

# The Roadmap Of Heritage Education In Local Community: Gastronomic Heritage And Lifestyle As Tourism Destination Drivers

Iris Mihajlović<sup>1\*</sup>, Laura Butirić<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Associate professor, University of Dubrovnik, [iris.mihajlovic@unidu.hr](mailto:iris.mihajlovic@unidu.hr)

<sup>2</sup>Student, University of Dubrovnik,

**Citation:** Iris Mihajlović, et al (2024), The Roadmap Of Heritage Education In Local Community: Gastronomic Heritage And Lifestyle As Tourism Destination Drivers, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(7), 464-478

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i7.6708

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Cultural heritage represents everything that is found in the legacy of past generations, it contains physical and intangible attributes that are preserved in the present. Heritage is very valuable, and it exists in all parts of the world, and each city or country has a separate story. The identity of each destination reflects a different combination of feelings, symbols, experiences, memories and activities that change daily through different social structures and are improved by social interaction. In the paper, the emphasis is on researching the level of integration of the potential value of the product and region in building the destination brand. Primary research was conducted on a sample of family farms in the Pelješac peninsula on the level of implementation of the potential of intangible heritage in shaping the products of the local area, their value, quality, ways of connecting the production of local products to the offer, and the level of connection with other partners in the destination. We conclude that in addition to the existence of a wealth of cultural heritage, marketing tools are needed in the placement of the products. We believe that there should be greater involvement of residents, better connection of local stakeholders, authorities, investors, because sometimes practice speaks in favor of how cooperation can help in further progress.

**Index Terms—** Gastronomy, Heritage, Local products, Pelješac, Tradition.

## INTRODUCTION

As a thought process that defines the mental expression of an idea, or the consumer's perception of psychological meanings, originality, which is closely related to loyalty to heritage and the survival of excellence, is a signal of vitality. In addition to the connection with the concept of identity, which reflects a set of specifics in real business frameworks, there is also a meaning based on associations in metaphors defined as "brand image". It is an older metaphor used in branding [1] which defines the impression of the product in the minds of potential users and consumers. Due to the exceptional dynamics of market processes, availability, on the other hand, the high level of competition among substitutive and competitive spatial units, the image is kept extremely important and recognition, and authenticity is one of the key elements for gaining trust and absolute service users. Along the way, identification with the product is visible until repeated tourist visits (positive user experiences). Levels of exceptional trust and emotional connection with the product in the form of loyalty. The various definitions currently found in the literature reveal that "brand" is an ambivalent construct, which has a negative as well as a positive meaning, which contributes to its multidimensional applicability.

One of the ways to achieve social recognizability and therefore the quality of the destination as a basic marketing unit and tourist basis is based on the appreciation of the element of material heritage, the

gathering and shaping of tourist products as events that contain time-defined activities. They are based on the elements of value created by human work, lifestyle, cultural expression, gastronomic heritage, presentation through proto-collar festivities or folk festivities. The modality is to interpret the heritage and value it for the benefit of the local community through tourist events. Networking and a high level of cooperation on a partnership basis in the local community are extremely important. For this purpose, a survey of the perceptions of local residents as support and their participative effect on personal engagement is carried out, as well as an examination of qualified stakeholders who deal with the delivery of value in the modality of production of original autochthonous products, gastronomic heritage, rural products with which they communicate and promote the culture of heritage. We call the set of specificities, the fundamental tool for distinguishing substitutive entities, identity. For space, as its historical legacy, identity is a consequence of cultural processes as a living heritage. Culture affects all of us, just like heritage, two terms that calibrate with space, and according to Marasović [2] culture "encompasses the totality of creations or phenomena in the material and spiritual life of every nation and humanity as a whole. Also, "heritage is marked by the concept of stability, i.e. continuity" [3].

Heritage is the legacy of the past. Cultural heritage speaks about the tradition of the cultural landscape, about the tradition of life on a certain soil, about the tradition of technological and organizational forms. This tradition is inherited by living in a certain environment. It receives and amalgamates influences, and ultimately contributes to a more complete picture of national identity based on cultural identity. The culture of a people belongs to everything that is in it, that is left and has been preserved in the territory where it lives, and culture knows no borders [4].

It has no national borders because cultural identity can be much wider than the borders of one environment. The culture of humanity is not the physical sum of national cultures. The specificities of national cultures are only contributions to the wider world culture. The tradition of one people and one environment includes all that, belonging to wider cultural circles and civilizations that lived, created and developed on its soil throughout its entire past [5].

They are not only attractive elements of the overall tourist offer of an area (the destinations are part of the natural and cultural heritage. They are also strong motives for potential tourist visits. Moreover, the quantitative context of physical closeness (number of tourist arrivals and/or visits to a tourist destination) is strongly positively correlated with the attractiveness of its natural and cultural heritage, with an emphasis on the link between the touristic attractiveness and the uniqueness of the heritage [6] (Kunst, 2014). Culture is reflected through heritage. These are two complementary concepts [2], culture "encompasses the totality of creations, actions and phenomena in the material and spiritual life of each nation and humanity as a whole", while, "heritage captures stability, and the dimension of continuity" [7], [8].

### Literature Review

For generations, intangible cultural heritage transfers the values of knowledge and skills through communities and groups. As a reaction to their environment, their actions and their history, they create and shape the present anew, giving meaning to identity in an unbroken chain of time. ICH (intangible heritage) promotes respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. The terminological definition of ICH refers to the manifestations, knowledge, expressions, skills, as well as instruments, objects, handicrafts and cultural spaces related thereto, which communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, accept as part of their cultural heritage [9].

The integrity of culture as a reflex of historical heritage and process has materialized the tangible properties of the cultural heritage context and the intangible elements that testify to the culture of the human community, their continuous development. Therefore, it includes all the intangible elements that a certain community considers essential components of its internal identity as well as its uniqueness and specialness compared to all other human groups.

