


**THE SUCCESS OF A FOOD TOURISM DESTINATION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW**

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ARTICLE INFO	<u>ABSTRACT</u>
<p><b>Article history:</b></p> <p><b>Received</b> 03 July 2023</p> <p><b>Accepted</b> 03 October 2023</p>	<p><b>Purpose:</b> This study aimed to identify the critical success factors (CSFs) of food tourism destinations and analyse their importance for the development of destination tourism.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p>SLR; Food Tourism; Food Destination; CSF.</p> <div data-bbox="172 913 480 1160" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>Design/methodology/approach:</b> We conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) to identify prevalent CSFs in food tourism destinations. Out of 210 articles related to food tourism destinations, 41 underwent a rigorous selection process for analysis. The chosen articles were examined comprehensively to provide a replicable overview of the subject.</p> <p><b>Findings:</b> The five most popular factors were: marketing, food quality, food product, cultural identity and visitor experience. It was also found that more studies were conducted on the supply side, while fewer studies were conducted on the demand and supply side. There was a significant difference between the CSFs of supply and demand side statistics separately.</p> <p><b>Research Practical &amp; Social implications:</b> This comprehensive review of CSFs in food tourism destinations offers a valuable contribution to the field. It encompasses insights into publication patterns, temporal distribution, research methodologies, and the identification of prevalent success factors. This knowledge helps researchers position their work, identify gaps, and align their research for maximum impact. Ultimately, it fosters efficient and productive future research, facilitating meaningful advancements in food tourism.</p> <p><b>Originality/value:</b> The study clarifies what are the most popular venues for successful food tourism destinations for publishing research. How research on CSFs in food tourism destinations is distributed over time and what the geographical distribution of research looks like. And what are the most popular CSFs for food tourism destinations.</p> <p>Doi: <a href="https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i10.3761">https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i10.3761</a></p>

**O SUCESSO DE UM DESTINO DE TURISMO GASTRONÔMICO: UMA REVISÃO SISTEMÁTICA**

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** Este estudo teve como objetivo identificar os fatores críticos de sucesso (CSFs) dos destinos de turismo alimentar e analisar sua importância para o desenvolvimento do turismo de destino.

**Design/metodologia/abordagem:** Realizamos uma revisão sistemática da literatura (SLR) para identificar CSFs predominantes em destinos turísticos de alimentos. Dos 210 artigos relacionados a destinos de turismo

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gastronômico, 41 passaram por rigoroso processo de seleção para análise. Os artigos escolhidos foram examinados de forma abrangente para fornecer uma visão geral replicável do assunto.

**Descobertas:** Os cinco fatores mais populares foram: marketing, qualidade alimentar, produto alimentar, identidade cultural e experiência do visitante. Constatou-se igualmente que foram realizados mais estudos do lado da oferta e menos estudos do lado da procura e da oferta. Verificou-se uma diferença significativa entre os QEC das estatísticas do lado da oferta e do lado da procura separadamente.

**Investigação Implicações práticas e sociais:** Esta revisão abrangente dos QCA em destinos turísticos de comida oferece uma contribuição valiosa para o campo. Abrange insights sobre padrões de publicação, distribuição temporal, metodologias de pesquisa e a identificação de fatores de sucesso predominantes. Esse conhecimento ajuda os pesquisadores a posicionar seu trabalho, identificar lacunas e alinhar suas pesquisas para obter o máximo de impacto. Em última análise, promove a investigação futura eficiente e produtiva, facilitando avanços significativos no turismo alimentar.

**Originalidade/valor:** O estudo esclarece quais são os locais mais populares para destinos bem-sucedidos de turismo gastronômico para publicação de pesquisas. A forma como a investigação sobre os QCA em destinos turísticos para a alimentação é distribuída ao longo do tempo e qual é a distribuição geográfica da investigação. E quais são os CSFs mais populares para destinos de turismo de alimentos.

**Palavras-chave:** SLR, Turismo Alimentar, Destino Alimentar, CSF.

## EL ÉXITO DE UN DESTINO DE TURISMO GASTRONÓMICO: UNA REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA

### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Identificar los factores críticos de éxito (CSF) de los destinos turísticos de alimentación y analizar su importancia para el desarrollo del turismo de destino.

**Diseño/metodología/enfoque:** Realizamos una revisión sistemática de la literatura (RPS) para identificar los LCR prevalentes en los destinos de turismo alimentario. De 210 artículos relacionados con destinos de turismo gastronómico, 41 fueron sometidos a un riguroso proceso de selección para su análisis. Los artículos elegidos fueron examinados exhaustivamente para ofrecer una visión general replicable del tema.

**Hallazgos:** Los cinco factores más populares fueron: mercadeo, calidad de la comida, producto alimenticio, identidad cultural y experiencia del visitante. También se comprobó que se habían realizado más estudios en el lado de la oferta, mientras que se habían realizado menos estudios en el lado de la oferta y la demanda. Se observó una diferencia significativa entre los marcos de servicios para los países de las estadísticas relativas a la oferta y la demanda por separado.

**Investigación Implicaciones prácticas y sociales:** Esta revisión exhaustiva de los MCA en los destinos de turismo alimentario ofrece una valiosa contribución al campo. Abarca información sobre los patrones de publicación, la distribución temporal, las metodologías de investigación y la identificación de los factores de éxito prevalentes. Este conocimiento ayuda a los investigadores a posicionar su trabajo, identificar brechas y alinear su investigación para lograr el máximo impacto. En última instancia, fomenta la investigación futura eficiente y productiva, facilitando avances significativos en el turismo alimentario.

**Originalidad/valor:** El estudio aclara cuáles son los lugares más populares para destinos de turismo gastronómico de éxito para la publicación de investigaciones. Cómo se distribuye a lo largo del tiempo la investigación sobre los CSF en los destinos de turismo alimentario y cómo es la distribución geográfica de la investigación. Y cuáles son los CSF más populares para destinos de turismo gastronómico.

**Palabras clave:** SLR, Turismo Alimentario, Destino Alimentario, CSF.

### INTRODUCTION

The World Food Travel Organization estimates that approximately a quarter of a tourist's travel budget is spent on food (Wolf, 2020). Food contributes significantly to tourist satisfaction at a destination (Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018). Local food and tourism have an important relationship, reflected in the increasing number of people travelling and searching for unique culinary experiences (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010). (Henderson, 2009) reviews the

contribution of food to tourism and food tourism while also mentioning several challenges faced by the food and tourism industry, including the fact that the critical success factors for developing a food tourism destination have not been clarified. This research aims to review studies conducted on CSFs of a food tourism destination, thereby contributing to a better understanding of food tourism.

Identifying CSFs improves the destination's competitiveness, determining the competitive advantages and allowing food tourism destinations' success to reflect a win-win situation for supply and demand (Bornhorst et al., 2010). A statistical analysis of academic research articles on tourism CSFs was conducted by (Marais et al., 2017b), which found that most research on tourism CSFs focused on the supply side, with several sectors frequently mentioned as tourists, human resources, and marketing. However, their research focuses on the tourism industry, which is broader in scope, and the CSFs for food tourism and tourism destination development have not been thoroughly investigated. Then, (Ellis et al., 2018) reviewed food tourism development through cognitive mapping. They suggested that destination orientation is a vital theme in food tourism research. But lack of analysis on how to successfully develop gastronomic tourism destinations. Later, (Hiamey et al., 2020) conducted a socio-cultural investigation of the Ghanaian region's CSFs as a food tourism destination. However, their research is not comprehensive enough and lacks quantitative data analysis. The review of critical success factors for food tourism destinations is still to be further investigated. This study aims to fill this gap with a systematic review to identify 1) the critical success factors of a food tourism destination and 2) the popular factors researchers have focused on.

