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Effects of African local food consumption experiences on post-tasting behavior

Abstract

Purpose - This study is designed to investigate the effects of experiences with local food in Ghana on satisfaction, favorability, and behavioral intention.

Design - Unlike previous studies that have used multiple regression analysis or structural equation modeling, this study adopts impact-range performance analysis (IRPA) and impact asymmetry analysis (IAA). A total sample of 336 questionnaires were used in the data analyses.

Findings - Factor analysis generates five domains of experience of consuming local food. Socialization and boasting, and experience with various menus and quality of food contribute most to explaining the three dependent variables.

Practical implications - The IRPA and IAA results demonstrate the role of African local food consumption experiences in predicting three dependent variables of post-tasting behavior.

Originality/value - This study has significant value because it extends the study of local food consumption experience to the understudied area of African food tourism, particularly Ghanaian food and tourists to Ghana.

Keywords: Consumption, Favorability, Food, Intention, Satisfaction, Performance

Introduction

In spite of much active research there are important research gaps or research questions that require attention. First, this study focuses on the experiential quality of local food consumption in an exotic destination. There has been little work to empirically test the role of local food consumption experiences in explaining post-tasting behavior such as satisfaction, future intention, and preference for a local destination. Second, most food tourism studies have been conducted in Western or Asian countries; little is known concerning international tourists' local food experiential structure and its effect on post-tasting behavior in the African context. For example, some studies have argued that international tourists' local food consumption experiences in Africa are likely to point out health and safety concerns (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Amuquandoh, 2011). From a multicultural approach, knowledge of these underexplored relationships in the context of African local food is important because the results of this study are consistent with those of other countries or continents. Again, this could help us to reach a holistic understanding of the meanings that are embedded in tourists' food experiences.

Third, previous studies have attempted to investigate aspects of tourists' local food consumption by analyzing outcome variables using multiple regression analysis (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Choe and Kim, 2019; Horng *et al*., 2012) or structural equation modelling (Agyeiwaah *et al*., 2018; Choe and Kim, 2018; Kim *et al*., 2014; Kim *et al*., 2010; Tsai and Wang, 2017). While these methods attempt to explain a linear association between experience with local food and post-tasting behavior, their results do not contribute to an understanding of the function of local food consumption experiences in explaining post-tasting behavior, which can be reached using different methods such as impact-range performance analysis (IRPA) and impact asymmetry analysis (IAA), proposed by Mikulić and Prebežac (2008, 2011, 2012). These two methods have previously

been used in studies to measure the range of an attribute's performance impact on overall customer satisfaction (Mikulić *et al*., 2016; Yuan *et al*., 2018).

In view of the above, three objectives were formulated for this study: first, to identify the effect of local food consumption experiences on satisfaction; second, to investigate the effect of local food consumption experiences on preference for a local food destination; and third, to assess the effect of local food consumption experiences on post-tasting behavior. These objectives are expected to be achieved by adopting IRPA and IAA; any divergent results of the statistical analyses will shed new light on important practical implications.

Literature review and hypotheses

Effects of local food consumption experiences on satisfaction

Tourists' local food consumption also enables exploration through learning and intellectual development during overseas travel (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Choe and Kim, 2019). For instance, previous studies have found that eating local foods facilitates tourists' acquisition of deeper knowledge of destinations, which adds to the self-esteem and accomplishment of the individual (Chang *et al*., 2010; Otoo *et al*., 2019). Therefore, consuming local foods allows tourists to be involved and to learn from the activities of the host culture, which also influences tourists' satisfaction and commitment to destinations and services.

According to Kauppinen-Räisänen *et al*. (2013), tourists obtain a sense of refreshment from consuming local foods because it provides a sense of release from the mental or physical fatigue associated with travel. This form of relaxation through local food consumption influences tourists' satisfaction with the destination. Also, tourists derive a sense of symbolism of the tourism experience or some sense of "meaning" from local food consumption (Mitchell and Hall, 2003).

According to Tsai (2016), food tourism experiences represent a significant aspect of meaning-signifying for many tourists. Meaningful experiences can lead to emotional attachment or evoke sentiments. In a similar manner, some studies have found that food tourists obtain meaningful tourism experiences through the reinforcement of friendship, affection, and improved family well-being (Choe and Kim, 2018; Kim and Eves, 2012).

Consuming local food makes tourists experience ataurant quality and ambience in destinations. Since tourists consume a variety of local foods in different restaurants during their travel, they are able to experience and assess the quality of local foods, service, and ambience in restaurants. Previous studies have found that food and restaurant quality are important aspects of the consumers' dining experience (Mak et al., 2012a).

Satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of whether local food meets or exceeds expectations (Choe and Kim, 2018). The attributes of food quality, service, and ambience axiomatically influence tourists' satisfaction with the destination. Previous studies have reported a positive relationship between the experiential domains of local food and satisfaction (Agyeiwaah *et al*., 2018; Choe and Kim, 2019; Kim and Choe, 2019). For example, Kim and Choe (2019) have found a direct relationship between the perceived quality of tourists' culinary experiences and their satisfaction and subsequent behavioral intentions. Given the evidence from previous studies, we anticipate a direct influence of local food experiential quality on tourists' satisfaction with local foods. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Consumption experience of local African food will influence satisfaction with local food consumption.

Effects of local food consumption experience on the favorability of a local food destination

In the food tourism context, favorability relates to tourists' exposure to and knowledge of

a particular local or regional food (Chang *et al*., 2010). Given that local food consumption is largely an experiential activity, tourists gain experiential familiarity from local food consumption. Previous studies (Choe and Kim, 2019; Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Horng *et al*., 2012; Tsai, 2016) have revealed that tourists gain a myriad of experiences from local food consumption. For example, through local food consumption, tourists have opportunities to learn about new cultures or traditions in travel destinations, to taste indigenous or authentic foods and menus and socialize with members of the host destination, and to experience restaurant quality and ambience (Choe and Kim, 2018).