As a consequence of the dynamics of market movements, idiosyncrasy is supported by the distinctiveness of the constitutive elements of people's cultures. Until the last decades of the 20th century, the international community did not adequately perceive the holistic perception of culture. The main legal instruments adopted for the purpose of protecting cultural heritage were exclusively devoted to tangible cultural expressions, the significance of which should be assessed based on an objective and standardized perception of their artistic, aesthetic, architectural, visual, scientific and economic value. Thanks to these instruments, this perspective, developed in the Western world, has become a globalized valuation method used by the international community as a whole to determine the value of cultural heritage [9].

Intangible cultural heritage, manifests culture, represents the diversity of the living heritage of humanity as well as the most important means of cultural diversity, the development potential of which is key to the development and branding of the destination area. The main "constitutive factors" of intangible cultural heritage represent the "self-identification" of this heritage as an essential element of the cultural identity of its creators and bearers; constant recreation as a response to the historical and social development of the respective communities and groups; connection with the cultural identity of those communities and groups; by its authenticity; and its inseparable relationship with human rights.

The international community became aware of the need for urgent international protection of intangible

cultural heritage, initiating legal proceedings that culminated in the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003 [9].

This Convention correctly highlights the main elements of intangible cultural heritage and is based on a sound philosophical rationale, but its operational part - structured on the model of the 1972 World Heritage Convention - seems to be inadequate to ensure adequate protection of the specificities of intangible heritage. Culture is continuously lived and developed, and the people and processes that materialized history are the testimony of the same.

As a market-oriented production system, the destination designates space as a fundamental marketing unit that tourists activate with their behavior pattern in space and time. The experience of tourists is the result of the changed behavior of tourists. The use of products uses resources that have changed form from attractive resources (natural and cultural) to the services of specific service providers. Tourists gain experience through experiences, and they are motivated by motives, then activities and contents of service providers [4].

A local tourist destination is a physical space where a visitor spends at least one night. It has physical and administrative boundaries that define its governance, images and perceptions that define its market competitiveness. Local tourism destinations involve different stakeholders that often include the host community and can be networked to create larger destinations' (UNWTO, 2002). Natural and anthropogenic attractions form the basis of the tourist product of the destination. They gather under the patronage of stakeholders and local residents in unique events. Tourists choose such a product of the destination, choose an event as a product that enables an easier understanding of the area and the offer of various activities and specifics that will satisfy their curiosity and related needs. In order for the product of the tourist destination to be shaped, promoted and developed in a balanced way, it is necessary to thoroughly analyze its components and include:

- 1) identification of real components of the tourist product - assessment of the components of the tourist product - evaluation of the possibility of commercialization of individual components of the tourist product
- 2) management's views on the participation of individual components in the tourist product, considering their attractiveness and limitations in valorization
- 3) selection of components of the tourist product that compete best on the market and express the identity of the offer as a destination brand, including the involvement of local residents as value creators

Increasingly strong competition between destinations on a global level makes questionable the question of quality and expected priority activities related to products in the destination. Proponents of the market regulatory balance and supply-demand relationship, which they consider to be meritorious, place more emphasis on the activities of the multiple components of the destination that interact with travelers during their journey [10]. Thus, Murphy [11] equates a destination with a market where the characteristics of supply and demand jostle for attention and consumption. He presented a model of the tourist system that describes the tourist product as a complex experience that is the result of a process in which tourists use a number of services during their stay (information, transportation, accommodation and attractions). Some authors [12] emphasize that tourism is not only a series of inputs but also an experience, while Murphy, Pritchard and Smith [13] state that a destination can be viewed as a set of individual products and experiences that together form the experience experienced in the visited area. One of the newer and more well-known models set Alastair M. Morrison [14] emphasizing the four components of a destination product: physical products, people, programs, organized arrangements.

Due to its natural characteristics, the sedimentary product of the Pelješac peninsula is very similar to other parts of the coastal area and the region of Dubrovnik. These are the typical Dinaric direction of extension and the characteristic mutual parallelism of elevations and depressions, similar structure and composition of rocks, karst characteristics of the area, and indentation of the coast, true Mediterranean climate and vegetation characteristics. Limestone ridges extend along the peninsula on the outside, which mutually close the valley formed for the most part in dolomites. There are fertile Pelješka parish, the area of Janjina, Pelješka crna gora and Stonsko polje.

The Pelješac peninsula inherits olive growing and wine growing, which are favored by fertile soil and a suitable Mediterranean climate. We also have a salt pan located in Ston, whose history bears witness to a valuable source that inherits the history of events, and thus we obtain Ston salt that is spread throughout Croatia and beyond. From Lovište, through Orebić, Trpnje, Potomje, Ponikve and all the way to Ston, they offer us various products, intangible heritage, archaeological zones, events that are held in that area, at a local level, but recognized all over the world. On Pelješac we also find forts, sacred buildings, tombs, monasteries and country buildings and palaces and their remains.

The identity of a tourist destination is a reflection of a different combination of feelings, symbols, experiences, memories and/or activities that, although personal, are filtered and checked daily through different social structures and improved by social interaction. In other words, the identity of any tourist destination is a relative category that reflects not only the opinions of different individuals and social groups at the local level, but also established historical connotations, attitudes towards other (similar) destinations as well as a set of beliefs/experiences of external, non-local protagonists. Consequently, the established identity of tourist destinations is the result of the balance of power of different groups of involved protagonists and is not a fixed category. In this sense, therefore, as a result of occasional changes in the balance of power, the space communicates through activities with users, creating unique experiences whose perceptions create and define

attitudes and preferences. By creating the attributes of the experience, spatial distinctiveness as the embodiment of emotional connections with space creates a good development assumption for tourist destinations that are nevertheless under the market pressure of changes. (The impact of changing the authentic cultural landscape of the city of Dubrovnik as an important element of the identity system on the brand and image of the city and on the success of the tourist destination, 2014).