## **THEORETICAL REFERENTIAL**

The study of Critical Success Factors or Key Success Factors (KSFs) began in the 1860s and was first applied in the field of information systems but has been expanded over the last two decades to apply to a broader range of management (A.Neal & Geller, 1985; Getz et al., 1999; Juwaidah et al., 2021; Leidecker & Bruno, 1984; Marais et al., 2017b; May et al., 2021). (Daniel, 1961) were the first to develop the concept of success factors and use the CSFs approach to distinguish required information in management. Since then, identifying CSFs has become a fundamental approach to strategic management (Gadelrab & Ekiz, 2019; Nieh, 2012). CSFs are necessary to enable an organisation or project to achieve its purpose. Their composition and combination allow a company or industry to be competitive, thrive, achieve its management objectives, and ultimately succeed (Avcikurt et al., 2010; Nieh, 2012; Wang &

Hung, 2015). Among the critical success factors, it is crucial to focus on the areas of constraints, characteristics, circumstances, situations, events, activities, strategic factors, and variables that, if used appropriately and maintained over time, will lead to the success and profitability of an event, individual, department, organisation, or company (Huo, 2017; Shyan et al., 2012). Given that each industry has different goals, each specific market and industry has its unique CSFs (A.Neal & Geller, 1985; May et al., 2021; Rojas-Rivas et al., 2021). This strategic management approach can also be applied to food tourism destination management, improving its competitiveness and helping destinations succeed (Li & Yu, 2023; Rand et al., 2008).

Research on food tourism destinations has been conducted by scholars starting from brand image (Che, 2006; Lai et al., 2018), sociological perspective (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019; Huo, 2017; Ueda & Poulain, 2021), and experiential perspective on the construction of food tourism destinations (Gonzalez Santa Cruz et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2010; Mora et al., 2021). Food tourism has been studied in various contexts, suggesting a correlation between culture and cuisine (Long, 2004; Wolf, 2002). Researchers argue that food reflects a region's cultural characteristics, which is a bridge for tourists to access local culture (Si & Couto, 2020). Another research hotspot is the strategies to develop food as an attraction to promote the tourism destination (Leong et al., 2010; Quan & Wang, 2004). There are also studies on the motivation and behavioural choices of food tourism that are often mentioned by scholars (Rachão et al., 2021; Türker & Süzer, 2022). Despite current food tourism studies covering various supply or demand topics. But few studies have been done on developing food tourism destinations and identifying the CSFs.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This section presents the research method used in this systematic literature review on the success of a food tourism destination. The authors follow the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines and utilise the suggested template for describing our approach (Page et al., 2021). Then, the following subsections elaborate on research questions, search strategy, and study selection.

### **Research Questions**

The primary goal of this literature review is to pinpoint what makes a food tourism destination successful. Also, this study wish to give a general summary of the field's research

activity, including how it has evolved through time, how it has been published, and how it is distributed geographically. Thus, our research questions can be formulated as follows:

- RQ1: what are the most popular research publication venues for successful food tourism destinations?
- RQ2: how have articles about food tourism in CSF been distributed over time?
- RQ3: what is the geographic distribution of a food tourism destination's CSFs research activity?
- RQ4: what are the most popular CSFs of a food tourism destination?

### Search Strategy

The authors use the PICO (Participants, Intervention, Comparators, Outcomes) approach to find appropriate keywords (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). In particular:

- Participants: The authors view travel and tourism as the application domain. However, because of the vast population, we only consider research on critical success factors. CSFs are also referred to as key success factors (KSF), key result areas (KRA), or strategic success variables in various studies. This study has searched for the keyword "success" to include the pertinent literature because there are several words more precisely and to prevent omissions.
- Intervention: The authors are interested in studies on analysing successful food tourism destinations. So, we have included food, gastronomy and cuisine as keywords.
- Comparators: The authors compare the popular success factors identified by different studies by considering the number of studies that mention them from both supply and demand sides.
- Outcomes: The authors present the identified success factors, allowing us to discuss which factors are critical for a successful food tourism destination.

With these criteria in mind, we have formulated the following keywords: *Tourism or Travel, Success, Food, Gastronomy and Cuisine*.

The authors considered as sources the following databases: Web of Science, Science Direct, Scopus and ProQuest. Combining these sources gives an accurate picture of international research in this field.

The authors divided the search into two stages. First, based on their titles, we queried the databases for articles related to tourism or travel. We narrowed our search to only include works related to critical success factors by excluding articles not containing the word "success"

in their abstract to provide an overview of the research conducted in this field. Following that, we limited our search to include articles about food while excluding works with the words "food or gastronomy or cuisine" missing from their abstracts. Table 1 summarises the inquiries. The search results for both queries are listed in Table 2. The queries were executed in March 2023.

### **Study Selection**

The authors further filtered the 210 papers returned by our queries into the studies with various phases. First, we identify and remove duplicates. The number of articles that were considered for the ensuing phases was reduced to 165 by the discovery of 45 duplicates. We employed a set of selection criteria to decide whether an article obtained by the search query should be chosen for inclusion in the survey. These criteria also include standards for determining a paper's level of quality.

Inclusion criteria:

- The paper related to destination tourism: This criterion ensures that the selected papers directly pertain to the context of tourism destinations, maintaining a targeted approach.
- The paper elaborates on or analyzes the success factors of a specific tourism destination: This criterion ensures the inclusion of papers that specifically address the success factors related to tourism destinations, providing a comprehensive understanding of key contributing elements.
- The promotion of the destination involves food, gastronomy, or cuisine: This criterion acknowledges the significance of food-related elements in promoting tourism destinations, capturing the factors that distinguish food tourism destinations.

Exclusion criteria:

- The paper is not peer-reviewed: Excluding non-peer-reviewed papers maintains the inclusion of high-quality and reliable research, ensuring credibility and trustworthiness.
- The presented paper is not in English: Excluding non-English papers minimizes language barriers, facilitating comprehension and synthesis of the literature.
- The paper is not a research article: Excluding certain types of publications focuses on research articles that present original research, methodology, empirical findings, or theoretical contributions, ensuring in-depth analysis and relevant insights.

In the full-text reading phase, we extracted information relevant to the stated research questions and identified the implications discussed in the papers. We then used this data to provide a comprehensive picture of the critical success factors of a food tourism destination.

During this stage, it became apparent that several papers were irrelevant to our research, leading to the rejection of 131 more papers. In addition, we added seven interesting articles we found via reverse snowball sampling to the collection. The total number of papers considered for this survey now stands at 41. Figure 1 summarises the complete research selection procedure and associated numbers.

Table 1. Queries used for search in pseudo-code.

Query	Description
Q1	in title: ((tourism OR travel) AND in abstract: (success))
Q2	in title: ((tourism OR travel) AND in abstract: (success and (food or gastronomy or cuisine)))

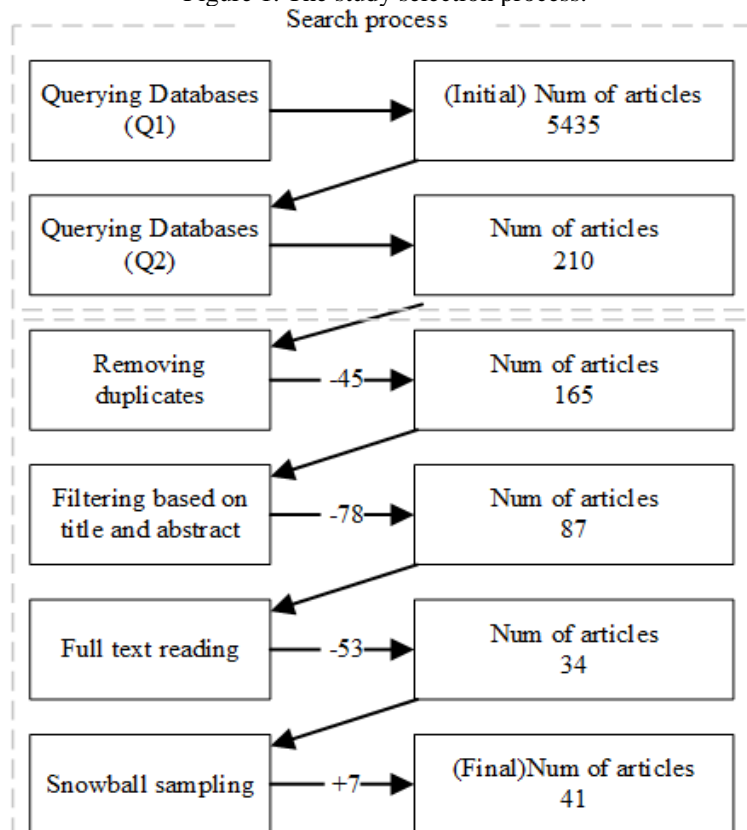
Source: Authors Listed Queries (Page et al., 2021).