The experiential quality makes tourists feel that they know a destination. Studies on food choice have shown that exposure to certain foods increases tourists' affection for them and perceived closeness to the destination (Mak *et al*., 2012a). Therefore, there is a positive relationship between favorability and repeated exposure to local food (Chang *et al*., 2010). Food tourists' experience leads to a more positive affective and cognitive image of local foods and fosters the intention to consume local foods (Amuquandoh and Asafo-Adjei, 2013; Choe and Kim, 2019; Horng et al., 2012). From the above discussion, we postulate that:

Hypothesis 2: Consumption experience with local African food will influence the favorability of a local food destination.

Effects of local food consumption experience on behavioral intention

Experiential aspects such as novelty, knowledge, restaurant quality, menu variety, culture, involvement, and hedonism are fundamental to positive influences on tourists' behavioral intentions (Horng et al., 2012; Kim and Choe, 2019). Through local food consumption, tourists gain unique and once-in-a-lifetime experiences, which influence their future behavioral intentions (Adongo *et al*., 2015). Tourists are also able to learn the history of local foods and different food

preparation and cooking methods through local food consumption, and to experience a variety of menus and food quality. Moreover, local food consumption bridges cultures and fosters friendships. On the subject of hedonism and meaningfulness, the consumption of local foods offers tourists pleasure, meaning, and self-discovery.

As revealed in previous studies, behavioral intention is an important construct in food tourism and destination marketing. Behavioral intention is an antecedent of future behavior, reflected in revisiting intentions and recommendations through positive word of mouth (Kim *et al*., 2014). Food tourists recommend local food to family members or friends based on their own experiences of consuming local food in destinations (Horng *et al*., 2012). In a different scenario, tourists might want to revisit and learn more about local foods in a particular destination.

The authors have identified experiential domains as significant predictors of experiential satisfaction and behavioral intention. Some researchers (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Tsai, 2016) have also found that tourists' memorable food experiences significantly and positively influence their behavioral intentions. Food experiences relating to hygiene, flavor, menu variety, and good atmosphere influence tourists' future behavioral intentions (Choe and Kim, 2018, 2019). Based on the preceding discussion of the relationship between local food experiential quality and its effect on behavioral intention, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Consumption experience of local African food will influence behavioral intention.

Methods

Measurement

Regarding the measurement constructs and items, this study adopted a sequential mixed method with a qualitative component (interviews) and sequential quantitative phases. A key

concept of this study is experience with local Ghanaian food. A pool of items to represent the experience of eating local Ghanaian food was developed as a result of reviewing extensive research on local food generally (Choe and Kim, 2018; Kim and Eves, 2012; Kim *et al*., 2014; Tsai and Wang, 2017) and Ghanaian food specifically (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Amuquandoh, 2011; Amuquandoh and Asafo-Adjei, 2013). However, since there was a need for items specifying particular features of local Ghanaian food, in-depth interviews were undertaken with 20 foreign tourists. They suggested inclusion of photographs representative of local Ghanaian foods and names on menus. Additionally, they strongly suggested a need for items indicating good hygiene conditions in local restaurants and items indicating memorable experiences in the destination. A new draft questionnaire was developed after reflecting on their comments.

Two items addressing satisfaction with local food consumption experience during travel in Ghana were extracted following a thorough literature review (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Amuquandoh and Asafo-Adjei, 2013; Choe and Kim, 2018; Kivela and Crotts, 2006). The items were satisfaction with quality of local food and restaurant. Three items regarding the favorability of a destination, namely positive evaluation of Ghana, attainment of more knowledge, and perceived closeness to Ghana, were extracted from previous studies (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Amuquandoh, 2016; Horng *et al*., 2012). In addition, four items related to behavioral intention, intention to revisit, intention to recommend, and intention to leave positive comments on social media were derived from the literature review (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Kim *et al*., 2014; Kim *et al*., 2018; Lee *et al*., 2011).

A pilot test was conducted with 60 foreign tourists who had eaten at some “chop bars” (the local name for traditional restaurants) and other local restaurants in Accra. The participants offered some suggestions. For example, they emphasized the importance of experiences with Ghanaian

tradition or culture and exoticism for overseas diners. Concerning behavioral intention, participants in the pilot test recommended the inclusion of an item indicating the role of social media in disseminating local Ghanaian food experience. In addition, regarding willingness to return to Ghana, some respondents suggested specifying a timeframe of within five years because it is not easy to travel to Ghana, due to distance and cost.

In the final questionnaire, a leading question requesting experiences with local Ghanaian food was operationalized as *"Items relating to experiences with local Ghanaian food during your travel are described below. Please evaluate local food that you experienced during your travel in Ghana."* Then 25 items adopted 5-point Likert-type scales having "strongly disagree" (1); "neutral" (3); "strongly agree" (5). In a similar manner, nine items asking about satisfaction with local food consumption experiences, destination favorability, and behavioral intention were introduced by a leading question, *"Items relating to satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention are described below. Please indicate your level of agreement with satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention."* Five-point Likert-type scales were used to measure the items. All questionnaires were written in English. The items used are reported in Tables 1 and 2.

Data collection

The main data collection exercise was undertaken on both weekends and weekdays between April and August 2018 at Kotoka International Airport in Accra, the capital of Ghana. For this exercise, ten undergraduate students were recruited and trained as interviewers and in data collection approaches such as expounding the purpose of this study, asking screening questions, contact method, and explaining local food menus. An incentive equivalent to US$4 per questionnaire was offered to the interviewers to ensure they would work sincerely and purchase a

gift for each respondent as a token of gratitude. To demonstrate the interviewers' sincere work of data collection they were asked to receive signature of each respondent.

Regarding respondents' selection criteria, three screening questions were used. The first question was asked to identify whether respondents had eaten local food during their stay in Ghana. The second asked whether they had tasted two or more items from among seven shown in photos of representative local foods (red red, *tuo zaafi*, *kenkey*, *eto*, *banku*, *fufu*, *ampesi*). The third question, concerning the importance of trying local food during a trip to Ghana, was answered on a 3-point scale (unimportant-neutral-important). In sum, potential samples should have tasted two or more local foods during their stay and placed an importance on eating local food.

