the dish. However, the specific factors that may compromise the authenticity of traditional food remain somewhat uncertain (Almansouri et al., 2022). The

preservation of this authenticity of traditional food assumes a paramount importance, since it not only represents the originality and distinction of a culture, but also has a substantial value as part of the cultural heritage. Almansouri et al. (2022) have identified six primary risk factors associated with authenticity from the literature on ethnic and traditional gastronomy. These factors cover aspects such as ingredients, recipes, cooking utensils, knowledge of the chef, presentation and gastronomic labels, which contribute to maintaining the true essence of the culinary heritage.

However, the global phenomenon of food modernity has the potential to accelerate change, posing a tangible risk to the preservation of this heritage. The concern does not lie in the capacity of modernity to reshape aspects related to food, but rather in its impact on cultural values, which can fragment and ultimately disappear (Quintero-Angel, Mendoza and Girón, 2022). Thus, the preservation of cultural heritage is essential, as they encompass identities and serve as a gateway to the world's diverse cultures. These cultural values encompass several aspects, including the intergenerational transmission of knowledge linked to culinary practices rooted in oral traditions, family and community cohesion around food, and the potential extinction of associated recipes. In the contemporary era, digitalisation has taken on a central role in collecting, preserving, promoting and improving the accessibility of cultural heritage. Historical documents, audiovisual recordings, visual representations, manuscripts and other artifacts are managed effectively through digital technology, offering a wider audience the opportunity to interact with these relics. Adane, Chekole, and Gedamu (2019) have revealed several advantages associated with digitisation in the context of cultural heritage, including preservation, promotion and wide accessibility. In this effort, digitalization has emerged as a fundamental tool, facilitating the conservation and dissemination of cultural legacies. Digitization involves the representation of objects, images, documents, or signals through discrete sets of dots or samples.

2.2. Tourism and gastronomy

In the contemporary tourism sector, it is crucial to prioritise experiences that have an impact on tourists, while respecting local communities and environments. To be successful in the competitive tourism market, destinations must offer unique and valuable experiences. That is, modern tourists seek diversity and a connection to local cultural traditions in the midst of global homogenization. This is especially true in the context of gastronomy tourism, where traditional elements play a key role in presenting a region's cultural identity (Markovic and Pindžo, 2020). According to Lin and Mao (2015), tourists buy food not only to savour it, but also to imagine the culture and identity behind it. The flavors, textures, and preparation techniques of a wide variety of traditional recipes attract diverse profiles of tourists who seek the history and generational knowledge, the cultural heritage of a particular place (Pita Lino et al., 2023). According to Seyitoğlu and Ivanov (2020), meals are not only a basic necessity for travellers, but also a crucial aspect of their overall satisfaction while exploring different destinations. Tourists typically devote a portion of their budget to food, engaging with local cuisine to experience the culinary values of a region. This relationship between food and culture makes gastronomy a vital tool to show the cultural uniqueness of a destination (Seyitoğlu and Ivanov, 2020). Whether it influences destination choices or becomes the top attraction, gastronomy has a significant impact. The interactions travellers have with local cuisine and culture leave lasting memories, contributing to overall satisfaction and the desire to return. The centrality of food in travel establishes a link with history, reinforcing the authenticity of the trip and creating emotional connections. In this way, the ability of gastronomy to connect with local culture creates unforgettable travel experiences and solidifies the image of a destination through its unique cuisine and cultural heritage (Hsu and Scott, 2020).

Ultimately, the relationship between gastronomy and travel goes beyond food, making it a memorable and impactful aspect of tourist travel (Seyitoğlu and Ivanov, 2020). Local cuisines exert a special fascination on tourists seeking authentic experiences, often becoming an attraction that exposes them to the culture of the host country. When the motivation of tourists revolves around the tasting of new flavours, the discovery of cultural histories and immersion in distinct traditions, we speak of gastronomic tourism (Tovmasyan, 2019). Food is an integral part of local culture, crucial in promoting tourism, a potential driver of economic growth in agriculture, and a regional variable

influenced by tourist preferences (Tovmasyan, 2019). Thus, gastronomic tourism encompasses diverse experiences, from visiting food producers and participating in culinary festivals to dining in renowned establishments known for unique dishes. It involves interaction with chefs, observation of preparation processes and the enjoyment of a local's gastronomic offerings. Travelers often prefer local food despite the higher costs, since quality takes precedence over price.