### **Products of Gastronomic Heritage - A Component of Originality and a Tool of Competitiveness**

Food affects spatial and temporal convergence. Conflicting and divergent globalization interests actually have a positive effect on the growth of interest in regional identities and the roots of our culture. Therefore, it is understandable to look for a connection between gastronomy and gastronomic heritage based on some kind of ethnic, national or religious 'character' and a way of communicating with people's social and cultural values. The active participation of the local community and the expression of these values is most effectively revived through events that revitalize traditions and enable the active participation of locals in their realization. Gastronomic heritage as part of cultural identity is perceived as a means of enriching experiences, creating new power of spiritual dimension that expresses a personal identity. It is complementary to the needs of belongings that influence the quality of life. Food is a powerful communication tool. As a way of communication and understanding of other cultures, food breaks down existing cultural barriers between different ethnic groups and spaces. The evolutionary approach to understanding heritage and the relationship to gastronomic tourism has a significant genesis in the forces that break through cultural barriers and internationalize gastronomic tourism [15].

Consequently, authenticity and forms of economic, social, cultural and culinary capital are relevant to this discussion of gastronomic tourism [16].

Numerous studies prioritize the consumption and experience of food 'on the spot' demarcating the provision of food service from gastronomic experience and tradition, demarcating the context of gastronomy as a primary need and a secondary need. In between, of course, there is a wide range of possibilities for accepting and engaging in gastronomic tourism. The characteristics of the service define the availability of gastronomic heritage and oenological heritage, its attachment to the local area, the climate of which it is an inseparable part. The authentic gastronomy of a dish is associated with tangible and intangible elements such as sense of place, context, manners, material culture and social customs that are difficult to replicate outside the original environment.

Thus, the relationship between gastronomy and tourism goes beyond eating and creates a special relationship between user and provider. The tourist experiences gastronomy, perceives information through consumption, which allows the tourist to communicate (economy of respect) with the place of production, processes and values of the people who participate. Therefore, identity is conditioned by exchange and is a function of exchange that is simultaneously economic and cultural, market and skill, commodity and experience". This, in turn, creates a stronger connection that tourists seek with their environment, inevitably increasing social and cultural capital. This confirms that the authenticity and forms of economic, social, cultural and culinary capital are elementary for gastronomic tourism [16], they inform and deepen the understanding of the direction of the evolution of gastronomic tourism.

In fact, people have always wanted to tell others about their experiences, especially their gastronomic travel experiences, in order to demonstrate their social and cultural capital, or to hear from others 'insider' information about what to do or eat, thus gaining social and cultural capital before travels. This behavior prompted by human nature and prompted by the development of marketing concepts that flourished in the socioeconomic context of the conditions of the balance of production forces and competitive relations, implies that, at least until the middle of the 20th century, information about gastronomic tourism was asymmetric - given the lower level of knowledge, experiences, sources of information, which was not in an equal relationship between the side of those who offer and the side of those who are offered and potentially oriented towards the same.

The promotion of gastronomic tourism in the new digital age also affected the popularization of regional food by solving the availability of information that can be trusted. This is confirmed by The Michelin guide and its star system was the first of many consumer guides that appeared in the early 20th century. It is also the oldest, the most authoritative by professionals, which legitimized it in the eyes of gastronomic tourists, covering today a wide world market [17]. Benefits of the sharing economy and P2P have catalyzed the sharing of information about quality and availability. These advantages shaped interactive communication and influenced the knowledge on products, experiencing users and making providers skillful in pricing, strategic thinking or even when bearing on the partnerships and collaboration. This complementarity is based on the trust that individuals place in close or independent users. They certainly confirm the advantages of the most dominant source of information such as suggestions and recommendations.

Therefore, market relations have rotated through the introduction of innovative solutions, where the effects of the attitudes of users of digital tools and algorithms to support the availability and sharing of information and experiences are enhanced. It is therefore not surprising that food tourists preferred to rely on word of mouth, which they still do, although this has now evolved from one tourist/consumer/customer talking to another on a personal level to gathering their own information through various platforms, mostly online [18].

Terminology such as co-creation of products and participation in production processes is the result of product control, production methods and time frames as conditions in which new tourist experiences are created as a mosaic heritage of past times that resonates in real time and unites or separates the service user from the service provider [19].

While tourists value tradition, local cuisine and authenticity, the tourism industry now uses heritage as a revenue driver, with the dual benefit of responsible local community behavior in response to commercialization, industrialization of food and manufacturing processes, and the impact of global trends that are losing touch with local identity. The dynamics of tourism development includes identity as a component of the offer of a rich gastronomic heritage, faced with competition in the domain of the experience economy [20]. The importance of gastronomic tourism is evidenced by the 1st UNWTO World Forum on Food Tourism organized by UNWTO in 2015 [21], based in the center of gastronomic tourism - San Sebastian in Spain. The growth of interest prompted the reorganization in 2016 under the name of the 2nd UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomic Tourism in Peru [22], where in the qualitative segment attention was drawn to the terminological evolution of the discipline from Food Tourism to Gastronomy Tourism.

The continuity of holding the Forum continues, which testifies to the recognition of the nature of gastronomic tourism through a) multiple user advantages, evaluations and experiences, promotion through word of mouth b) credibility in the area and c) income generation effects. The research corpus is important for the development trajectory of this phenomenon. Although in an informal modality, we are witnessing its progress, where development continuity and evolution of activities require a wider social context, research efforts aimed at harmonizing the consequent effects, and primarily on defining the size and characteristics of the market, the profile of users of gastronomic treasures, experiences, motives of tourists' trips, sources of pleasure during their stay, with tourist infrastructure and reception possibilities.

Gastronomic tourism began at the threshold of the 21st century. When Erik Wolf, president of the International Culinary Tourism Association (now the World Food Travel Association, WFTA), presented his organization with a work on culinary tourism, documenting the interest in gastronomic and wine tourism and encouraging the interpretation of this segment of heritage, networking as an incentive for local businesses and caterers to meet the growing demand [23]. The WFTA has since conducted research in 2010, 2013 and again in 2016 confronting the quantitative growth segment with the structural changes facing the world with information on the broadcasting markets of eleven countries: Australia, China, France, Germany, Ireland, India, Italy, Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. Questions of state of mind or legacy of user experiences value the tourism system [24].