For the data collection procedure, this study assumed that a large percentage of the sample would be inbound tourists from the U.S.A., the U.K., and Germany because available figures from the Ghana Tourism Authority (2016) showed that over the past decade the majority of inbound travelers to the country originated from these three source markets. Demographic profiles of international tourists in past studies (Adongo *et al*., 2017; Badu-Baiden *et al*., 2016) have also shown that the majority of incoming tourists had come from these three countries. The interviewers systematically solicited data from every fourth international tourist who entered the lobby of the airport or international tourists who were sitting in rest areas.

Respondents who were not willing to participate in the study were replaced before the next count. Each respondent received a gift of a local souvenir as a token of gratitude for their participation in the survey. Among a total of 400 questionnaires collected, 64 were identified as inappropriate for the study due to multiple missing items or consistently answering on one number (e.g., "3" ("neutral")), and were rejected. Finally, 336 questionnaires were used for further data analysis.

Data analysis methods

IRPA and IAA were the main analytical methods used to investigate the influence of local food consumption experiences during a trip on satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. The two methods were proposed by Mikulić and Prebežac (2008) as a means of balancing the weaknesses of IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis), such as the vague definition of importance, consistently high scores of importance, use of a mean score to determine the cutoff points of the importance-performance gridline, and the averaging of all items despite different relative weights among importance items and among performance items to determine the cutoff points (Mikulić and Prebežac, 2008). The IRPA and IAA methods have been adopted by various studies of the hospitality and tourism industry (Coghlan, 2012; Mikulić and Prebežac, 2008, 2011, 2012; Ye *et al*., 2016; Oh *et al*., 2019).

Three multiple regression models were constructed. In these models, five extracted domains of local food consumption experience were employed as independent variables, and three dependent variables were also defined – satisfaction with local food consumption experience, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. To realize reward indices (RIs) and penalty indices (PIs), independent variables to indicate RIs were coded as 1 = a domain mean exceeding 4.0 and 0 = others, whereas independent variables to calculate PIs were coded as 1 = a domain mean of less than 3.0 and 0 = others. As shown in Table 3, in a multiple regression equation where the five independent variables are regressed on each dependent variable, a high level of unstandardized regression coefficients of RIs indicates high performance. In contrast, a high level of unstandardized regression coefficients of PIs indicates low performance. Thus, one multiple regression equation is equal to a combination of unstandardized regression coefficients of RIs and

PIs. Significant coefficients at a certain significance level in the multiple regression model indicate influential factors in the prediction of each dependent variable.

An IRPA figure, like an IPA figure, is also divided into four quadrants according to grand mean scores. However, the vertical axes of the two figures are different. That is, the IRPA figure shows impact range, while the IPA figure indicates importance. An examination of an IAA figure results in three impact groups to interpret the output of RIOCS, which indicates the combined magnitude of RI and PI. A more detailed explanation is offered in the notes under Table 4. Impact asymmetry (IA) explaining satisfaction with local food consumption experience was divided into five groups: "delighters," "satisfiers," "hybrids," "dissatisfiers," and "frustraters." In predicting destination favorability, five groups were named according to the magnitude of IA: "intimidators," "favorabilitizers," "hybrids," "de-favorabilitizers," and "estrangers." To explain the magnitude of IA in accounting for behavioral intention, five groups were labeled "advocates," "recommenders," "hybrids," "hesitaters," and "dissenters." The scales determining the five groups are meticulously reported in the three IA figures. The conceptual and methodological configuration is explained in Figure 1.

[FIGURE 1]

Results

Descriptive analysis

Concerning tourists' nationality, the highest percentage were tourists from the U.S.A. (32.2%), followed by German (19.6%), British (16.7%), Spanish (10.0%), and Dutch (5.8%) tourists. A much higher percentage of respondents were female (74.4%), single (82.0%), and in their twenties and thirties (95.3%). The average annual household income of the majority was

US$25,000 or less (52.9%), followed by US$70,001 or more (24.2%). The final educational level of the majority was college graduate or higher (45.9%), followed by college students (38.2%). As for religion, the majority identified as Christian (53.0%).

Regarding duration of travel, the majority indicated 21 nights or more (60.5%), followed by 11–20 nights (32.8%). With regard to purpose of visit, the majority indicated "other" (mostly volunteering work, 53.6%), followed by vacation/leisure (33.4%) and business (10.1%). Regarding frequency of visit, the majority indicated that it was their first time in Ghana (80.5%), while almost a fifth stated that it was at least their second trip (19.5%). Regarding the type of restaurant visited, respondents indicated various types, including Ghanaian casual dining restaurants (59.8%), local restaurants where Ghanaian residents usually go (54.2%), local restaurants that had been recommended by friends/tour guides (43.8%), and fine-dining restaurants (31.5%). Regarding dietary preferences, respondents answered both meat and vegetables (68.6%), vegetables (21.5%), and meat (9.9%).

Exploratory factor analysis

To reduce the number of items manifesting local food consumption experience, a factor analysis was undertaken. This is a good way to deal with concerns of multicollinearity between independent variables, which can occur when many independent variables are simultaneously regressed on one dependent variable. An exploratory factor analysis was performed with 25 items using the principal component factor extraction method and the varimax rotation method. The results of the factor analysis generated a five-factor structure where eigenvalues were greater than 1.0. The variance explained by each of the five factors was 37.15%, 9.33%, 6.80%, 5.23%, and 4.46%, respectively. Communalities for each item, which indicate the variance explained by the factors, were higher than .54, thus exceeded the threshold of .50 (Hair et al., 2010).