Gastronomy is considered a stimulus for the development of the local economy and has been progressively recognized as a main strategy for promoting tourism (Mendes et al., 2021). There is still much discussion about the need to conserve local gastronomy and the best means of doing so. Changing the rules about how food is produced and consumed could compromise the local roots of gastronomic culture in many parts of the world (Fernandes and Richards, 2021). Traditional gastronomy is progressively recognized as a valuable component of the intangible cultural heritage and, in this sense, the rescue of ancient traditions has given rise to the revival and protection of local, regional, and national products (Araújo, 2021). While tourists are increasingly seeking values of authenticity, gastronomy serves as a marker of cultural identity. Therefore, when we talk about gastronomy, we are talking about territories, culture, heritage, memory, and identity (Araújo, 2021).

Modern travellers are actively seeking diverse gastronomic adventures that significantly influence their travel choices. Therefore, to promote local gastronomy effectively, marketers must employ strategies that maximize its value to tourists. Tourists' preference for local gastronomy has a profound impact on their destination decisions, driven by emotions, functionality, knowledge and social interactions. Recognizing these preferences enables strategic marketing efforts and promotes increased visits (Roustia and Jamshidi, 2019). Gastronomy is not just about sustenance; it is a bridge to culture, a window to tradition, and a source of memorable experiences for tourists (Tovmasyan, 2019). According to Roustia and Jamshidi (2019), the local gastronomy functions as a gateway to the cultural and personal identity of a destination. Understanding how to enrich tourists' experiences is crucial to predicting their behaviour and perceptions.

2.3. Residents perceptions on gastronomy

The studies of residents' perceptions in tourism is an established and essential area of research. It is particularly important given that local communities are key stakeholders in the development and sustainability of tourism destinations (Freitas, Sousa and Ramazanov, 2021). Recently, there has been some interest in examining residents' perceptions within specific tourism contexts, notably in gastronomic tourism. While incorporating local, authentic foods offers tourism potential, it also presents challenges. The local population, aware of the implications of tourism in gastronomy, plays a key role in shaping tourism's sustainable development. Their attitudes toward using traditional cuisine in tourism can either enhance or hinder its impact on both tourism success and broader, sustainable regional development (Şengül, Türkay, & Yılmaz, 2022). Understanding local support is crucial for sustainable tourism and offers practical guidance for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders. The study by Lino (2023) reveals that residents hold a highly positive perception of their gastronomic cultural heritage in the context of tourism. They acknowledge the economic, social, environmental, and cultural significance of traditional cuisine and its vital role in enhancing the tourism experience. There is a strong consensus that preserving local culinary traditions contributes to both environmental sustainability and the celebration of cultural diversity. For tourism development to be successful, it is essential to actively engage the community in planning efforts and to recognize the importance of ancestral agricultural products as part of the region's cultural identity. Ongoing research in tourism planning is also encouraged to ensure the preservation of these valuable resources for future generations. İrigüler (2021) highlights that residents see gastronomic tourism as vital to the economy, as it showcases each region's unique culinary identity. Food tourism goes beyond tasting exotic dishes—it's a cultural journey that offers insight into a place's history, traditions, and heritage through its cuisine. The research conducted by Suna (2019) explores the various dimensions of gastronomic identity from the perspectives of both visitors and local residents in Gaziantep. The findings indicate that residents tend to have a more positive perception of the city's food quality and the range of gastronomic activities available. This divergence in viewpoints may be attributed to the fact that residents are generally more familiar with the city's culinary

offerings. Considering the perspectives of local residents is highly important, as they possess in-depth knowledge of local gastronomy, related traditions, and preparation processes. Moreover, they play a critical role in delivering authentic gastronomic experiences to visitors.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This study addresses the case of the city of Porto and neighbouring municipalities in the North of Portugal, assessing Portuguese residents' perceptions about the recognition of gastronomy as a cultural heritage and a driver for tourism development. Participants were Portuguese residents from the northern region of the country who had visited the historic centre of Porto.

Data was collected through the administration of questionnaires between May and October 2022. Since Generalized Q Analysis searches for common and common attitude different from the previous ones, and not for average attitudes, researchers opted for a convenience sampling strategy (Golzar, Noor and Tajik, 2022). Questionnaires were distributed across different locations and at various times in order to reach individuals from a range of age groups, professional backgrounds, and social contexts. As a result of these efforts, a total of 262 valid responses were obtained.