Table 2. Number of articles obtained.

Source	Q1	Q2
Web of Science	1607	61
Science Direct	305	11
Scopus	2031	76
ProQuest	1492	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>5435</b>	<b>210</b>

Source: Authors Search Result from the Databases.

Figure 1. The study selection process.



Source: Authors Study Search Process (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of this research in terms of various aspects such as the distribution of articles across journals, the temporal distribution of articles, the supply and demand distribution of articles, the distribution of articles according to countries/regions, the method of research conducted, and the CSFs of a food tourism destination that have been identified.

### Distribution of Articles Among Journals and Over Time

The authors first analyzed the 41 searched articles and created graphs to display important information on each publication, such as the distribution of articles across journals and their publication timeline.

#### Distribution of articles among journals (RQ1)

Analysis of the distribution of journal articles indicates that the "International Journal of Tourism Research" and "International Journal of Hospitality Management" have been prolific in publishing articles related to the success factors of food tourism destinations, with each journal having four publications on this topic (Figure 2). It is worth noting that one conference paper has been excluded from the figure for clarity and to focus solely on journal articles. These two journals demonstrate a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in understanding the factors that contribute to the success of food tourism destinations. The "World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology," "Tourism Management Perspectives," "Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism," "Tourism," "PLoS One," and "Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing" have each published two articles on this topic, while the remaining journals only have one publication each. The aforementioned list of journals indicates that there is a greater emphasis on this area of research within the tourism and management fields.



Figure 2. Distribution of articles among journals.

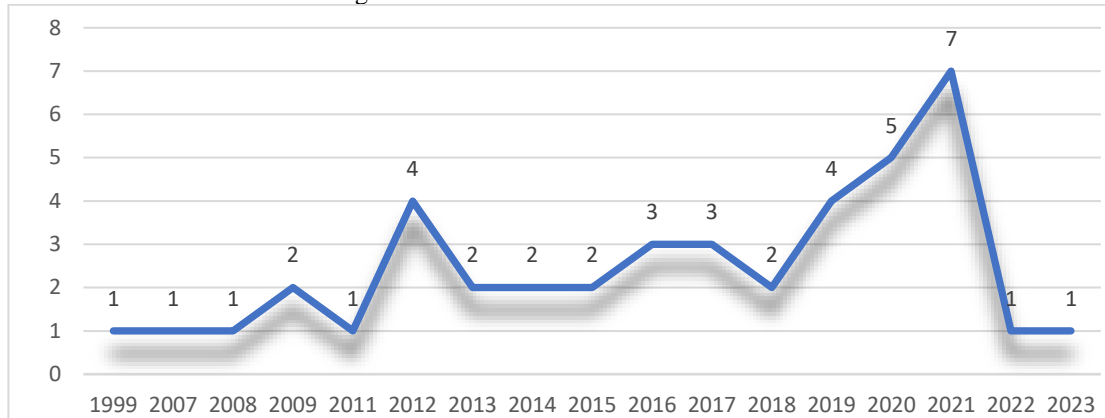
1	Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing,...	Acta Commercii, 3%	Actual Problems of Economics, 3%	African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 3%	4	International Journal of Hospitality Management, 10%	International Journal of Tourism Research, 10%
	Anatolia, 3%	Annals of Tourism Research, 3%	Appetite, 3%	British Food Journal, 3%			
	Current Issues in Tourism, 3%	Food Research International, 3%	Heliyon, 3%	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Manageme...			
	International Journal of Early Childhood Special...	International Journal of Wine Marketing, 3%	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 3%	Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism, 3%			
	International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science, 3%	Journal of Vacation marketing, 3%	Thunder bird International Business Review, 3%	Tourism & Management Studies, 3%	2	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 5%	PLoS One, 5%
	International Journal of Tourism Cities, 3%	Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 3%	Tourism and Hospitality Research, 3%	TourismMa... 3%		Tourism Management Perspectives, 5%	World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, 5%

Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

#### Distribution of articles over time (RQ2)

Based on the statistical data, it can be observed that the earliest published article on the success factors of food tourism destinations dates to 1999, with the most recent publication in 2023. A noticeable gap in published literature exists between 1999 and 2007; however, since 2011, articles have been published annually, suggesting that this area of research is receiving greater attention from scholars. Notably, a consistent upsurge in research activity has been observed since 2012, culminating in 2021 with the publication of seven articles on the topic. This phenomenon can be attributed to a multitude of factors, such as the escalating interest of scholars in this field and their motivation to attain further breakthroughs in their research endeavors. Additionally, there is an increasing demand for this type of research as destinations seek to differentiate themselves considering the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on traditional tourism (Widiastini et al., 2023).

Figure 3. Distribution of articles over time.



Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

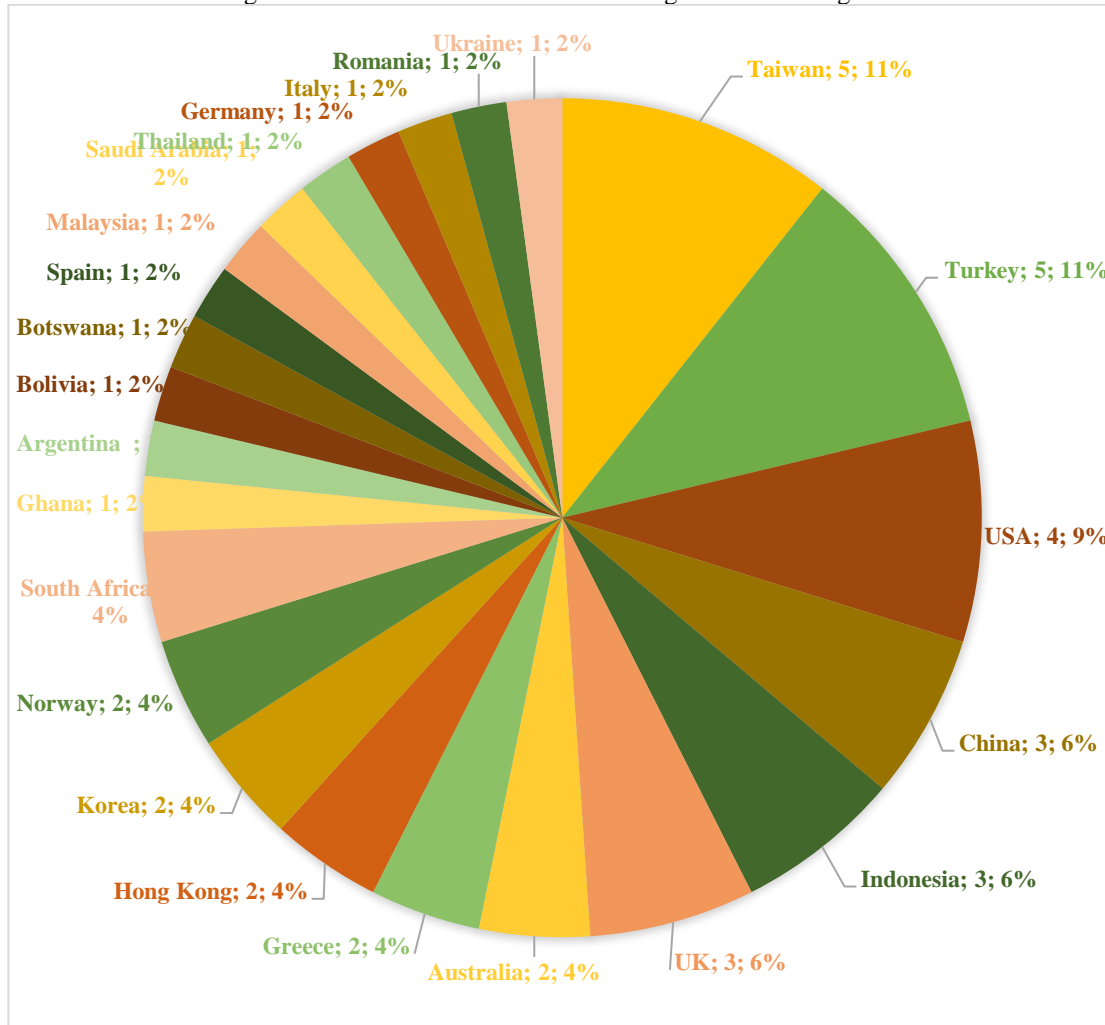
### A Review of the Critical Aspects of the Articles

This subsection presents an overview of the key elements present in the publications, such as studies related to supply and demand, countries/regions covered in the research, and research methodologies employed.