The factor loadings ranged between .48 to .80, exceeding the threshold (.40) recommended by Comrey and Lee (1992). The results of the reliability tests on each domain were .78 or higher, meaning that the values were satisfactory considering the minimum (.70) recommended by Nunnally (1978) to ensure that all items in each domain are internally consistent. Finally, the five domains were labeled: experiencing authentic food (Domain 1), socialization and boasting (Domain 2), experiencing a high-quality local restaurant (Domain 3), learning local food culture (Domain 4), experiencing various menus and quality of food (Domain 5). Here, socialization and boasting refers to enjoyment obtained from intermingling with others in a relaxing and exciting ambience and a desire to boasting their experience to others. The grand mean scores on the five domains were 4.33, 3.98, 3.86, 4.34, and 4.04, respectively. The results are reported in Table 1.

The results of the exploratory factor analyses of satisfaction, behavioral intention, and destination favorability are explained in Table 2. Since these three constructs consisted of two, four, and three items, respectively, factor analyses were run to identify the factor structure of each construct. The results of the factor analyses produced a single-factor solution. As shown in Table 2, the constructs' eigenvalues were 1.75, 2.65, and 2.27, respectively, and they explained 87.5%, 66.30%, and 75.65% of the variance, respectively. Since the reliability alpha values of the three constructs were .86, .83, and .84, respectively, their internal consistency was satisfactory. The grand mean scores of the three constructs were 3.90, 3.88, and 4.02, respectively.

[TABLES 1 AND 2]

Influence of local food consumption experience on satisfaction

Table 3 and Figure 2 report the results of IRPA and IAA. They are delineated to test hypothesis 1. Since the models used to predict the three dependent variables (satisfaction,

destination favorability, and behavioral intention) complied with the multiple regression equation, it was necessary to test for multicollinearity, a high level of correlation between independent variables. Thus, the tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) value of each independent variable should be investigated. As the two indices were greater than .58 and lower than 1.73 in the regression models, they met the criteria (higher than .25 for tolerance; lower than 10.0 for VIF, respectively) for multicollinearity (Hair *et al*., 2010; Huber and Stephens, 1993).

[TABLE 3 AND FIGURE 2]

The results of running a multiple regression model to predict satisfaction generated an adjusted R^2 value of .39, indicating that 39% of the variance in satisfaction was accounted for by the five independent variables. According to an examination of the RI scores, socialization and boasting (.43) and experience of various menus and quality of food (.30) contributed to satisfaction with the local food consumption experience. In contrast, socialization and boasting (-.49) and experience of a high-quality local restaurant (-.42) strongly contributed to dissatisfaction with the local food consumption experience, based on an analysis of the PI scores.

The highest RIOCS values were identified for socialization and boasting (.92), followed by experience of a high-quality local restaurant (.55), experience of authentic food (.44), experience of various menus and quality of food (.31), and experience of local food culture (.21). As a result, socialization and boasting is the strongest influence on the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with local restaurants. The results of IRPA, shown in Figure 2, indicate that learning experience with local food culture and experience of authentic food fall into the low-impact but high-performance quadrant. Experience of various menus and quality of food was located in the low-impact/low-performance quadrant. Interestingly, socialization and boasting, and experience of a high-quality local restaurant belonged to the high-impact/low-performance quadrant.

According to the results of the IAA shown in Figure 2, experience of various menus and quality of food was identified as a delighter because it demonstrated a very high-impact asymmetry. However, its impact on satisfaction or dissatisfaction was not high. Experience of authentic food and experience of a high-quality local restaurant were classified as frustraters since the experiential components showed a very negative impact asymmetry. In particular, learning experience with local food culture, and socialization and boasting were referred to as hybrids because they revealed a medium level of impact asymmetry. However, socialization and boasting showed a high impact level, compared to learning experience with local food.

Influences of local food consumption experience on destination favorability

To test hypothesis 2, multiple regression analysis was undertaken. The multiple regression equation to account for local Ghanaian food destination favorability using the five experiential components produced an adjusted R^2 value of .41, indicating that 41% of the variance in destination favorability was explained by the five independent variables. Based on the RI scores, significance was observed for socialization and boasting (.47) and experience of various menus and quality of food (.20), at least at the .05 level. This means the two experimental factors contributed to stimulating favor for the local food destination. After scrutinizing the PI scores, significance was noted in socialization and boasting (-.46) and experience of a high-quality local restaurant (-.20). Interestingly, socialization and boasting can also strongly and negatively affect destination favorability if local restaurants fail to adequately offer this factor to food tourists.

The highest RIOCS score was observed for socialization and boasting (.93) and learning experience with local food culture (.34). This indicates that the experiential factors were the biggest determinants affecting the favorability or unfavorability of Ghana as a local food tourism destination. As shown in Figure 3, learning experience with local food culture and experience of

authentic food were located in the high-performance/low-impact category, whereas experience of various menus and quality of food and experience of a high-quality local restaurant fell into the low-performance/low-impact quadrant. However, socialization and boasting was in the low-performance/high-impact cell, which explains why its performance was low despite being a high-impact factor. The IAA results indicated that no experimental component was an intimidator. Experience of various menus and quality of food was regarded as a favorabilitizer, whereas socialization and boasting, and learning experience with local food culture were deemed hybrids. Experience of authentic food and experience of a high-quality local restaurant were revealed as estrangers. That is, if local restaurants failed to meet food tourists' expectations of experiencing authentic food and a high-quality local restaurant, they directly contribute to their de-favorability as a local Ghanaian food destination.

[FIGURE 3]

Influences of local food consumption experience on behavioral intention

To examine hypothesis 3, a series of analyses were conducted. The multiple regression equation for predicting behavioral intention using the five independent variables generated an adjusted R^2 value of .42. Thus, 42% of the variance in behavioral intention was accounted for by the five independent variables. The RI scores on socialization and boasting (.56) and experience of various menus and quality of food (.19) were significant at the .001 level or .05 level. The PI scores revealed significance at the .001 level for socialization and boasting (-.56) and experience of a high-quality local restaurant (-.31), which strongly influenced dissatisfaction. A close investigation of the RIOCS values indicated that socialization and boasting (1.12) was the most influential component in explaining behavioral intention. That is, the component was very

influential in determining whether tourists planned to return or not. The next most influential component was experience of a high-quality local restaurant (.44), which had an especially negative effect on behavioral intention.