Prior to the main data collection phase, a pilot test was conducted with 15 participants to evaluate the clarity of the questions, the overall structure of the instrument, and the time required for completion. The feedback provided by the participants was thoroughly analyzed, and their comments and suggestions were integrated into the final version of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of two main sections, with the first one focusing on the sample profile and the second one centered around gastronomy assessment, exploring the intersection of gastronomy, culture, and identity, emphasizing the importance of preserving traditional gastronomy, as well as concerns about globalization contributing to the loss of traditional gastronomy but highlights the potential for cultural attractiveness through innovative approaches within the framework of tradition.

To assess residents' perceptions, participants were asked to express their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented "Totally Disagree" and 5 indicated "Totally Agree." The majority of the items included in the questionnaire were adapted from previous scholarly works, specifically those of Lin, Marine-Roig and Llonch-Molina (2021), Ramazanov et al. (2022), and Seyitoğlu & Ivanov (2020), who have contributed to the academic discourse on this subject.

Following the process of the Generalized Q Analysis (Dentinho, Kourtit and Nijkamp, 2023) the collected data was processed using Excel to expand the scores per statement to the combined scores of all statements using a combination of dummies, and SPSS software was used to perform the Principal Component Analysis, to regress the Component Scores against the dummies used to combine the statements to name the components, and to regress the factor scores against the features of the respondents to perceive who is more related to each named components. Descriptive statistics were applied to characterise the respondents and to provide a general overview of the sample's demographic and other relevant features.

The Generalized Q Analysis was conducted on 262 valid questionnaires, with 20 simple responses. The 20 responses were organized into 5 groups of 4 responses each (Table 3), allowing $4^5=1024$ combined responses using combinations of 20 dummies, one dummy for each one of the 20 questions (Table 4). Then it is possible to perform the Principal Component analysis of 262 respondents and 1024 combined responses using the software SPSS, getting eigenvalues that represent the variance of each component, and extracted values of each component and each respondent. All the possible combinations of dummies on the initial sets of responses are used to get the values of the combined responses. Then the extracted values of the principal components are regressed against the dummies which coefficients show the profile implicit to the extracted components.

The "Q method" serves as a research technique used within the social sciences, designed to examine the shared perspectives and distinctions among individuals regarding a particular subject of interest. Developed by William Stephenson in 1953, this method has found application in diverse areas such as educational attitudes (Gawron, 2016), autoethnographic analysis (Ellis, 2003; Pepeka, de Fátima Ferreiro and Dentinho 2022), credibility studies (Metzger and Flanagan, 2013), healthcare research (Churruca et al., 2021), job satisfaction (Guastello et al., 2019), and various other fields.

The Q Methodology facilitates the transformation of subjective evaluations into objective outcomes through a structured process:

1. the compilation of statements on a topic of research
2. the ranking of disagreement in an approximated normal distribution
3. the transposition of collected data defining stakeholders as variables and statements as observations
4. the implementation of Principal Component Analysis to reduce the responses profiles into synthesised and orthogonal responses
5. the analysis of synthesised orthogonal responses relating them with the typology of statements and with the stakeholder features (Dentinho, Kourtit and Nijkamp, 2023, p.6).

The Q analysis is a frequently used, multivariate exploratory technique in the social sciences which seeks to identify and analyse commonalities and differences in the respondents 'rankings of a set of relevant individual qualitative statements. It has some intrinsic weaknesses which may be overcome by widening and deepening the underlying multivariate statistical approach. This new technique, termed a Generalized Q method, can handle an enlargement of the number of ranked combined statements based on a structured re-combination of the rankings of simple statements. This method will be presented in this paper. The Generalized Q analysis, considers of many simple questionnaires with trustful responses, allows for an expansion of the number of respondents, facilitates the naming and interpretation of the extracted multivariate components, and can test the consistency of the responses. In this context, this study applies a new Generalized Q Analysis, which has important benefits, and allows an expansion of the number of respondents by overcoming the redundancy of many respondents in the usual Q Analysis. It facilitates the nomenclature of the extracted components that are representative responses, and it allows to test the consistency of the various responses (Dentinho, Kourtit and Nijkamp, 2023). Furthermore, it allows the analysis to highlight subjects, synthesizing all respondents' perspectives into a small number of representative attitudes, instead of just working with features of respondents.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Characteristics of sample

The demographic characteristics of the 262 respondents show a slightly higher proportion of men (52%) than women (48%) were surveyed, with 34 years old in average, most reported as being single (63%) or married (27%). Regarding education, most individuals had an undergraduate degree (35%), or 12th grade (35%), followed by respondents with a master's degree (10%). As for employment, 37% of the respondents work in private organizations and 34% were students.

Table 1. Sample profile.