#### Distribution of articles according to countries/regions (RQ3)

This paper categorizes studies on food tourism destinations into various countries or regions and presents statistical data indicating the extent of attention given to each location. Figure 4 illustrates that Turkey and Taiwan have been the subject of the most studies, with each country featuring in five articles. The USA is next with four articles, followed by the UK, Indonesia, and mainland China, with three articles each. A comprehensive analysis of the overall statistics indicates that the majority of cases examined are situated in Asia, comprising a total of 17 articles. Notably, Europe has also received considerable attention from researchers, with scholars from these two regions displaying a strong interest in developing food destinations within their respective countries. Conversely, relatively fewer relevant studies have been conducted in Africa and South America when compared to other regions.

Figure 4. Distribution of articles according to countries/regions.



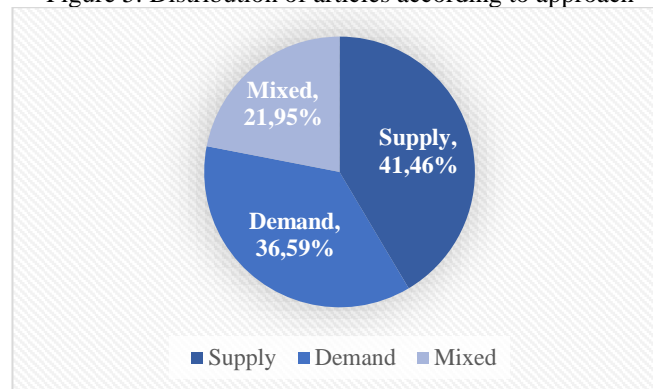
Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

#### Distribution of articles according to demand or supply approach

Figure 6 illustrates that the articles in this study were categorised into one of three primary areas: supply-side approaches (41.46%), demand-side approaches (36.59%), or mixed research on both sides (21.95%). Fewer studies consider both the supply and demand sides. In economic terms, the supply side encompasses capital, resources, labour, technology, and policies, and includes government, businesses, and individuals (Goodwin et al., 2019). When examining the tourism industry, the supply side may incorporate transport, accommodation, attractions, food and beverage, intermediaries, services, tourism marketing organisations, promotion, and information. Various measures of tourism demand include trip satisfaction, duration, mode of travel, origin and destination, domestic or international travel, and accommodation (Jones et al., 2015; Marais et al., 2017b; Mei et al., 2016). This investigation found that the supply side of food tourism commonly includes food suppliers, producers, businesses, and organisations (e.g., international hotels, restaurants, domestic travel agencies,

and international airlines), government, and the food sector (Hernandez-Rojas & Huete Alcocer, 2021; Kim et al., 2009; Lin et al., 2011; Marais et al., 2017a; Stalmirska, 2021). Research on food tourism demand usually concentrates on social, psychological, and experiential factors of diners, with a focus on the quality of food, friendly service, destination appeal, core products, and authenticity experienced through exposure to local food cultures (Chang, 2021; Jones et al., 2015; Kozak & Buhalis, 2019).

Figure 5. Distribution of articles according to approach



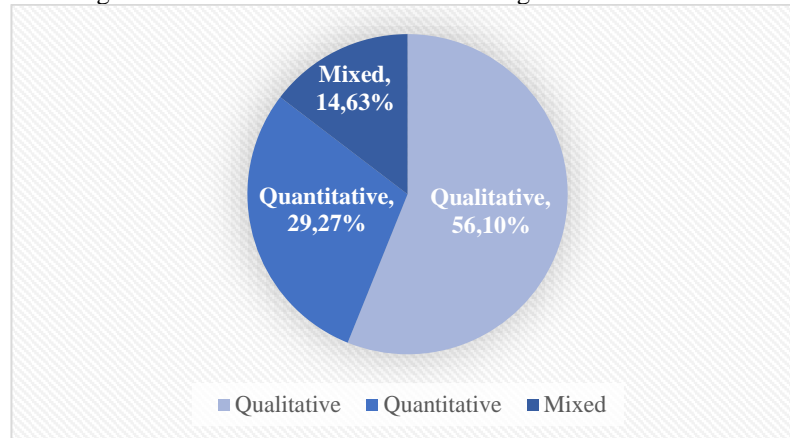
Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

#### Distribution of articles according to research method

In order to achieve the objectives of a study, researchers must develop a general plan, known as the study's design. Research methods can be broadly categorised into three types: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Quantitative research involves a structured and systematic approach to data collection and statistical analysis. Typically, researchers use a predetermined set of questions to gather data from many respondents, which is then analysed and generalised. In contrast, qualitative research involves observation of phenomena, and analysis and interpretation of data through the study of people's words and actions. It seeks to describe and interpret the subject matter under investigation, rather than measure it.

In the present study, the authors have analysed the distribution of research articles according to the methods employed by the researchers. Figure 6 shows that 56.1% of the research utilised quantitative methods, while 29.27% of the studies employed qualitative analysis. Only 14.63% of the research was a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Figure 6. Distribution of articles according to research method



Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

#### A Review of Critical Success Factors (RQ4)

The primary objective of this analysis is to determine the most prevalent critical success factors (CSFs) based on the outcomes of the articles examined in this study. The identified CSFs were classified based on the concepts addressed in each article, and a particular factor could be placed in more than one category. Counts for each category were computed and graphed accordingly. The majority of the CSFs were discovered through the findings of quantitative analyses, while others were recognized through qualitative descriptive analysis. Furthermore, the statistics for destination success factors included a breakdown of factors identified by supply and demand and mixed methods, in addition to the overall data.

#### Critical success factors most frequently found

Figure 7 presents the results of the analysis conducted on the CSFs identified in the selected articles. The identified factors were categorized based on the concepts mentioned within each article, with some factors belonging to multiple categories. The top five factors identified were marketing, food quality, products, cultural identity, and visitor experience.

Marketing, including aspects such as food marketing, destination marketing, social media, and online marketing, along with food quality, were the most frequently mentioned factors, appearing in 15 articles. Food products, encompassing special food, unique cuisine, food materials, ingredients, and local cuisine, as well as cultural identity, which included references to local culture and unique ethnic culture, were both mentioned in 13 articles, ranking second in terms of frequency. The visitor experience, which included factors related to tourist satisfaction and loyalty, was identified as a critical success factor in 12 articles, ranking third.

Stakeholders, represented by destination associations, communities, organizations, and food institutions, as well as the destination environment, which considered factors such as location, climate, and landscape, were each identified in 11 articles. Destination image closely followed, being mentioned in multiple articles as a significant factor in the success of food tourism destinations.

These findings provide insights into the key factors that have been consistently identified and discussed in the literature, shedding light on the important aspects to consider when striving for success in food tourism destinations.

Other factors mentioned frequently but not as frequently as the top five included human resources (10), government (10), food image (9), and service quality (8). Other factors related to food, but not mentioned frequently, were food education, food resource, and food safety. Some factors were closely associated with destination development, such as natural resources, policy, public, economy, and management. The analysis also found that individual factors were described too specifically and required careful summarisation based on the literature, such as food novelty, including new food offerings (Zhang et al., 2022). Sensory factors, including visual, taste, texture, and aroma (Kim et al., 2021; Okumus et al., 2020; Rojas-Rivas et al., 2021); activities, including food activities, festivals, historical events, interactions (Kim et al., 2021; Park & Widyanta, 2022; Rand et al., 2008; Singh & Hsiung, 2016); and facilities, including accessibility, transport, and parking (Kozak & Buhalis, 2019; Lin & Chang, 2013; May et al., 2021; Wang & Hung, 2015).