Gastronomic tourism cooperates with other areas of user experience, so the categorization of the understanding of gastronomic tourism, even from a practical level, is neither simple nor unique. In parallel with the selective modalities of tourism development, according to Getz et al. [25], with the development of organized ways of presenting these narratives - manifestations, gastronomic tourism has gained momentum only since 2005, with the largest academic research conducted in Hong Kong [26]. Misunderstanding, partial interests of the local community, lack of a complete picture that would indicate the interactivity of this platform for the exchange of experiences and information contained in the name of gastronomic heritage. Food-based tourism has spawned several descriptors that reflect different sectors of the tourism industry.

### Primary Research

In addition to the previously supported by secondary qualitative analyzes of social phenomena, the paper conducted empirical research through a survey. The qualitative upgrade of the survey is defined by the interpretation of the results through the process of comparison, observation and connection of relative relationships into clear attitudes. The central process of quantitative research is the process of measurement because it enables the connection of empirical observations and the mathematical expression of quantitative relationships. They are most often performed on a sample, with the hope that the results can be generalized to the population [27].

Investigation of the level of implementation of the potential of intangible heritage in shaping the products of the local area

The aim of this research is to point out the value and quality of local products that contribute to the branding of the local area as a destination. The survey indirectly provides answers regarding the pandemic and the change in the structure of consumption.

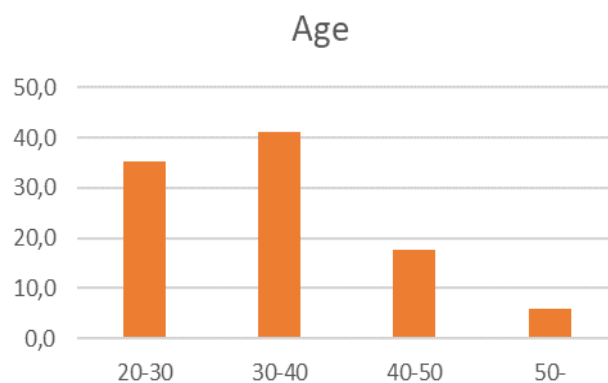
The respondents included in the research are excellent winemakers who own their own wineries on the Pelješac peninsula and are engaged in the production and sale of top quality wines. Out of a total of 25 questionnaires sent, the number of correctly filled questionnaires is 18, which is relevant information for this research. The research was conducted through 20 questions with a single or multiple answer, displayed on a linear scale and with your own opinion.

### Research results

Based on the first survey questionnaire according to family farms, the respondents are mostly between 30 and 40 years old, i.e. 41.2%, and 35.3% of the respondents are between the ages of 20 and 30, while 17.6% of the respondents are between the ages of 40 to 50 years old, and the smallest number is those, i.e. 5.9%, who are



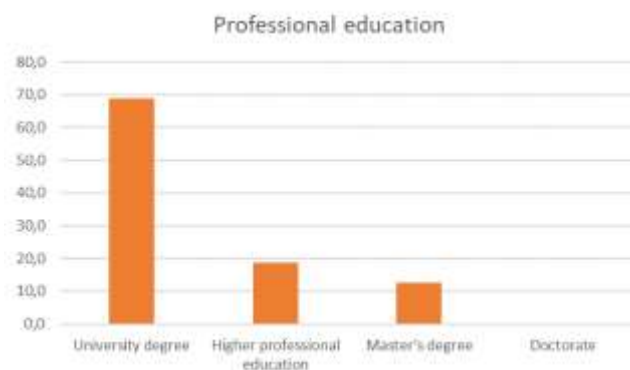
50 and older.



**Figure 1. Age of respondents**

Source: Research by the author

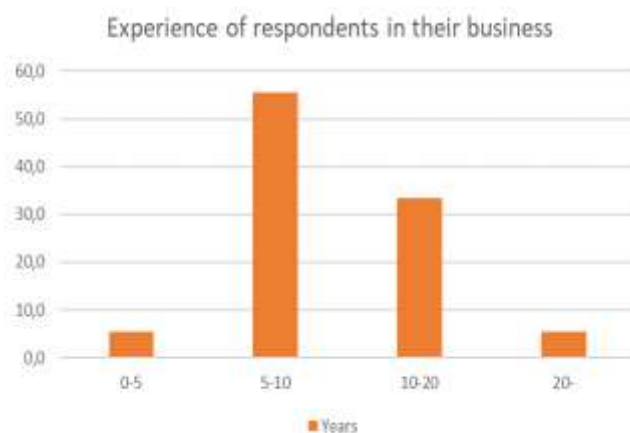
As for professional education, 68.8% of respondents have a university degree, 18.8% have a higher professional education, 12.5% of respondents have a master's degree, and 0%, that is, no one, has a doctorate.



**Figure 2. Professional education**

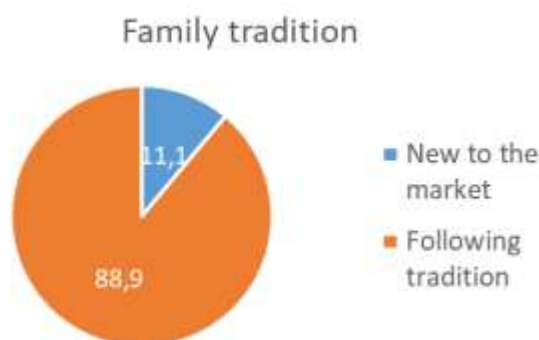
Source: Research by the author

As for experience in business, most of the respondents already exist on the market, as the graph shows. Most of them have 5 to 10 years of experience, or 55.6%, 38.9% of respondents have 10 to 20 years of experience, and 5.6% of respondents have 20 and more years of experience.



**Figure 3. Experience of respondents in their business**

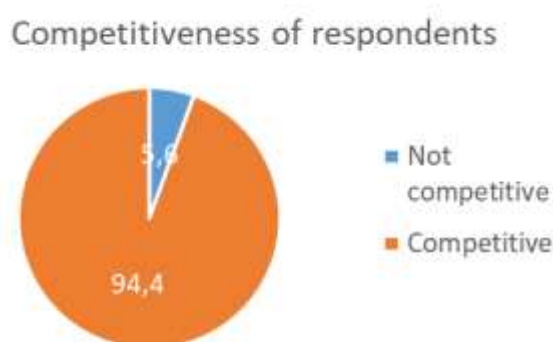
Source: Research by the author



**Figure 4. Family tradition**

Source: Research by the author

The majority of respondents follow the family tradition, i.e. 88.9%, and are engaged in wine and olive growing, and in addition they produce honey, grow oysters and mussels, and 11.1% of them are new to the market.