Variables	N	%
Gender		
Female	125	48%
Male	137	52%
Age		
Average	34	
Education		
4th grade	7	3%
9th grade	26	10%
12th grade	92	35%
Bachelor	93	35%
Master	27	10%
Postgraduate	12	5%
Doctorate	5	2%
Marital status		
Single	166	63%
Married	70	27%
Divorced	22	8%
Widower	4	2%
Occupation		
Civil servant	29	11%
Private organization	97	37%
Entrepreneur	18	7%
Retired	15	6%
Student	88	34%
Other	15	6%
Total	262	100

Two thirds of the respondents are from the Metropolitan Area of Porto but one third of them come from other municipalities in the North of Portugal (table 2). There was one respondent from each of the following municipalities: Celorico de Basto, Santa Maria da Feira, Arcos de Valdevez, Viana do Castelo, Amarante, Póvoa de Varzim, Vila do Conde, Castelo de Paiva, Resende, Ponte de Lima, Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Cinfães, Marco de Canaveses, Barcelos, Fafe, Lamego and São João da Madeira. There were three respondents from each of the following municipalities: Vila Real, Valongo, Paços de Ferreira.

Table 2. Municipality of Residence.

Municipality of Residence	Total	Percentage
Porto	95	36,3%
Matosinhos	31	11,8%
Vila Nova de Gaia	19	7,3%
Maia	17	6,5%
Gondomar	16	6,1%
Guimarães	16	6,1%
Lousada	9	3,4%
Vila Nova de Famalicão	7	2,7%
Santo Tirso	6	2,3%
Penafiel	6	2,3%
Braga	5	1,9%
Espinho	5	1,9%
Paredes	4	1,5%

4.2. Understanding gastronomy through Generalized Q Analysis

Table 3 present the simple statements, organized into 5 groups of 4 statements each. Group 1 refers to the definition of traditional gastronomy, which represents the cooking practices and food preparation methods passed down through generations within a particular culture or region. It is a key element of cultural heritage and identity. Group 2 relate traditional recipes, which are often centuries old, passed through generations, preserving the culinary heritage of a region. At the same time openness to innovation in traditional cuisine contributes to increasing its cultural attractiveness. Group 3 has to do with the role of local population in traditional gastronomy. It also concerns with globalization which can lead to the loss of traditional dishes; thus it is important to raise the awareness of the younger generations about traditional dishes. Group 4 includes statements on gastronomic tourism as a recent trend contributes to the preservation of traditional dishes.

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Traditional gastronomy should be linked to tourist products such as hotels, restaurants and festivals. Group 5 talks about traditional recipes and variety of contexts related ritual, celebrations and the practical knowledge of food preparation. This group demonstrates the holistic nature of traditional gastronomy, encompassing heritage, community practices and the relationship between people and their traditions of food preparation and consumption.

Table 3. Average Ranking of Simple Statements

Simple Statements	AR	SD
Gastronomy is an integral part of local culture and identity	4,6	0,6
The traditional dish should only be cooked with local ingredients from a specific region	3,2	0,9
Gastronomy is more associated with modern cuisine than with traditional cuisine	2,5	0,9
Gastronomy does not imply heritage, so traditional recipes can be changed over time	2,4	0,9
Traditional dishes should keep the recipes of our grandparents	4,0	0,7
Innovation in traditional cuisine contributes to increasing its cultural attractiveness	3,8	0,8
Traditional and modern kitchens must be merged to create new experiences for customers	3,5	0,9
Traditional recipes should not be modified according to the interests of the market and the chefs	3,5	1,0
It is important to preserve traditional dishes and pass them on from generation to generation	4,4	0,7
The local population has a significant role in the conservation of traditional dishes	4,3	0,7
It is important to raise the awareness of the younger generations about traditional dishes	4,2	0,8
It is worrying to know that globalization leads to the loss of traditional dishes	4,1	0,7
Gastronomic tourism as a recent trend contributes to the preservation of traditional dishes	4,2	0,7
Traditional gastronomy should be linked to tourist products such as hotels, restaurants and festivals.	4,0	0,7
The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is through digitisation (videos, photos or scanning)	3,8	0,9
The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is to publish it in a cookbook	3,5	1,0
Recipes passed down through generations	3,5	1,0
Traditional confection processes and techniques	1,6	0,7
The relationship of recipes with rituals and cultural celebrations	1,3	0,4
Use of local products, utensils and recipes	1,0	0,0

Examining the average rankings of the simple statements, there was a general consensus among respondents that “Gastronomy is an integral part of local culture and identity” and that “Preserving traditional dishes and passing them on from generation to generation is important.” Conversely, there was significant disagreement regarding the exclusive “Use of local products, utensils, and recipes” as well as the “Association of recipes with rituals and cultural celebrations in regional gastronomy.”