#### Critical success factors identified from different approaches

During the full-text reading phase, a cluster analysis was conducted on the supply and demand sides, encompassing both aspects. Table 3 shows a list of the comparison of all the 41 selected articles in terms of their identified CSFs of a successful food destination. As shown in Figure 8, most of the research on food tourism destinations originated from the supply side, with 17 articles being reviewed. The success factor that garnered the most attention from researchers was marketing, which was mentioned in 9 articles. Human resources and government factors were included in 7 articles each. Stakeholders and the destination environment were identified 5 times, and culture-related factors were identified 4 times. In addition to marketing, other factors that were examined from the supply side based on the number of articles included the destination environment, food quality, collaboration, service quality, food products, food diversity, destination image, and cultural identity.

It is intriguing to observe that food quality and food products, despite being highly regarded factors in the overall analysis, did not rank among the top five factors from the supply-side perspective. In contrast, the supply-side perspective placed greater emphasis on human resources (7), government (7), and stakeholders (5) as the primary factors of interest. This finding aligns with the statistical rankings presented in the summary table, highlighting the specific areas of focus among researchers in the supply-side analysis. The variation in emphasis suggests that researchers exploring the success factors of food tourism destinations from the supply side prioritize factors related to human resources, governmental involvement, and stakeholder collaboration, potentially reflecting their significance in shaping, and influencing the development of these destinations (Kusworo, 2023).

Table 3. Comparison of approaches and CSFs in selected articles

Ref.	Supply	Demand	Qualitative	Quantitative	Success Factors
Hiamey et al. 2020		✓	✓	✓	Food culture, Price, Government, Service, Education, Stakeholders, Visitor experience
Kozak et al., 2019	✓	✓	✓		Food culture, Food products, Marketing, Stakeholders
Kim et al., 2021		✓	✓		Food authenticity, Food culture, Sensory, Visitor experience, Food products, Stakeholders
Okumus et al., 2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	Service, Food quality, Price, Visitor experience, Marketing, Food education
Hernandez-Rojas et al., 2021		✓	✓	✓	Service, Food quality, Environment, Visitor experience, Destination image, Destination loyalty
Seo et al., 2014		✓		✓	Food image, Marketing, Visitor experience
Wang & Hung, 2015		✓		✓	Environment, Facilities, Service, Food accessibility
Singh & Hsiung, 2016		✓		✓	Food products, Food quality, Food image, Activities, Unique Experience, Environment, Service,
Rojas-Rivas et al., 2021		✓		✓	Food culture, Food products, Visitor experience, Sensory
Rand et al., 2008	✓	✓	✓	✓	Food authenticity, Food products, Food festivals, Destination marketing, Stakeholders, Food service, Food image
Pavlidis & Markantonatou, 2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	Information, Food culture, Environment, Marketing, Religion, Activities
Park & Widyanta, 2022	✓	✓	✓		Food experience, Food products, Destination marketing, Food service, Food novelty, Culture identity, Food diversity,
Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017		✓	✓		Food authenticity, Food image, Environment

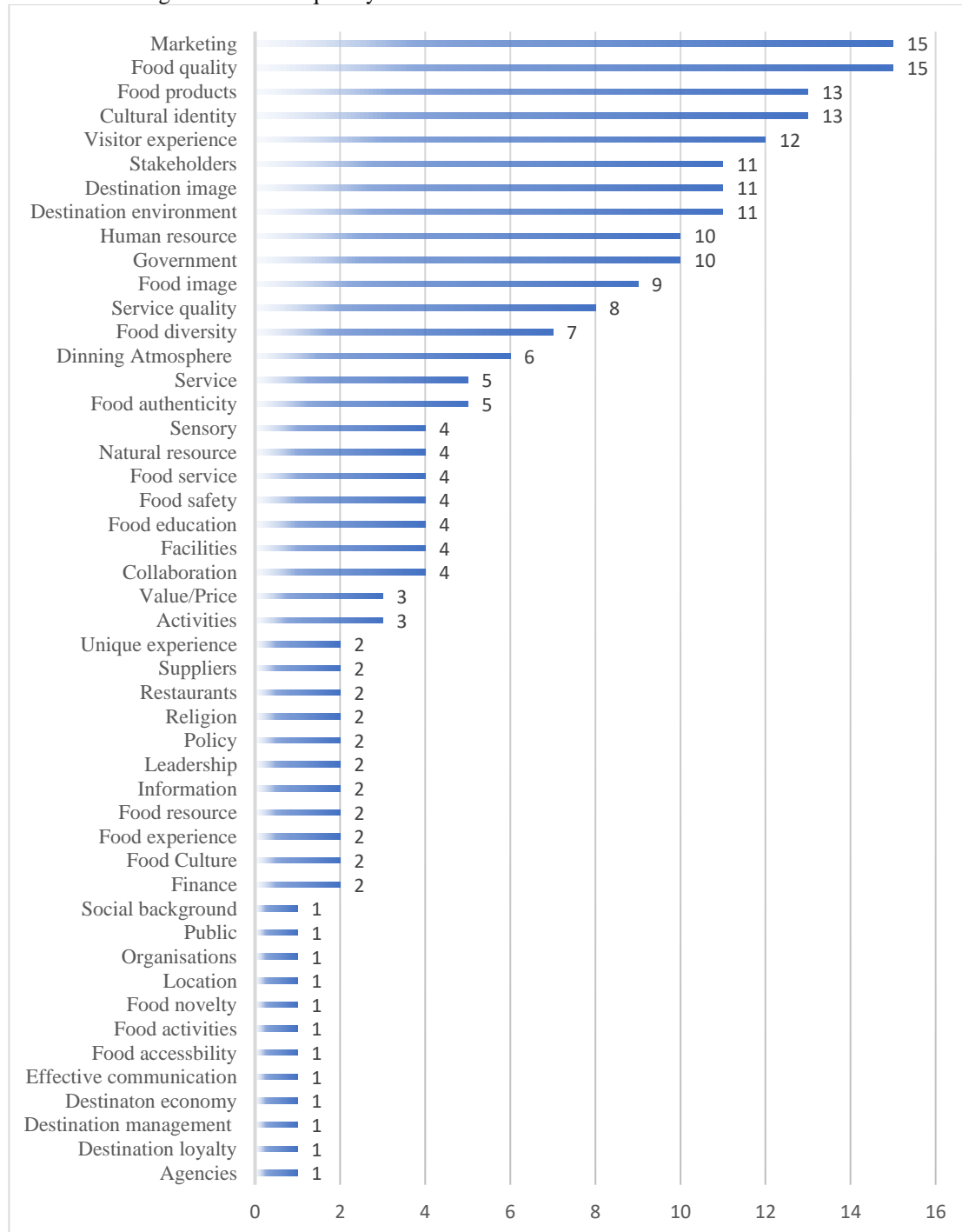
Okumus et al., 2007	✓		✓	Destination marketing, Food diversity, Food culture, Culture identity
Nursal, 2019	✓		✓	Food diversity, Human resource, Finance, Stakeholders, Government, Food education
Nieh & Pong, 2012		✓	✓	Food environment, Service, Human resource, Food diversity, Food image, Destination image
Mei et al., 2016	✓		✓	Collaborations, Government, Stakeholders
Marais et al., 2017	✓		✓	Finance, Human resource, Food quality, Service
Mak et al., 2012		✓	✓	Food culture, Religion, Sensory, Destination image, Service, Marketing, Price, Food experience, Food diversity
Lun et al., 2016	✓		✓	Collaborations, Leadership, Food quality, Effective communication
Lin et al., 2011	✓		✓	Food image, Food diversity, Food authenticity, Stakeholders, Marketing
Lin et al., 2013	✓		✓	Food products, Food culture, Government, Stakeholders
Lee et al, 2017		✓	✓	Food diversity, Destination image, Visitor experience, Food environment
Kim et al., 2009		✓	✓	Visitor experience, Food quality, environment, Food authenticity, Food image, Food education
Juwaidah et al., 2021	✓		✓	Human resource, Food diversity, Service, Food image, Environment, Marketing
Jones et al., 2015	✓		✓	Food products, Food image, Stakeholders, Food environment, Public, Collaboration
Hsiao-Ming et al., 2013		✓	✓	Food culture, Food diversity, Environment, Facilities, Service
Henderson, 2009	✓	✓	✓	Food image, Marketing, Stakeholders, Food safety, Service, Food culture
Gonzalez et al, 2019		✓	✓	Food culture, Food quality, Food safety, Visitor experience
Getz et al., 1999		✓	✓	Food quality, Marketing, Service, Government
Gadelrab & Ekiz, 2019	✓		✓	Food quality, Food Service, Marketing, Human resource, Visitor experience
Dalgiç & Birdir, 2020		✓	✓	Food image, Food experience, Human resource, Facilities, Food quality
Chatibura, 2021	✓		✓	Food diversity, Human resource, Environment, Marketing, Food culture
Wongtada, 2014	✓		✓	Human resource, Environment, Marketing, Food resource
Shyan & Tsang, 2012	✓		✓	Food resource, Government, Stakeholders, Marketing, Environment
Chaney & Ryan, 2012	✓		✓	Food diversity, Food culture, Food quality, Marketing, Government, Food image, Human resource
Çakar, 2018	✓		✓	Collaboration, Government, Stakeholders