According to the IRPA results, authentic food and learning experience with local food culture were in the low-impact/high-performance quadrant, whereas experience of a high-quality local restaurant and experience of various menus and quality of food were located in the low-impact/low-performance quadrant. Socialization and boasting fell into the low-performance/high-impact category. The IAA results are reported in Figure 4. Experience of various menus and quality of food was labeled an advocate, while socialization and boasting was labeled a hybrid. Interestingly, since experience of authentic food and learning experience with local food culture were labeled dissenters, they determined dissuading behavioral intention.

[FIGURE 4]

Discussion and conclusions

Conclusions

The results of this study are in line with those of previous studies (Chan and Baum, 2007; Kim *et al*., 2016) supporting Herzberg's two-factor theory because this study identified coexistence of both satisfiers and dissatisfiers in each of the five experience components. That is, one experiential component can act as a satisfier for some diner groups and as a dissatisfier for others. International diners have different expectations, previous experiences, preferences, cultural backgrounds, and other socio-demographic features. Thus, satisfaction levels cannot be uniformly measured on a horizontal continuum from highly satisfied to highly dissatisfied. This indicates a need for further efforts to more precisely define or conceptualize satisfaction according to experiential quality.

Further, this study has shown the magnitude of the effects of the experiential factors on future intention. Importantly, previous studies have used only one dependent variable, satisfaction, in conducting IRPA and IAA (Coghlan, 2012; Mikulić and Prebežac, 2008, 2011, 2012; Ye *et al*., 2016), whereas this study has introduced the additional dependent variables of destination favorability and behavioral intention in order to identify the explanatory role of experiential components on the dependent variables.

Theoretical implications

The results of exploratory factor analysis exploring the dimensions of local food consumption experience generated a five-factor structure encompassing experience of authentic food, socialization and boasting, experience of a high-quality local restaurant, learning experience with local food culture, and experience of various menus and quality of food. Epistemic experiences, such as learning about culture or tasting authentic food, showed very high mean scores (4.33 and 4.34 out of 5.0). These results are consistent with those of other studies that have reported the importance of these factors in the context of tasting local cuisines during overseas travel (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Kim and Choe, 2019).

The exploratory power (adjusted R^2) for predicting satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention using the four experiential domains was high at .39, .41, and .42, respectively. These results indicating that food experiential domains can determine post-tasting behavior are supported by those of previous studies showing high path coefficients or adjusted R^2 values (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Choe and Kim, 2018, 2019; Horng *et al*., 2012; Kim *et al*., 2018; Kim *et al*., 2014; Kim *et al*., 2010; Tsai and Wang, 2017).

The IAA findings show that experience of authentic food was classified as a frustrater,

estranger, or dissenter. This means that a low level of satisfaction with this experience has only a small influence on satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention, whereas underperformance of this experience has a strong influence on dissatisfaction. The results of this study thus support Herzberg and colleagues' two-factor theory, which states that different attributes influence customers' satisfaction and dissatisfaction differently (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg et al., 1958).

The epistemic experience of learning about local food culture was classified as a hybrid and a dissenter. That is, the negative impact on satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention of a lower level of satisfaction with this experience is likely to be stronger than the positive impact of a higher level of satisfaction on the three dependent variables. This means that the poor performance of a restaurant in providing opportunities for learning about local food culture can have a stronger effect in discouraging future intention than a good performance has in encouraging future intention. This finding is similar to those of previous studies reporting that negative information has a stronger influence on tourism demand than positive information (Kim and Wong, 2006).

Experiences of tasting local Ghanaian food helped to explain future intention because their effects showed distinctiveness as well as similarity in experiential dimensions when the IRPA and IAA methods were employed. Therefore, the findings of this study are more valuable than those obtained using multiple regression analyses, which assume a linear relationship between one dependent variable and five experiential variables as explanatory variables. Socialization and boasting acts to boost both satisfaction and dissatisfaction, facilitating both favorability and unfavorability, and influencing both high and low levels of behavioral intention. However, experience of authentic food has a more positive influence on future intention.

Practical implications

This empirical research offers several important practical implications. First, as previously mentioned, the respondents' assessments of their experience of authentic food and learning experience with local food culture were very positive, with mean values of 4.33 and 4.34, respectively. However, the IRPA results show that respondents considered all three dependent variables to be low-impact. This means that even though they perceived these two experiences to be positive, they had little influence on their future intention. Despite providing authentic food and learning experiences to guests, the low influence of these two factors on future intention could partly be attributed to the poor service and insufficient facilities that are often found in most traditional restaurants in Ghana (Adongo *et al*., 2015). Generally speaking, most traditional eateries in the country lack facilities and services that meet acceptable international standards (Amuquandoh, 2011). Therefore, even though such restaurants exhibited their uniqueness with their African style, perhaps tourists were not content with the level of service provision, and this low level of satisfaction negatively impacted their future intention.

Second, the PI values show that socialization and boasting, and experience of a high-quality local restaurant had a significantly negative relationship with all three dependent variables. This indicates that respondents who perceived the two experiential aspects less favorably were more highly dissatisfied, more highly unfavorable of the local food destination, and showed unfavorable behavioral intention. In practical terms, local restaurants' failure to offer international diners experiences of socialization and boasting, and quality entails very strong dissatisfaction. In other words, now that international tourists place a high value on experiences of socialization with other tourists or local residents during overseas travel (Agyeiwaah *et al*., 2018; Choe and Kim, 2019; Tsai and Wang, 2017), local restaurateurs need to design restaurants

with open kitchens and to foster interactions with employees or other patrons. International tourists in Ghana want high-quality local restaurants that meet good hygiene standards, are pleasingly decorated, and are in safe locations because they are concerned about food safety issues and security (Adongo *et al*., 2015; Amuquandoh, 2011, 2016). Moreover, since they are traveling in an African country they may show high levels of fear and thus seek secure locations (Otoo *et al*., 2019).