In Table 4 we only present the first eight and the last ten possible combinations of statements for respondent Q1, and the way it is computed. Notice that data to be treated will have the valuations of 1024 combined statements for 262 respondents. Nevertheless, since two respondents gave the same value for all 20 basic statements the results of the Principal Component Analysis involved in the Generalized Q Analysis were redundant. Therefore, these two respondents had to be dropped off from the valid responses that turn out to be 260. Note that in the Q Analysis and in the Generalized Q Analysis, statements become observations and respondents become variables. Therefore, it is not advisable to use the Q Analysis with 260 variables and 20 observations, but it is convenient and adequate to use the Generalized Q Analysis with 260 variables and 1024 observations.

Table 4. Values of Combined Statements

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Statements	Q1	Q2
																					Gastronomy is an integral part of local culture and identity	5	4
																					The traditional dish should only be cooked with local ingredients from a specific region	3	2
																					Gastronomy is more associated with modern cuisine than with traditional cuisine	2	2
																					Gastronomy does not imply heritage, so traditional recipes can be changed over time	2	3
																					Traditional and modern kitchens must be merged in order to create new experiences for customers	4	4
																					Traditional dishes should keep the recipes of our grandparents	5	3
																					Traditional recipes should not be modified according to the interests of the market and the chefs	3	4
																					Innovation in traditional cuisine contributes to increasing its cultural attractiveness	3	3
																					The local population has a significant role in the conservation of traditional dishes	5	3
																					It is important to preserve traditional dishes and pass them on from generation to generation	5	4
																					It is worrying to know that globalization leads to the loss of traditional dishes	5	3
																					It is important to raise the awareness of the younger generations about traditional dishes	5	3
																					Gastronomic tourism as a recent trend contributes to the preservation of traditional dishes	5	5
																					Traditional gastronomy should be linked to tourist products (hotels, restaurants and festivals)	4	4
																					The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is to publish it in a cookbook	2	4
																					The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is through digitisation (videos, photos or scanning)	5	4
																					Recipes passed down through generations	4	4
																					The relationship of recipes with rituals and cultural celebrations	2	1
																					Traditional confection processes and techniques	1	2
																					Use of local products, utensils and recipes	1	1
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		23	20
2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	21	17
3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	20	18
4	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	20	17
5	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	22	19
6	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	20	16
7	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	19	17
8	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	19	16
1014	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	16	14
1015	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	15	15
1016	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	15	14
1017	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	16	17
1018	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	14	14
1019	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	13	15
1020	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	13	14
1021	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	19	17
1022	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	17	14
1023	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	16	15
1024	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	16	14

4.3 Results of Principal Component Analysis

This section presents the Principal Component Analysis, aimed to reduce the responses profiles into synthesized and orthogonal responses (1), name them by regressing the vectors of each component with the dummy variables of the simple statements of each composed statement (2) and analysis the relation between the extracted values and the features of the respondents (3). The first

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four components explain 71% of variance (Figure 1) with the 1st Component representing 45% of the variance, the 2nd Component 11%, the 3rd Component 8%, and the 4th Component 5%.