Bertella, 2020	✓		✓		Food safety, Food environment
Chang, 2021	✓	✓	✓	✓	Government, Policy, Food image, Cultural identity, Food quality
May et al., 2021	✓	✓		✓	Food quality, Food authenticity, Food diversity, Marketing, Environment, Facilities
Li et al., 2023	✓	✓	✓		Food environment, Food culture, Visitor experience, Food diversity, Food quality, Human resource

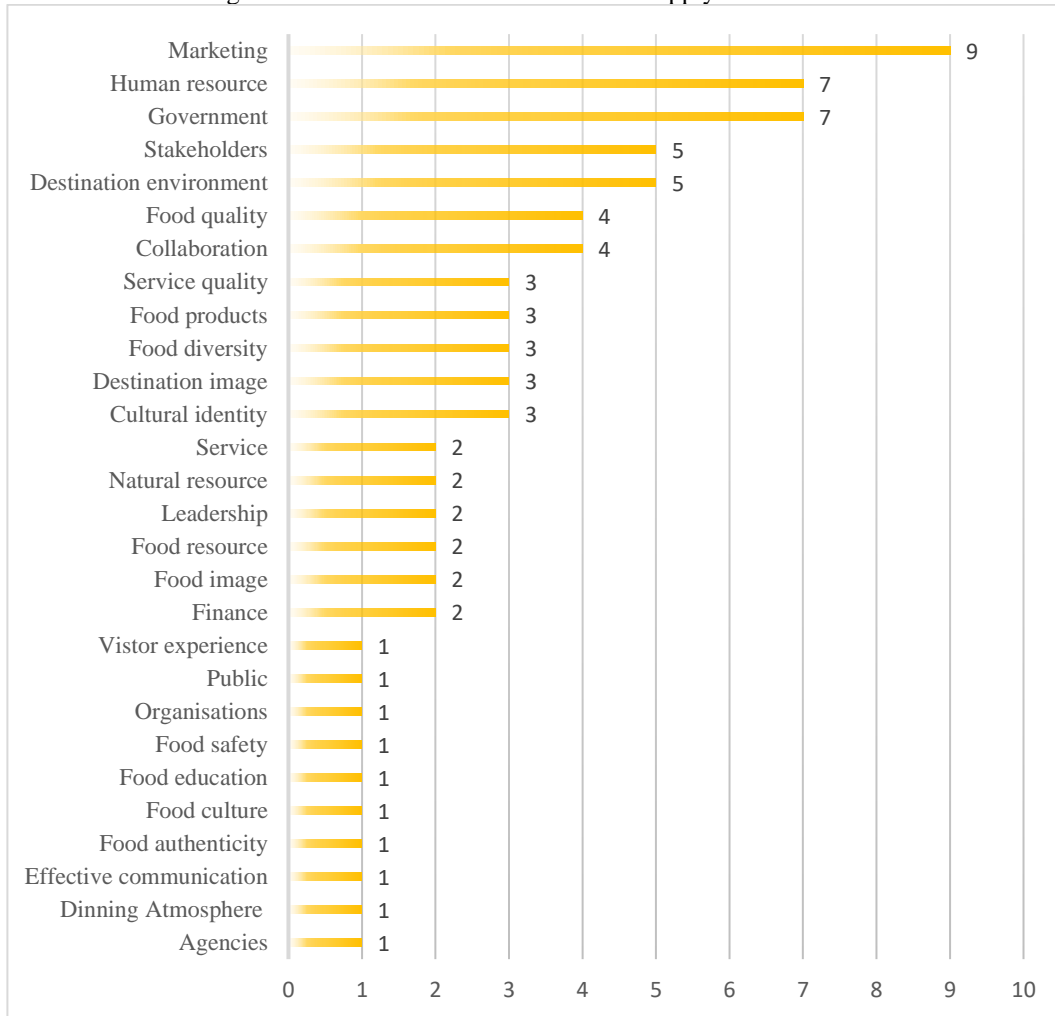
Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

Figure 7. Most frequently mentioned success factors in the literature review



Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

Figure 8. Success factors identified from supply-side research.



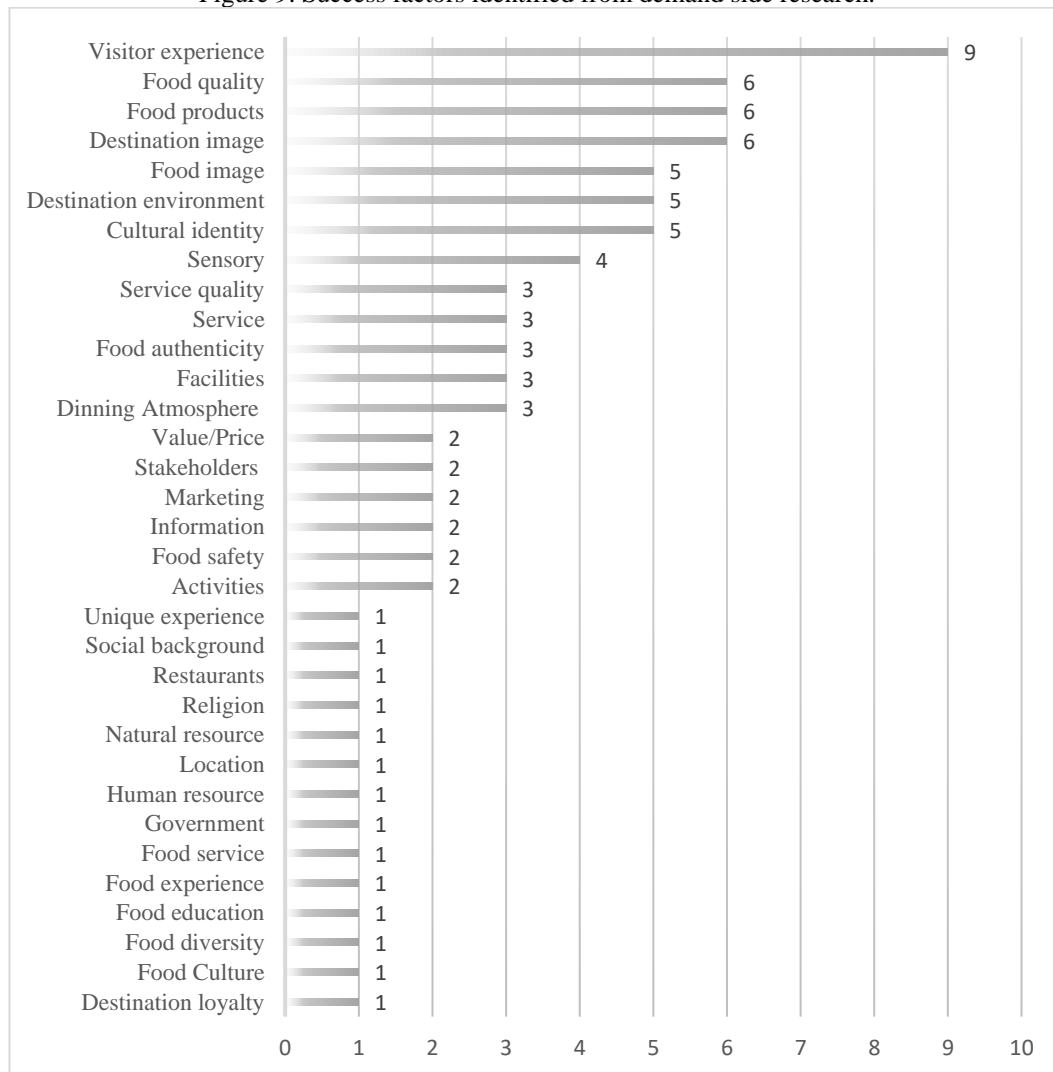
Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

Figure 9 illustrates that, in contrast to the supply-side perspective, the demand-side perspective identified visitor experience as the most significant success factor, mentioned in nine articles, with a focus on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Okumus et al., 2020). Food quality, food products, destination image, and food image were mentioned in six articles, while destination environment and cultural identity were identified in five articles. Destination image and food image ranked sixth, while destination environment and cultural identity were ranked fifth.