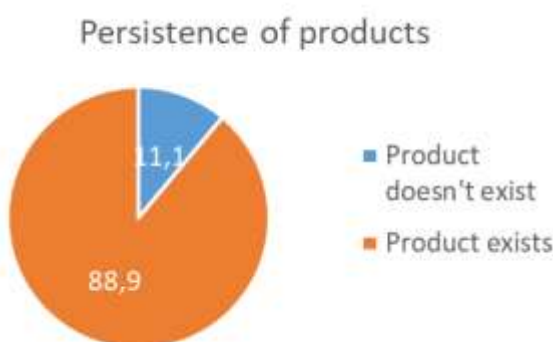


**Figure 5. Competitiveness of respondents**

Source: Research by the author

A large percentage of respondents believe that they are competitive with the quality of the product, more precisely 94.4% of them, and only 5.6% believe that they are not.

According to the combination of the originality of the gastronomic offer, the respondents believe that it is best to offer products such as olive oil, wine, winemaking as part of a local event, a combination of olive growing, winemakers and local events, a combination of tourist tours, tastings and gastronomic offers. Days of open Pelješac cellars, fishermen's evenings, festival of open Pelješac cellars, stone souvenirs, liqueurs, a unique product based on market demand at an acceptable price.



**Figure 6. Persistence of products, that is, manifestations on the Pelješac peninsula**

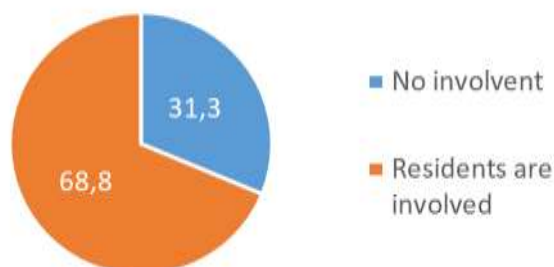
Source: Research by the author

Does such a product or event already exist in your area? It exists, and 88.9% of respondents pointed out that it exists, and only 11.1% that it does not exist. What binds these local residents to the destination, i.e. the area where they live, are tradition, heritage, home, family, work, clean sea, wine production, tourism and catering,

and someone even gave the answer because "home is the most beautiful in the world".

A 68.8% of the respondents believe that there is greater involvement of local residents in production, and 31.3% that there is none.

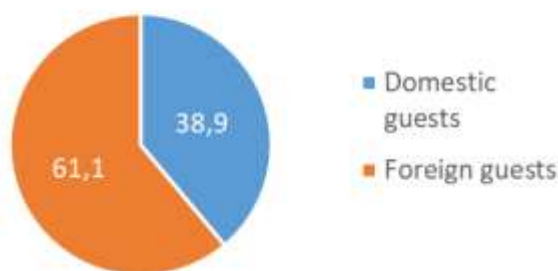
Engagement of local residents



**Figure 7. Engagement of local residents**

Source: Research by authors

Structure of consumption

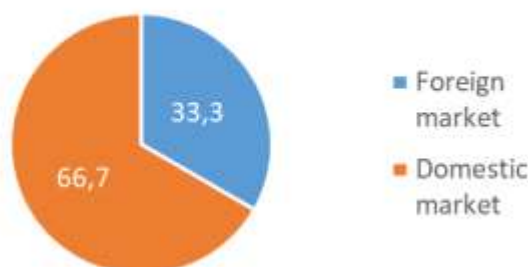


**Figure 8. Structure of consumption**

Source: Research by the author

Regarding the consumption structure, foreign guests spend more than domestic guests, and foreign guests are the ones who make the market dominant. The corona virus pandemic greatly affected business, and both production and consumption decreased. Respondents believe that 38.9% of spending is done by domestic guests, and 61.1% by foreign guests.

Dominant market

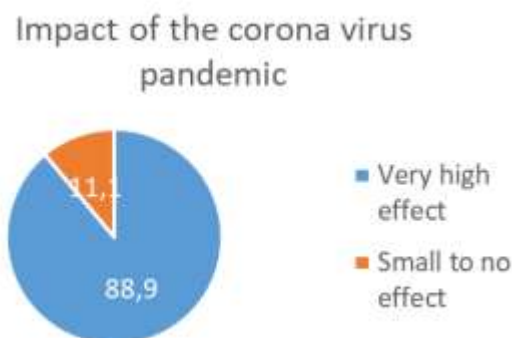


**Figure 9. Dominant market**

Source: Research by the author

33.3% of the respondents believe that the foreign market is dominant, and 66.7% of the respondents that the domestic market is dominant, which leads to the conclusion that the market should be expanded, that is, the potential should be used and shown to people from the wider area, on the territory of the country through marketing. And they spread what they offer all over the world.





**Figure 10. Impact of the corona virus pandemic on business**

Source: Research by the author

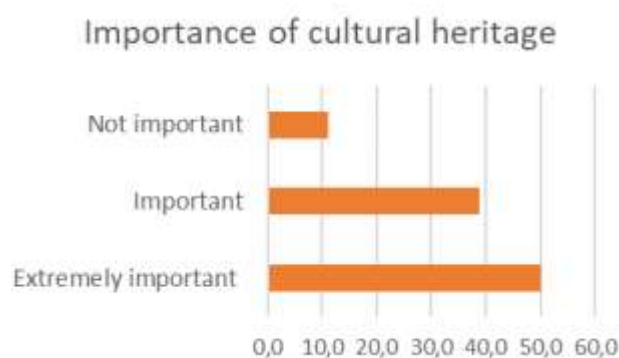
88.9% of respondents believe that the pandemic has greatly affected business, and 11.1% of them believe that it has not. Given that the corona virus pandemic has affected the whole world, we see a large deficit in business and trade in all sectors.