Figure 1. Extracted Explained Variance

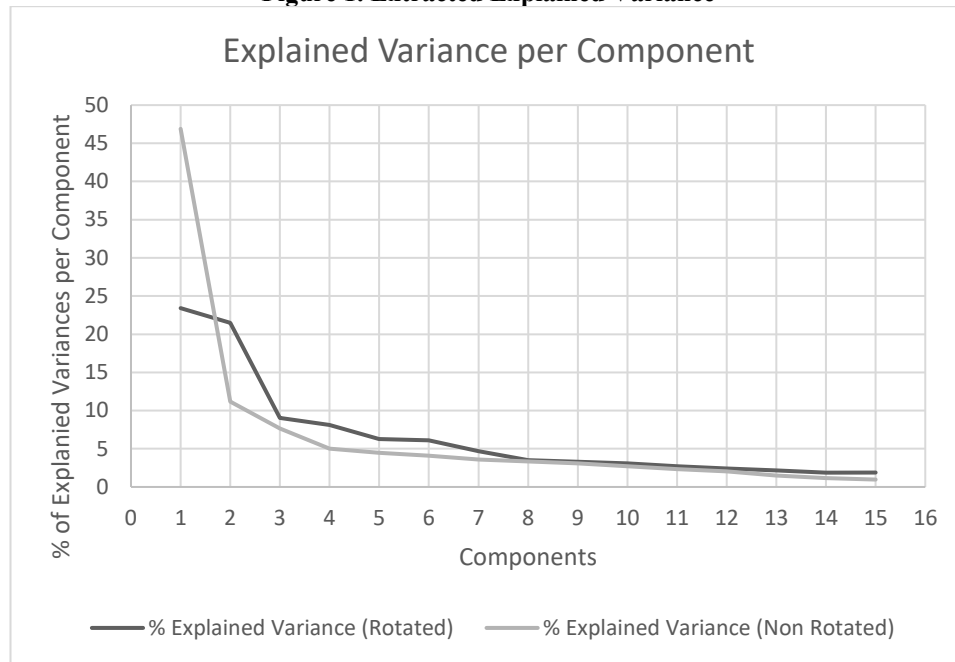


Table 5 facilitates the naming of the components. Component 1 favours all statements of Group 3 (importance of local population and intergenerational transmission). The 1024 regression scores for each one of the 4 main components were regressed against the dummies used to obtain the combined data. Table 5 presents the coefficients of these regressions and shows what is the profile of each component/ representative attitude.

Table 5. Dummy Coefficients for the Four First Components

	C1	C2	C3	C4
Gastronomy is an integral part of local culture and identity	2,024	0,046	0,947	0,158
The traditional dish should only be cooked with local ingredients from a specific region	0,532	0,992	1,377	0,484
Gastronomy is more associated with modern cuisine than with traditional cuisine	0,666	1,011	1,062	0,786
Gastronomy does not imply heritage, so traditional recipes can be changed over time	1,431	1,560	0,668	1,135
Traditional and modern kitchens must be merged in order to create new experiences for customers	2,024	0,046	0,947	0,158
Traditional dishes should keep the recipes of our grandparents	1,622	1,955	1,085	0,134
Traditional recipes should not be modified according to the interests of the market and the chefs	0,583	0,998	0,853	0,029
Innovation in traditional cuisine contributes to increasing its cultural attractiveness	1,950	0,182	1,385	0,197
The local population has a significant role in the conservation of traditional dishes	2,024	0,046	0,947	0,158
It is important to preserve traditional dishes and pass them on from generation to generation	2,142	0,088	0,785	0,198
It is worrying to know that globalization leads to the loss of traditional dishes	1,974	0,225	0,768	0,099
It is important to raise the awareness of the younger generations about traditional dishes	2,035	0,061	0,508	0,246
Gastronomic tourism as a recent trend contributes to the preservation of traditional dishes	2,024	0,046	0,947	0,158
Traditional gastronomy should be linked to tourist products (hotels, restaurants and festivals)	2,131	0,432	0,786	0,173
The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is to publish it in a cookbook	2,408	0,068	1,149	0,029
The best way to preserve a traditional recipe is through digitisation (videos, photos or scanning)	2,348	1,092	1,034	0,077
Recipes passed down through generations	2,024	0,046	0,947	0,158
The relationship of recipes with rituals and cultural celebrations	0,789	0,965	0,353	0,429
Traditional confection processes and techniques	0,868	0,926	0,370	2,305
Use of local products, utensils and recipes	0,788	0,046	0,529	0,339

Group 4 (gastronomic tourism and its role in preservation), particularly statements like “It is important to preserve traditional dishes...” and “Gastronomic tourism contributes to the preservation of traditional dishes.”, highlights the perceived cultural value attributed to local gastronomic heritage and the role of tourism in safeguarding and promoting traditional gastronomic practices (Topole et al., 2021). It is important to preserve traditional dishes and pass them on from generation to generation. This suggests a general appreciation for the cultural and economic role of traditional gastronomy, though with relatively low emphasis on ceremonial or ritualistic aspects (Group 5), such as the maintenance of traditional confection processes and techniques, the use of local products,

utensils and recipes, the adjustment to the market, the creativity of the chefs and the use of local tools and ingredients.

Component 2 exhibits a similar, though less intense, profile to Component 1 in its agreement with preservation and tourism aspects. Instead, it presents a more neutral stance on several statements, suggesting a cautious but supportive view of tradition.

Component 3, unlike previously stated, does not reject the publication of cookbooks as a preservation method — on the contrary, the coefficient suggests a positive view toward this approach. This component appears to value documentation and formal preservation methods such as publishing and digitalization, reflecting an interest in safeguarding heritage through modern tools rather than oral tradition alone.