A comparative analysis of the statistical data from both the supply and demand sides reveals distinct differences in the ranking of the top five CSFs. The demand side consistently identified visitor experience as the most crucial factor, with a frequency of nine mentions. On the other hand, the supply side emphasized marketing as the most popular factor, also with nine mentions. However, it is noteworthy that there was only one article related to visitor experience identified from the supply side, while the demand side presented two papers on marketing. Both

sides recognized the importance of service quality as a CSF, demonstrating a convergence of perspectives on this factor. However, the top three factors of attention, excluding the destination environment, differed significantly between the supply and demand sides.

Figure 9. Success factors identified from demand side research.

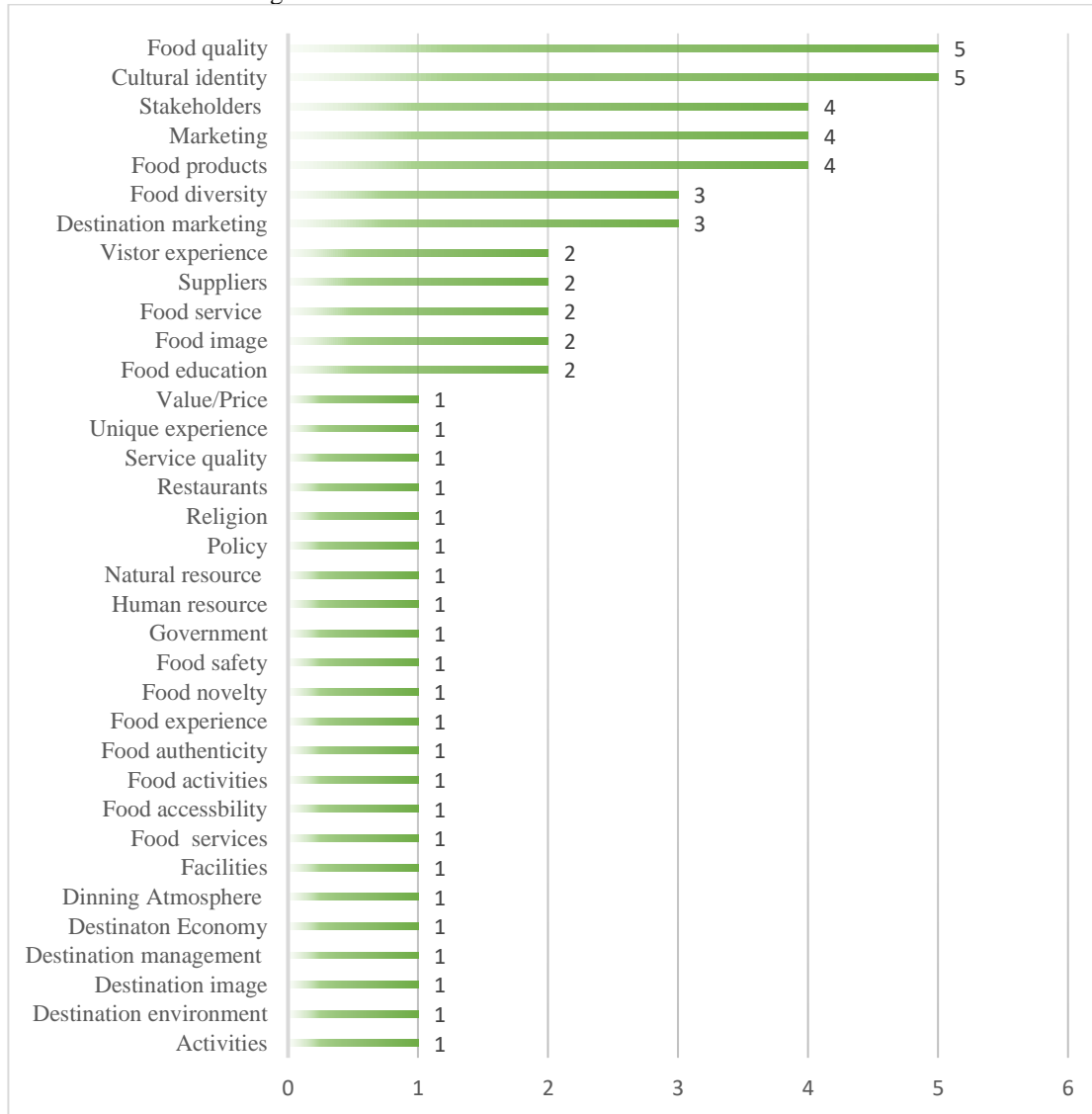


Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

The examination of the supply and demand sides of food tourism destinations has not been extensively studied, as illustrated in Figure 10. In this study, a total of nine articles were reviewed, and 35 critical success factors (CSFs) were identified. The five most frequently mentioned CSFs that impact food tourism destinations from both the supply and demand sides are food quality, cultural identity, stakeholders, marketing, and food products. Interestingly, research from both perspectives acknowledges the importance of cultural values embedded in food products. However, the degree of significance of these values varies depending on the research perspective (Chaney & Ryan, 2012; Kozak & Buhalis, 2019; Mak et al., 2012).

Therefore, it is recommended that future research on food tourism destinations consider investigating the aforementioned five factors in detail from both the supply and demand sides.

Figure 10. Success factors identified from mixed research.



Source: Authors Collected Data from the SLR (2023).

## Main Findings

**Research focus and geographic distribution:** The study of CSFs in food tourism research has remained a prominent area of focus in the last decade. A significant proportion of research in this field has concentrated on Asian countries or regions, with particular attention given to Turkey (Çakar, 2018; Dalgıç & Birdir, 2020; Kozak & Buhalis, 2019; Okumus et al., 2007; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017) and Taiwan (Hsiao-Ming Chang, 2013; Lin & Chang, 2013; Lin et al., 2011; Mei et al., 2016; Shyan et al., 2012). Europe followed closely behind in terms of research output, while studies from Africa (Chatibura, 2021; Hiamey et al., 2020) and South

America (Gonzalez Santa Cruz et al., 2019) were comparatively fewer. This distribution highlights the heightened interest in gastronomic research within Asian countries, which can be attributed to various factors such as the diverse food structures found in the region, the wide regional distribution of populations, the distinct dietary habits of ethnic minorities, and the complexity of the geographical environment, encompassing cold, subtropical, and tropical zones.

**Convergence and divergence in CSFs:** The second finding reveals both convergence and divergence when exploring critical success factors (CSFs) from different perspectives. When the top 5 factors are considered as CSFs, there is some convergence between the supply and demand sides. However, as the factors increase in rank, the deviation between the two perspectives becomes more significant. Furthermore, the majority of studies tend to focus exclusively on either the supply or demand side of CSFs (Bertella, 2020; Çakar, 2018; Gadelrab & Ekiz, 2019; Gonzalez Santa Cruz et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2015; Marais et al., 2017a; Seo et al., 2014; Singh & Hsiung, 2016; Wongtada, 2014), with relatively few studies examining both sides simultaneously (Chang, 2021; Park & Widyanta, 2022). This convergence and divergence may arise due to variations in data collection methods, sample sizes, statistical techniques, and analytical frameworks employed in different studies. Additionally, the narrow focus on either the supply or demand side limits the scope of analysis and may lead to varying findings. By exclusively studying one side, researchers might overlook crucial factors that are significant from the other perspective, thereby resulting in divergent conclusions.