**Figure 11. Integration towards other stakeholders**

Source: Research by the author

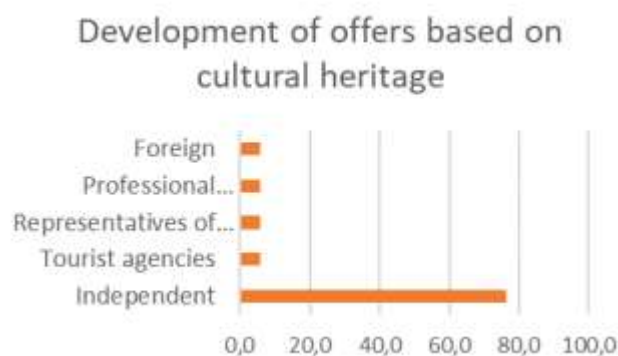
Attitudes regarding the level of integration with other stakeholders according to a linear scale from 1 to 5, at level 1 is 17.6% of respondents, at level 2 11.8% of respondents, at level 3 47.1% of respondents, at level 4 17.6% of respondents, and at level 5 5.9% of respondents.



**Figure 12. Importance of cultural heritage**

Source: Research by the author

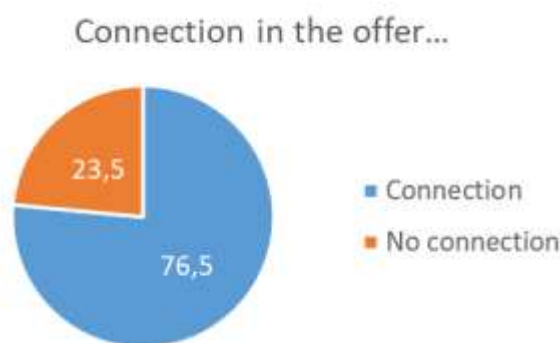
Half of the respondents, or 50% of them, believe that cultural heritage is extremely important for family farms' business, 38.9% of them believe that it is important, and 11.1% of respondents believe that business is not based on cultural heritage.



**Figure 13. Development of offers based on cultural heritage**

Source: Research by the author

According to the development of the offer based on cultural heritage, 76.4% of the respondents are independent, 5.9% are connected with tourist agencies, 5.9% with representatives of local and regional administration, also 5.9% with professional organizations at the local and regional level, and 5.9% abroad.



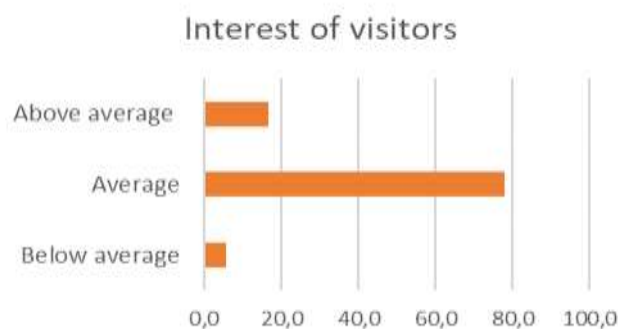
**Figure 14. Connection in the offer of cultural heritage with other local destinations in Pelješac**

Source: Research by the author

76.5% believe that there is a connection in the offer of cultural heritage with other local destinations in Pelješac, 23.5% of them think that there is none.

According to the respondents, the elements of cultural heritage that have the greatest potential in business are traditional events, wine evenings, fishermen's evenings, ambience, local events, wine cellars, and there have always been events such as Vignja Day, Kučišta Day, and it would be nice if some other places celebrated like this your day, because the more events, the bigger the offer. Regarding the connection between the offer and the cultural heritage, we see that it exists and that there is a lot of unused potential. The interest of visitors, tourists, and even locals in cultural heritage is considered extremely important.

According to respondents, the interest of visitors, tourists, and even locals in cultural heritage is average at 77.8%. 16.7% above average interest, and 5.6% think it is below average interest. I think that the interest is quite high, because compared to so many existing facilities, wineries, wine cellars, products, etc., everyone can find something that interests them or that they like or want to visit.



**Figure 15. Interest of visitors**

Source: Research by the author

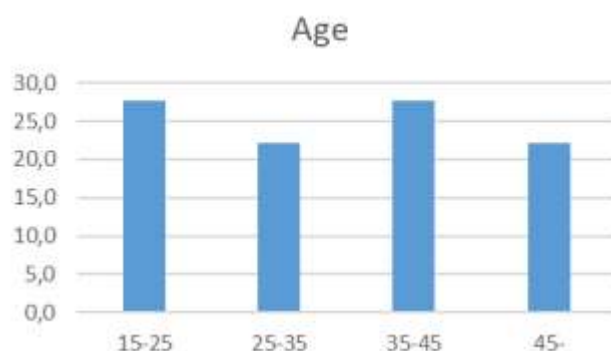
Investigating the level of involvement of the local population in shaping the products of the local area

A survey of the level of engagement of the local population in shaping the products of the local area was carried out and related to the local population. The statistical unit is the respondent, a member of the local population. 36 people took part in the research and supported their opinion with an answer, out of a total of 50 questionnaires sent.

The respondents according to whom this research was conducted are the local population who live and inhabit the Pelješac peninsula and enjoy the benefits that the peninsula offers us, with its historical cultural heritage. The aim of this research is to show the level of involvement of the local population in shaping the products of the local area and to bring us closer to their knowledge, opinions and involvement in the shaping of the products of their local area.

### Research results

Out of 50 surveys sent, 36 of them gave answers, which is very relevant information. There are 27.8% of respondents aged 15 to 25, 22.2% aged 25 to 35, and 27.8% aged 35 to 45, and 22.2% aged 45 and over.



**Figure 16. Age of respondents**

Source: author's research

44.4% of the respondents have university degree, 47.2% of them have a higher professional education, 8.3% have completed a master's degree, and none has a doctorate in science.