Third, Previous studies using Herzberg's two-factor theory have reported that dissatisfaction is not necessarily opposed to satisfaction because they may not be located on a continuum (Kim *et al*., 2016). In addition, this study discovered that the relationship between satisfaction and dissatisfaction can vary according to the dimensionality of the food consumption experience in a foreign tourism destination. Thus, to improve tourists' satisfaction with local food, local restaurateurs must work on improving the originality and flavor of local dishes. Further, restaurant managers need to provide guests with information on both the nutritional value of local dishes and local ingredients that are used in preparing them because international tourists are not familiar with African cuisine.

Fourth, the IAA results show that the experience of various menus and quality of food was classified as a delighter, favorabilitizer, and advocate. The level of satisfaction with this experience has a significant influence on satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. Nevertheless, a poor perception of this experience did not necessarily cause a low level of satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. The reason for this is that RIs are more significant than PIs in explaining the predictive power of experience of various menus and quality of food regarding the three dependent variables. Even though respondents who evaluated this experience as poor did not show a typical association between experience of

various menus and quality of food on the one hand and the three dependent variables on the other, it is important to provide tourists a pleasant experience with a varied menu and good food quality in order to enhance future intention. Thus, local restaurants need to diversify and introduce more authentic local dishes into their menus. In addition, there is a need to enhance food quality through hygienic food preparation and by developing standard recipes using verified ingredients because international tourists' experience of tasting African food has been unfavorable in terms of uncleanliness, mistrust regarding ingredients, and sickness after eating (Amuquandoh, 2011, 2016).

Fifth, socialization and boasting was identified as a hybrid factor in predicting satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. According to the IRPA results, this experience component was the highest contributor to explaining the three outcome variables for both RI and PI. That is, those who were highly satisfied with this experience presented high levels of the three resultant variables. In contrast, those who were very dissatisfied with this experience presented low levels of satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention. As a consequence, socialization and boasting is an imperative experience necessary to satisfy diners because poor performance in this experience will lead to a high level of dissatisfaction, dislike of the destination, and have a dissuasive effect on future intention. Restaurant managers must create pleasant eating environments that facilitate the intermingling of tourists, service providers, and other guests. Opportunities for tourists to make new friends, experience the cuisine, and enjoy the food service process will enhance interaction between restaurant employees and guests. Since social value is considered important by international tourists regarding their travels, there is a need to encourage social interaction with international customers.

Sixth, experience of a high-quality local restaurant was identified as a frustrater, estranger, and hesitator. This means that those who reported a low level of satisfaction with their experience of a high-quality local restaurant expressed low levels of satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention, whereas a high level of satisfaction with this experience did not help to enhance the three resultant variables. Previous studies seem to have reached a consensus that a high-quality local restaurant is regarded as an important attribute in tourists' restaurant choices and satisfaction. Therefore, managers of local restaurants must ensure that their outlets meet guests' expectations, for example those regarding hygiene or service delivery. For example, guidelines for kitchen safety and/or hygiene should be offered to working staff and used for training. In addition, management needs to provide authentic local dishes with unique garnishes and/or served on plates engraved with traditional designs to provide memorable African experiences.

Limitations and future research

First, tourists' food consumption experiences can vary according to the standards of a local restaurant (Tsai and Lu, 2012) or a tourist's familiarity with foreign food (Kivela and Crotts, 2005), personality (Kim *et al*., 2010; Mak *et al*., 2017), or preferences (Amuquandoh, 2016; Chang *et al*., 2010). Thus, future research needs to analyze tourists' experiences considering these variables. Second, a majority of the sample consisted of young adults (aged 20–30) who were doing volunteer work in Ghana. Even though young adults constitute a high percentage of inbound tourists to Ghana (Amuquandoh, 2016), there is a need to include other demographics such as middle-aged or senior tourists. Third, a majority of the participants in this study were tourists from Western countries, in particular the U.S.A., Germany, the U.K., Spain, and the Netherlands. Most previous studies agree that there are cross-cultural differences in food

consumption experiences because food is an inherent asset of national, ethnic, and religious groups (e.g., Choe and Kim, 2019; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Hwang *et al*., 2018). Therefore, future research needs to compare tourists' experiences considering cultural background. Fourth, a qualitative research method could also be adopted to confirm the findings of this study because in-depth interviews can help identify the hermeneutic nature of the reasoning behind subjective experiences. Finally, only two items manifest satisfaction with local food consumption experience and thus a future study needs to include at least three items in order to enhance its dimensional structure.

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Table 1. Exploratory factor analysis of local Ghanaian food consumption experience (N = 336)

Domains and items to indicate local Ghanaian food experience	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
Domain 1 (Experience of authentic food. eigenvalue = 9.66, 37.15%, α = .86)			
I tasted food unlike that of my country.	.67	.80	4.56
I tasted unknown food.	.65	.76	4.33
I tasted authentic local Ghanaian food.	.65	.75	4.43
I tasted traditional Ghanaian food.	.64	.70	4.46
I tasted indigenous Ghanaian food.	.66	.55	4.33
I tasted exotic ingredients.	.48	.48	4.07
Grand mean = 4.33			
Domain 2 (Socialization and boasting. eigenvalue = 2.43, 9.33%, α = .81**)**			
I could build a good memory by tasting local Ghanaian food.	.66	.74	4.07
I like to talk to families and friends about my Ghana experiences over a meal.	.61	.67	4.43
I could boast to others about tasting local Ghanaian food.			
Tasting local Ghanaian food helped me to relax.	.66	.67	3.40
Tasting local Ghanaian food served by local people in its original context	.62	.59	3.39
helped me to socialize with local people.	.54	.60	3.93
Tasting local Ghanaian food in its original context was exciting.			
Grand mean = 3.98	.59	.53	4.16
Domain 3 (Experience of a high-quality local restaurant. eigenvalue = 1.77, 6.80%, α = .81**)**			
I experienced exotic ambiences of local Ghanaian restaurants.	.70	.76	3.86
I experienced a high level of service quality in local restaurants.	.62	.69	3.69
I experienced good hygiene conditions in local restaurants.	.64	.60	3.61
I experienced value for money in local restaurants.	.62	.60	4.11
I tasted local food with local people and other foreign tourists.	.59	.58	4.11
Grand mean = 3.86			
Domain 4 (Learning experience with local food culture. eigenvalue = 1.36, 5.23%, α = .85**)**			
Tasting local Ghanaian food increased my knowledge of a different culture.	.71	.79	4.34
Tasting local Ghanaian food served by local people in its original context	.69	.71	4.28
helped me to understand the local culture.			
Tasting local Ghanaian food allowed me to discover something new.	.63	.63	4.43
Tasting local Ghanaian food enabled me to learn about this cuisine.	.65	.58	4.42
Grand mean = 4.34			
Domain 5 (Experience of various menus and quality of food. eigenvalue = 1.16, 4.46%, α = .78**)**			
I tasted good-quality food.	.73	.73	3.99
I tasted delicious food.	.72	.70	4.15
I tasted various menus and ingredients.	.55	.56	3.96
I was served adequate food portions.	.59	.52	4.15
Grand mean = 4.04			

Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis of satisfaction, destination favorability, and behavioral intention

Satisfaction with local food consumption experience (eigenvalue = 1.75; explained variance = 87.57%; α = .86)	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
I was satisfied with the quality of local Ghanaian foods.	.88	.94	3.91
Overall, I was satisfied with a local restaurant.	.88	.94	3.89
Grand mean = 3.90			
Favoring a local food destination (eigenvalue = 2.27; explained variance = 75.65%; α = .84)	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
I became familiar with Ghana after tasting local Ghanaian foods.	.77	.89	3.87
I felt positive about Ghana after tasting local Ghanaian foods.	.74	.86	4.03
I felt that I gained additional knowledge about Ghana after tasting local foods.	.76	.87	4.02
Grand mean = 4.02			
Behavioral intention (eigenvalue = 2.65; explained variance = 66.30%; α = .83)	Communalities	Factor loadings	Mean
I would recommend local Ghanaian foods to my family and/or friends.	.73	.85	3.99
I would visit a local Ghanaian restaurant after my return home.	.78	.89	4.01
I would visit Ghana to explore diverse local foods within the next five years.	.59	.77	3.73
I would leave positive reviews of local Ghanaian foods on social media (e.g., Facebook, blogs, video clips, and Messenger).	.55	.74	3.81
Grand mean = 3.88			

Table 3. IRPA and IAA results predicting three post-tasting behavior

Satisfaction with local food consumption experience (Adjusted $R^2 = .39$)								
Local food consumption experience components	Performance (mean)	RI	PI	RIOCS	SGP	DGP	IA	Factor
Experience of authentic food	4.33	-.12	-.32	.44	.27	.73	-.45	Frustrater
Socialization and boasting	3.98	.43***	-.49**	.92	.47	.53	-.06	Hybrid
Experience of a high-quality local restaurant	3.86	.13	-.42***	.55	.23	.77	-.53	Frustrater
Learning experience with local food culture	4.34	.09	.11	.21	.46	.54	-.09	Hybrid
Experience of various menus and quality of food	4.04	.30**	-.01	.31	.96	.04	.91	Delighter
Favoring a local food destination (Adjusted $R^2 = .41$)								
Local food consumption experience components	Performance (mean)	RI	PI	RIOCS	SGP	DGP	IA	Factor
Experience of authentic food	4.33	.05	-.20	.25	.21	.79	-.59	Estranger
Socialization and boasting	3.98	.47***	-.46**	.93	.51	.49	.02	Hybrid
Experience of a high-quality local restaurant	3.86	.03	-.20*	.23	.14	.86	-.72	Estranger
Learning experience with local food culture	4.34	.16	-.18	.34	.47	.53	-.07	Hybrid
Experience of various menus and quality of food	4.04	.20*	-.09	.29	.68	.32	.36	Favorabilitizer
Behavioral intention (Adjusted $R^2 = .42$)								
Local food consumption experience components	Performance (mean)	RI	PI	RIOCS	SGP	DGP	IA	Factor
Experience of authentic food	4.33	.05	.17	.22	.21	.79	-.59	Dissenter
Socialization and boasting	3.98	.56***	-.56***	1.12	.50	.50	.00	Hybrid
Experience of a high-quality local restaurant	3.86	.13	-.31**	.44	.30	.70	-.39	Hesitater
Learning experience with local food culture	4.34	-.03	-.31	.35	.10	.90	-.81	Dissenter
Experience of various menus and quality of food	4.04	.19*	-.02	.21	.93	.07	.85	Advocate

Notes: RI and PI are unstandardized regression coefficients.
RI = reward indices, P I =penalty indices, RIOCS = |reward index| + |penalty index|, SGP = |reward index|/RIOCS, DGP = |penalty index|/RIOCS, IA = SGP - DGP
Frustrater < Dissatisfier < Hybrid < Satisfier < Delighter
Estranger < De-favorabilitizer < Hybrid < Favorabilitizer < Intimator
Dissenter < Hesitater < Hybrid < Recommender < Advocator
*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, and * $p < .05$.