**Cultural values and gastronomic products:** The third finding highlights the importance of mixed supply and demand studies in achieving a more balanced understanding of CSFs. Research from both the supply and demand sides has consistently emphasized the significance of cultural values embedded in food, products, and services (Chang, 2021; Li & Yu, 2023). While the degree of importance assigned to these values may differ between the two perspectives, they consistently emerge as crucial factors in studies on a food tourism destination.

An essential aspect to consider in the development of food tourism destinations is the focus on locally representative food products. UNESCO-designated food tourism destinations often have core food items that hold significant cultural and intangible heritage value (Gonzalez Santa Cruz et al., 2019; Hernandez-Rojas & Huete Alcocer, 2021). These products are deeply intertwined with the identity of the destination and are widely recognized by the local population. Their production often involves the use of locally sourced ingredients and

traditional techniques (Rojas-Rivas et al., 2021). Food products serve as a vital representation of the destination's image and are instrumental in promotional efforts.

In fact, gastronomic products play a pivotal role in shaping the culture, marketing, and visitor experience of gastronomic tourism destinations (Lai et al., 2018; Rand et al., 2008). To foster the development of a successful gastronomic tourism destination, it is essential to identify and prioritize a core local food product. However, it is worth noting that, based on the findings of this study, the data from both the demand side and mixed studies indicate that product factors rank among the top 5 CSFs. In contrast, the exclusive focus on the supply aspect often leads to inadequate prioritization of gourmet product advancement among catering companies. Consequently, their business development strategies tend to revolve around marketing techniques, human resource expenses, and other factors, potentially neglecting the fundamental requirements and preferences of their customers.

**The most popular CSFs:** The fourth finding focuses on the identification of the most popular CSFs based on the analysis of 49 factors summarized in 41 articles. Among these factors, 11 were found to have only one measurement due to their specificity, making it challenging to cluster them with other factors. The review identifies visitor experience, cultural identity, food products, food quality, and marketing as the top 5 significant factors influencing the development of a food tourism destination.

It is important to note that there is a particular element of food education that has been relatively neglected in the extensive literature, with limited attention given to it in studies focusing solely on the supply or demand side. However, this element has been repeatedly mentioned in mixed studies (Kim et al., 2009; Kozak & Buhalis, 2019), indicating its significance in the overall understanding of CSFs. Researchers should exercise caution when using these findings for comparative analysis, as different perspectives and approaches may lead to variations in results.

Furthermore, the impact of social media on food tourism has emerged as a noteworthy trend. Although it was barely mentioned in articles before 2019, the use of social media has been discussed in seven articles within the last three years, particularly in studies exploring the future of food tourism (Gadelrab & Ekiz, 2019; Kozak & Buhalis, 2019; Okumus et al., 2020). This trend has become particularly prominent in 2021 (Juwaidah et al., 2021; May et al., 2021). However, it is important to highlight that social media is not currently cited as a CSF in the existing articles.

## CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

**Contextual variation:** Food tourism destinations vary significantly in their cultural, social, economic, and environmental contexts, and critical success factors may differ from one destination to another (Dalgiç & Birdir, 2020; Jones et al., 2015; Lin & Chang, 2013; Nursal, 2019). For example, even though they are both in Asia, there are differences in the research findings of Taiwanese and Indonesian scholars on the CSFs of food tourism destinations. They both agree on the importance of food resources, destination environment, and marketing. However, Indonesian scholars also emphasise the importance of human resources and service quality (Juwaidah et al., 2021), while Taiwanese scholars believe that government and stakeholder involvement are more important (Lin & Chang, 2013). Future directions could include developing customised frameworks for analysing CSFs in different contexts.

**Diverse Stakeholders:** Food tourism involves a diverse range of stakeholders, including local communities, food producers, restaurateurs, and tourists. The variation in opinions among stakeholders regarding the promotion of local food in a specific place or region can create challenges for destination marketing and brand building. This is because food is often closely linked to a particular location, and different stakeholders may have conflicting views on the best approach to promoting it. For instance, in the case of Taiwan, some stakeholders may prefer to promote night market snacks, while others may advocate for the promotion of specialty restaurants. The diverse perspectives and opinions can make it challenging to develop an effective marketing strategy that appeals to all stakeholders and promotes the destination's unique culinary offerings (Kim et al., 2021; Lun et al., 2016; Nursal, 2019). Researchers need to consider the perspectives and interests of all these stakeholders in their studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of CSFs. Collecting diverse opinions can help identify the core products that represent a food tourism destination, providing a competitive advantage. This insight can then be used to create effective marketing strategies to attract visitors.

**The complexity of factors:** Critical success factors in food tourism destinations are complex and multifaceted, and researchers need to consider a broad range of factors, including food quality, cultural heritage, sustainability, accessibility, and technology. An example of this is conducting research that considers the perspectives of both the supply and demand sides, which can help researchers understand a situation and identify factors that may have been overlooked. In this study, the statistical data collected from both the supply and demand sides shed light on factors related to cooking skills (Kim et al., 2009). Future directions could include developing more sophisticated models and methodologies to analyse these complex factors.

**Long-term impact:** Researchers need to consider the long-term effect of CSFs on food tourism destinations, including their sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness (Bertella, 2020). There is an increasing interest among tourists in food that has a clear lineage, traceability, and sustainability, as they have their own values and preferences that they wish to see reflected in the places they visit (Pavlidis & Markantonatou, 2020). The success of culinary tourism destinations is also measured by their ability to achieve sustainable development goals (Park & Widyanta, 2022). Culinary tourism has the potential to make a more significant economic impact than other tourism industries, as it encompasses a wider range of complementary businesses and is of interest to a larger number of tourists (Rand et al., 2008). Future directions could include conducting longitudinal studies to track the evolution of CSFs over time.

**Dynamic market:** The food tourism market is constantly evolving, and researchers need to keep up with changing consumer preferences, market trends, and technological innovations. With the development and progress of society, tourists' preferences and demands are constantly changing and updating. Marketing of tourist destinations must constantly adapt to these changes to attract and satisfy tourists' needs. For example, tourists may have focused on the quantity and scale of attractions, but now they are more interested in unique and interesting experiences, including local culture, cuisine, natural environment, and other aspects (Dalgiç & Birdir, 2020; Lee et al., 2017). Future directions could include using big data and artificial intelligence to analyse or predict consumer behaviour and preferences. With the diversification of marketing tools, future scholars cannot ignore the need to consider big data, artificial intelligence, online social media and the impact of UGC (User-generated Content) (Li et al., 2023), PGC (Professional-generated Content), AIGC (Artificial Intelligence Generated) on food tourism. Future directions may include the use of big data and artificial intelligence to analyse or predict consumer behaviour and preferences.

## CONCLUSIONS

Identifying the critical factors contributing to food tourism destinations' success is essential for their development. To achieve a thorough and impartial understanding of the current knowledge in this area, this study conducted a systematic literature review. From a total of 210 articles related to food tourism destinations, 41 were selected for analysis in this study after a meticulous process of selection and exclusion. These articles were carefully examined to obtain a comprehensive and replicable overview of the topic.



This study formulated and addressed four research questions: **(RQ1)** What are the most popular research publication venues for successful food tourism destinations? **(RQ2)** How have articles about food tourism in CSF been distributed over time? **(RQ3)** What is the geographic distribution of a food tourism destination's CSFs research activity? **(RQ4)** What are the most popular CSFs of a food tourism destination?

The first three research questions were addressed using a quantitative analysis of the 41 selected articles. This was followed by an in-depth reading and analysis to answer RQ4. This detailed review led to the identification of 49 CSFs for successful food tourism destinations. The five most recurrently cited were marketing, food quality, food products, cultural identity, and visitor experience. These findings were then summarized, and potential challenges and directions for future research were discussed.

This comprehensive review of CSFs in food tourism destinations offers a valuable contribution to the field. It draws insights from the breadth of existing literature, including publication patterns across different journals, temporal distribution of research, methodologies employed, and the identification of predominant success factors. Understanding these elements allows researchers to situate their work within the broader landscape, pinpoint potential gaps, and tailor their research to maximize impact. This, in turn, paves the way for more efficient and productive future research, fostering meaningful advancements in the field of food tourism.

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