**Figure 17. Professional education of respondents**

Source: author's research

As for the perception of local residents in relation to the area, some of the answers are: the sea, love for the place, habit and desire for the progress and development of the place, a place of memories, a place where I can always return and a place where I feel simply good, natural the beauty of the area, family, friends and love for home. Tourism, autochthonousness, love, vacation, life on Pelješac, viticulture, landscape and people, work, family, sensibility. One of the local residents suggested that one product should be captured and branded as a premium product, exclusively from this region. The destination is an important factor in tourism development, tourist movements and in the economy of tourism in general.

Products related to local events and traditions; products such as butard, fish, olive oil, various citrus fruits, wine, blackberry wine, crostini, seafood, salted anchovies, clams, pashticada are products that connect the respondents with local events and traditions.

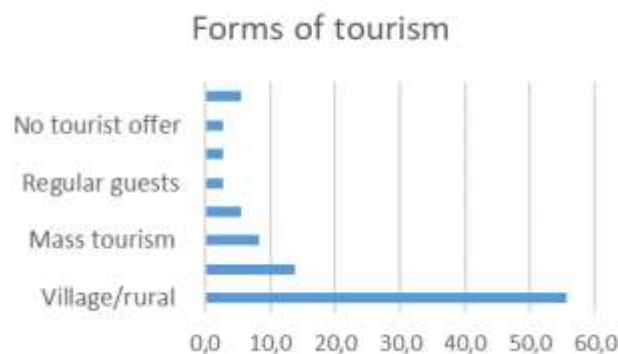
According to the linear scale at level 1 to 5, only 5.7% of them answered that at level 1, 20% of respondents were at level 2, at level 3 even 42.9% of respondents, at level 4 14.3% of respondents, and at level 5 17.1% of respondents.



**Graph 18. Attitudes regarding the level of local stakeholders**

Source: Research by the author

A large number, i.e. 44.4% of the respondents believe that there are no innovative manifestations with greater engagement of the younger population, and the rest, mostly on average 3.7% answered that there are, and gave the answer that they are manifestations as part of a cultural festival, i.e. such as klapa meetings, Village Festival, band night, events such as open cellar days. 7.4% of the respondents gave as an example the organization of a Street Ball, 3.7% a wine tour, 3.7% believe that young people are poorly engaged and 3.7% answered that there should be more interest and engagement of young people.



**Chart 19. Forms of tourism with regard to the area where the inhabitants live**

Source: Research by the author

55.6% of the respondents answered that it is dominated mainly by the village/rural form of tourism considering the area in which they live, 13.9% believe that cultural tourism dominates, and 8.3% of them consider mass tourism as such. 5.6% answered the question that it is sports tourism, 2.8% that there is no tourism, that is, if there are no ferries and guests who have been coming for 20 years, so there would be no tourism in the town at all. 2.8% said that this tourism is actually tourism of the sea, sun and natural beauty, 2.8% believe that Trpanj does not have any tourist offer or program, and 5.6% of respondents pointed out that family tourism is dominant.



**Graph 20. Competitiveness of the destination**

Source: Research by the author

According to the respondents, the main competitiveness of the destination is largely natural resources, i.e. 72.2% of the respondents chose the sun and the sea as the answer, 13.9% of the respondents believe that it is the cultural and historical heritage, 8.3% the hospitality of the host, and only 5, 6% that the main competitiveness is the developed tourist infrastructure.

Attitudes related to the spatial integrity of destinations.

a) recognition and image of the tourist destination

b) preserved natural and cultural integrity of the area

This is achieved by the following activities:

As for the views on the spatial integrity of the destination, it was suggested that the recognition and image of the tourist destination could be achieved by work, by telling a story, they believe that the place can have much greater recognition in the world if joint marketing and promotion work were done.

Also, as regards the preservation of the natural and cultural integrity of the area, a lot of the area is preserved and natural, which leads to the conclusion that it does not need a lot of investment to start creating the image of the place. Some say that these activities are the holding of fishing evenings, clap concerts, adequate publicity on the tourist markets, protection and promotion of local products, creation of an original way of branding the place, and targeted tourism. Smarter waste management, investing in cultural heritage and promoting it, by arranging places, supporting restaurateurs, small businessmen and private companies to expand the offer and differentiate the type of tourism to be aspired to, and that one should pay attention to one's heritage, nature and culture and convey enthusiasm are also mentioned. to younger generations. As for the potential, that is, the assumption of space development, some have proposed the development of nautical tourism, elite tourism, winter tourism and wine tours, while others think that there is no potential. Beautiful nature, rural tourism, family farms, secluded houses (villas), renovation of old houses, beaches, clear sea, healing mud, monuments, beautiful promenades, quality food, olive oil, wine. They pointed out that we have the potential for cycling, hiking, diving, and that the tourism community should be more involved.

According to the opinion of the respondents, the rich history, the walls, the Gradina, material assets (renovation of the old part of the town, renovation of the Gradina, St. Rok's staircase, etc.), beaches and the sea are the parts of the elements of cultural heritage that have the greatest potential.

## Conclusion

Cultural heritage represents everything that we find in the legacy, that is, the legacy of past generations, it contains physical and intangible attributes that are preserved in the present so that future generations will have something and continue to nurture it. Tangible and intangible heritage are equally important and show long-term work, heritage, changes over time, our history, and thus teach us and help us in further development. Heritage is something that is very valuable, and it exists in all parts of the world, and each story, idea is separate for each city, place, and country. The identity of each destination is a reflection of a different combination of feelings, symbols, experiences, memories and activities that, although personal, change daily through different social structures and are improved by social interaction. Through the identity of the destination, we learn about the originality of the cultural heritage that accompanies us through history and leads to the future. The Pelješac peninsula has all the characteristics of a pleasant Mediterranean climate with pronounced long, clear, calm, dry summers, short and mild winters, and warmer and wetter autumns than spring. . In the work, the emphasis is on researching the level of integration of the value of the potential of the product, space in building the brand of the destination.