Figure 1. Conceptual and methodological configuration

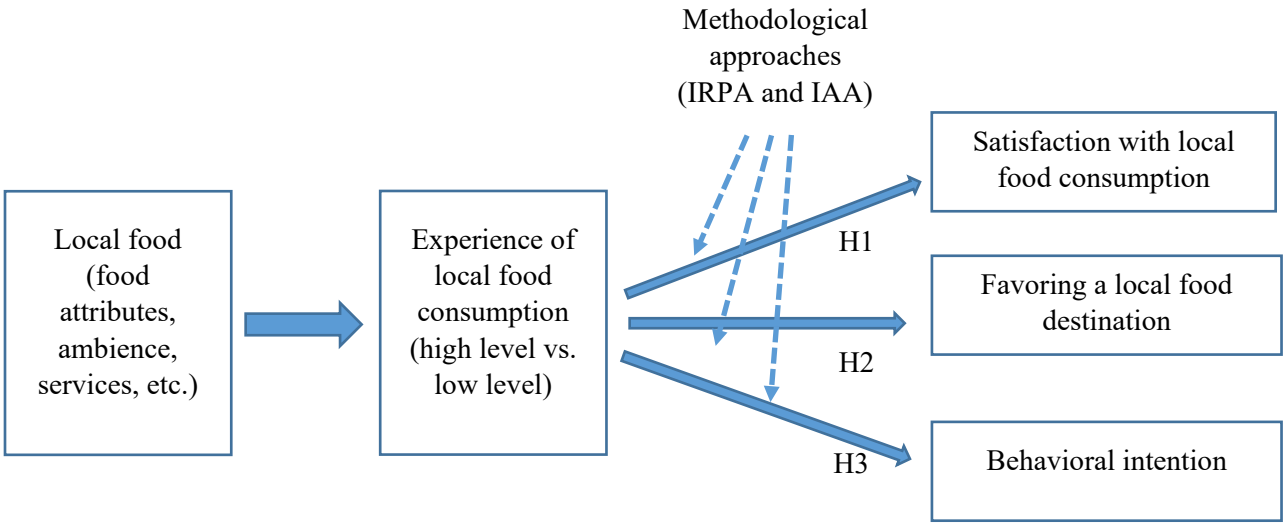
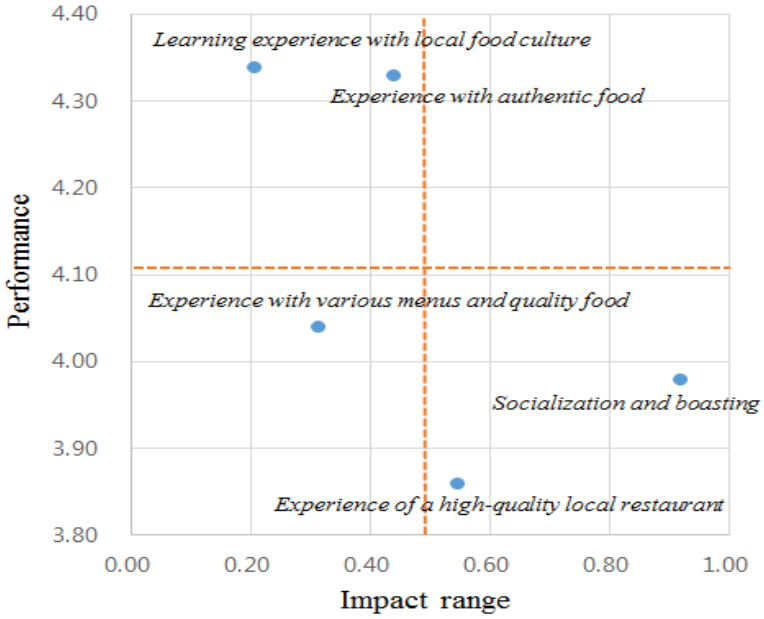


Figure 2. IRPA predicting satisfaction with local food consumption experience



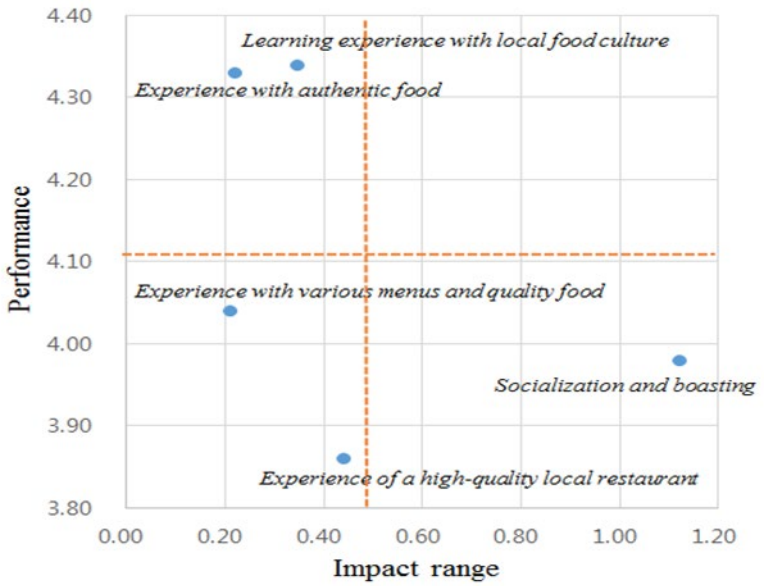


Figure 3. IRPA predicting favoring of a local food destination

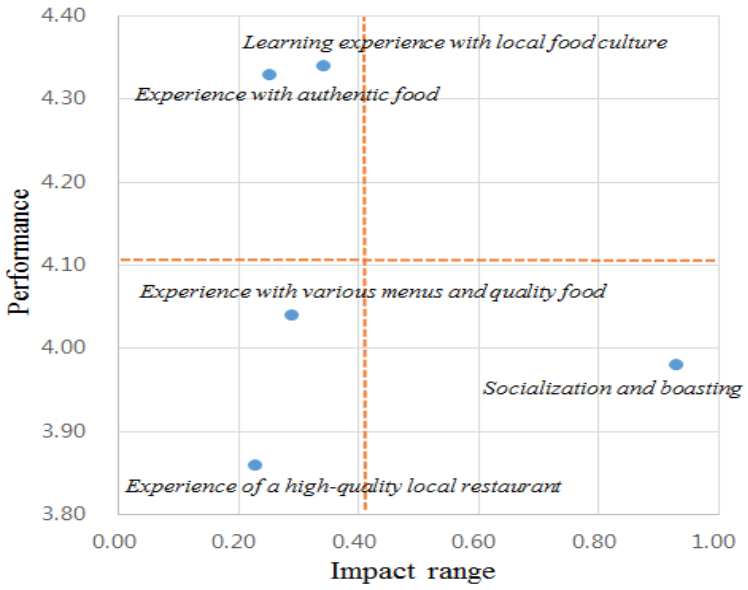


Figure 4. IRPA predicting behavioral intention