Finally, the specificity of Component 4 stands out for its strong association with Group 5, particularly in valuing “traditional confection processes and techniques,” which indicates a segment of respondents who see these practices as central to cultural authenticity. These respondents perceive such techniques not merely as functional aspects of food preparation but as symbolic carriers of intangible cultural heritage. Their emphasis reflects a broader understanding of gastronomy as a holistic cultural expression, in which the authenticity of traditional methods is essential for maintaining the integrity and continuity of local identity.

Table 6 presents the analysis of respondents’ associations with the four components reflecting distinct perspectives on traditional gastronomy and cultural heritage. Each component captures specific attitudes and behaviors linked to sociodemographic characteristics and geographic origins.

Table 6. Respondents Associated with Components

	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
R	,286a	,308a	,352a	,311a
R square	0,082	0,095	0,124	0,097
R square adjusted	0,068	0,066	0,103	0,079
Standard error of estimate	0,267	0,247	0,198	0,259
Regression				
Sum of Squares	1,623	1,615	1,393	1,824
df	4	8	6	5
Mean Square	0,406	0,202	0,232	0,365
Z	5,691	3,296	5,949	5,448
Sig.	<,001b	,001b	<,001b	<,001b
Resíduo				
Sum of Squares	18,177	15,369	9,875	17,008
df	255	251	253	254
Mean Square	0,071	0,061	0,039	0,067

Component 1 is the common attitude of the respondents and, naturally, the attempt to allocate it to the features of the respondents does not provide a robust response because, by the nature of Principal Components Technique, the first component extracts what is common to all respondents. Nevertheless, married younger males namely from Penafiel are the chief representatives of this common attitude regarding traditional gastronomy. This could be attributed to factors, such as the strong cultural identity present in Penafiel that is shared by other places, where traditional gastronomy remains an important element of community life. Moreover, younger married individuals may reflect a growing awareness of the importance of preserving gastronomic heritage for future generations, as they often begin to assume familial and cultural responsibilities, including the transmission of local traditions (table 6.1).

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Table 6.1. Component 1 – Preservation and Tourism

Component 1	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error	Beta		
Constant	0,472	0,047		10,029	0,000
Gender	0,089	0,033	0,161	2,661	0,008
Married	0,103	0,049	0,166	2,122	0,035
Age	-0,005	0,001	-0,252	-3,233	0,001
Penafiel	0,227	0,111	0,124	2,051	0,041

As said before Component 2 is a superlative of component 1 and the respondents that are more associated with it are women, non-entrepreneurs and non-students from Póvoa do Varzim, Vila do Conde, Braga, Fafe e Resende. Component 3 that prefers the oral tradition are single with higher scholarship from Valongo, Lousada, Santo Tirso and Arcos de Vale de Vez. Finally the component 4, those who defend traditional confection processes and techniques are those that have higher scholarship and attend training courses on gastronomy and they come from Famalicão, Lousada and Celorico de Basto.

Table 6.2. Component 2 – Cautions Tradition

Component 2	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error	Beta		
Constant	0,445	0,027		16,713	0,000
Gender	-0,058	0,031	-0,114	-1,877	0,062
Entrepreneur	-0,103	0,062	-0,102	-1,664	0,097
Student	-0,093	0,034	-0,171	-2,764	0,006
Póvoa do Varzim	0,375	0,249	0,091	1,503	0,134
Vila do Conde	0,527	0,249	0,128	2,112	0,036
Braga	0,179	0,112	0,096	1,603	0,110
Resende	0,442	0,249	0,107	1,778	0,077
Fafe	0,401	0,249	0,097	1,613	0,108

Table 6.3. Component 3 – Valorization of Documentation

Component 3	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error	Beta		
Constant	0,162	0,043		3,765	0,000
Married	-0,075	0,028	-0,159	-2,669	0,008
Education level	0,017	0,011	0,091	1,527	0,128
Valongo	0,277	0,115	0,142	2,404	0,017
Lousada	0,108	0,067	0,095	1,600	0,111
Santo Tirso	0,269	0,082	0,194	3,293	0,001
Arcos de Valdevez	0,413	0,198	0,123	2,084	0,038

Table 6.4. Component 4 – Technical Authenticity

Component 4	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error	Beta		
Constant	-0,084	0,069		-1,221	0,223
Education level	0,031	0,015	0,131	2,086	0,038
Frequencies	0,015	0,009	0,101	1,617	0,107
VilaNova de Famalicão	0,177	0,099	0,107	1,788	0,075
Lousada	0,273	0,089	0,186	3,061	0,002
Celorico de Basto	0,706	0,264	0,162	2,675	0,008

The results highlight distinct sociodemographic patterns across components, revealing important distinctions in the relationship between respondent profiles and their cultural preferences and interpretation of gastronomy.