Primary research was conducted on a sample of family farms in the area of the Pelješac peninsula on the level of implementation of the potential of intangible heritage in shaping the products of the local region, with the aim of researching the role, value of the products they offer, their quality, ways of connecting the production of local products to the offer and the level of connection with other partners who build the destination brand in a complementary way. Therefore, we can conclude that in addition to the existence of a wealth of cultural heritage and resource base, we also need marketing tools in the placement of the products of the destination. When asked about the level of business integration with other stakeholders, the respondents rated it as good on a linear scale, thus proving that there should be greater involvement of local residents. Therefore, greater involvement would help in building the brand of the destination and thus compete more easily compared to other destinations in the Mediterranean. Also, primary research was conducted on a sample of local residents regarding attitudes about the potential, the level of connection of products with local events, the level of recognition and importance of local products that would influence the building of the destination's brand. During this research, we proved how local residents connected products with events and how they recognize their originality and value that has been built up over time. Considering the obtained results, it is considered that there should be greater involvement of local residents, i.e. better connection of local stakeholders, authorities, investors, because sometimes practice speaks in favor of how cooperation can help in further progress. As for the attitudes towards the spatial integrity of the destination, it was suggested that the recognition and image of the tourist destination can be achieved through work, with a story, it is believed that the place can have much greater recognition in the world if joint marketing and promotion work were done.

Also, as regards the preservation of the natural and cultural integrity of the area, a lot of the area is preserved and natural, which leads to the conclusion that it does not need a lot of investment to start creating the image of the place. The Pelješac peninsula has so much potential, so much unused potential that is just waiting to see the light of day and show the world what it has. Such a thing requires a lot of work, involvement and engagement of the residents, and everyone who will help build the destination brand based on the complementarity of local products.

## REFERENCES

1. R. W. Belk, K. D. Bahn and R. N. Mayer, "Developmental Recognition of Consumption Symbolism," *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 9(1). pp. 4–17, 1982, <https://doi.org/10.1086/208892>.
2. T. Marasović, "Cultural Heritage", Split: Polytechnic. 2001.
3. P. Perreault and D. Richard D., "Basic Marketing: a marketing strategy planning approach", *Topics Marketing -- Management, Marketing -- Management*, Publisher Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin, IRWIN, USA, pp. 274, 1993.
4. S. Reinhold, C. Laesser and P. Beritelli, "St. Gallen Consensus on destination management", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, Volume 4, Issue 2, pp. 137-142, 2015, ISSN 2212-571X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.03.006>.
5. Maroević, "Present Heritage", Zagreb, Society of Art Historians of the Slovak Republic of Croatia, Zagreb, 1986.
6. Kunst, 2014
7. P. Beritelli, C. Laesser, and T. Bieger, "The St. Gallen Model for Destination Management (1 ed.)", St. Gallen: IMP-HSG, 2015.
8. M. Escobar-Farfán, A. Cervera-Taulet, and W. Schlesinger, "Destination brand identity: challenges, opportunities, and future research agenda", *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2302803>.
9. F. Lenzerini, "Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of Peoples", *European Journal of International Law*, 22, pp. 101-120, 2011., <https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/chro06>.
10. C. A. Gunn, "Vacationscapes: Designing Tourist Regions", Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1988.
11. P. E. Murphy, "Tourism: A Community Approach", New York-London: Methuen, 1985.
12. E. Mayo and L. P. Jarvis, "Psychology of Leisure Travel", *Effective Marketing of Sales of Travel Services*, Boston MA CBI, 1981.
13. P. E. Murphy, M. P. Pritchard and B. Smith, "The Destination Product and Its Impact on Traveler Perceptions," *Tourism Management*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 43-52, 2000. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00080-1.
14. M. Morrison, "Marketing and Managing Tourism Destinations (2nd ed.)", Routledge, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315178929>.
15. J. Mulcahy, "Historical Evolution of Gastronomic Tourism", In book: *Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism* pp. 24-31, Chapter: 2. Routledge, 2019, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340183656\\_Historical\\_Evolution\\_of\\_Gastronomic\\_Tourism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340183656_Historical_Evolution_of_Gastronomic_Tourism).
16. P. Naccarato, and K. LeBesco, "Culinary Capital", Oxford: Berg, pp. 145, 2012.
17. C. Lane, "The Cultivation of Taste: Chefs and the Organization of Fine Dining", Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
18. J. Bussell, and K. Roberts, "Power of the People: Word of Mouth Marketing in Food Tourism", In: Bussell, J., Campbell, C., McAree, K. & Lange-Faria, W. *Have Fork Will Travel: A Practical Handbook for Food & Drink Tourism Professionals*, Portland, Oregon, USA: World Food Travel Association, 2014.
19. J. D. Mulcahy, "Future Consumption: Gastronomy and Public Policy", In: Yeoman, I., McMahon-Beattie, U., Fields, K., Albrecht, J. & Meethan, K. *The Future of Food Tourism: Foodies, Experiences, Exclusivity, Visions and Political Capital*, pp 75-86, UK: Channel View Publications, 2015.
20. G. Richards, "An overview of food and tourism trends and policies", *Food and the Tourism Experience: The OECD-Korea Workshop*, OECD Publishing, 2012.
21. United Nations World Tourism Organization, "Tourism Highlights, 2016 Edition", Madrid: UNWTO Publishing, 2016.
22. United Nations World Tourism Organization, "Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism", Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2017.
23. E. Wolf, "Culinary tourism: the hidden harvest", Iowa, USA: Kendall/Hunt, 2006.
24. S. H. Katz, and W. W. Weaver, "Encyclopedia of Food and Culture, Volume 3: Obesity to Zoroastrianism", Index, pp. 407, New York: Scribner. 2003.
25. D. Getz, E. Robinson, and S. Vujicic, "Demographic History of Food Travelers", In: Bussell, J., Campbell, C., McAree, K. & Lange-Faria, W. *Have Fork Will Travel: A Practical Handbook for Food & Drink Tourism Professionals*, pp 63-69, Portland, Oregon, USA: World Food Travel Association, 2014.
26. J. Kivela, and J. C. Crofts, "Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy's Influence on How Tourists Experience a Destination", *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 30 (3): pp. 354 – 377, 2006.



- 
27. D. Pavić, Quantitative research methods, scientific paper, 2014, available at: [www.hrstud.unizg.hr](http://www.hrstud.unizg.hr)