5. DISCUSSION

Results are interesting because, on the one hand, they reinforce some of what was accepted by the literature but, on the other hand they indicate important disagreements that could shed some light for the creation of a new common sense.

Yes, respondents generally recognize the importance of cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003) associated with traditional gastronomy included in practices, knowledge, skills, transmitted through generations, but they do not agree with the connection with instruments, objects, artifacts, and rituals (Ramazanov, Cardoso, and Freitas, 2022). Only those that attended training courses seem to favor that non innovative perspective of traditional gastronomy.

Yes, results confirm the importance of the local population (Topole et al., 2021) and the “*taste of the place*” (Trubek, 2008), and the attraction of diverse profiles of tourists (Pita Lino et al., 2023; Markovic and Pindžo, 2020; Seyitoğlu and Ivanov, 2020), but respondents do not agree that such “*taste of place*” should be connected exclusively with local products (Tovmasyan, 2019). Globalization accelerating changes in culture and heritage, posing a tangible risk to the preservation of this heritage related to food in its impact on cultural values, which can fragment and ultimately disappear (Quintero-Angel, Mendoza and Girón, 2022). Thus, the preservation of cultural heritage is essential, as they encompass identities and serve as a gateway to the world's diverse cultures.

Regarding component 3 that dislikes the creation of cookbooks most of the components favor marketing efforts and promotion increased visits and the development of traditional culinary (Rousta and Jamshidi, 2019).

Yes, the study confirmed that consumption habits, culinary traditions and gastronomic heritage, are a testament to the cultural importance of food (Quintero-Angel, Mendoza and Girón, 2022; Romagnoli, 2019; Almansouri et al., 2022). However, it does not confirm that the rise of modernity in food contributed to the degradation of the gastronomic heritage.

The study confirms that cultural heritage functions as a social pact between local residents (Suna, 2019), but it does not agree with a crystallized preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage. The research confirms the role of digitalisation (Adane, Chekole, and Gedamu, 2019) but also indicates disagreement of this potential namely put forward by women (Component 2). Nowadays, digitalisation has taken on a central role in collecting, preserving, promoting and improving the accessibility of cultural heritage. Digitisation has emerged as a fundamental tool, facilitating the conservation and dissemination of cultural legacies (Adane, Chekole, and Gedamu, 2019).

6. CONCLUSION

The research question was to know if traditional gastronomy associated with cultural heritage, promotes tourism and the development of people and places. The use of a Generalized Q Analysis to analyse 262 valid questionnaires confirmed that traditional gastronomy associated with cultural heritage does contribute to tourism and regional development. Traditional cuisine refers to the food that is commonly prepared and consumed by a group of people over a long period of time (Rocillo-Aquino et al., 2021). However, respondents generally do not associate traditional cuisine with confection processes or the exclusive use of local utensils and ingredients. This suggests that the perception of traditional gastronomy among residents may prioritize symbolic and identity dimensions over strict adherence to traditional techniques or ceremonial contexts. This food is associated with the cultural heritage of a community and reflects the local climate, and history (Rocillo-Aquino et al., 2019). Regardless diverse outcomes, preserving traditional gastronomy as cultural heritage is of high relevance not only to foster tourism but also contributes to the growth and prosperity of communities and destinations. These findings reinforce existing literature regarding the importance of cultural heritage and the role of the local population in preserving gastronomic traditions, while also highlighting internal contradictions that merit further investigation. Future research could explore how different layers of tradition are valued or dismissed by various stakeholder groups.

This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the applicability of Generalized Q Analysis in the field of gastronomy and tourism, particularly when assessing resident perceptions. It adds to the literature by demonstrating that local communities do not uniformly associate traditional gastronomy with specific production techniques, but instead emphasize its social and cultural value. From a practical standpoint, the results are relevant for communities and destinations where traditional gastronomy plays a central role. The findings offer guidance for designing policies and marketing strategies that focus on authenticity, community involvement, and innovation without losing the cultural essence of traditional gastronomy. This is especially relevant for destinations aiming to promote intangible cultural heritage such as gastronomy as a tourism asset.

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