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**REVIEW ARTICLE**

Business and Tourism

**CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER,  
INNOVATION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE GASTRONOMIC  
TOURISM 2012- 2023**

**RELACIÓN CONCEPTUAL ENTRE TRANSFERENCIA DE CONOCIMIENTO,  
INNOVACIÓN Y SATISFACCIÓN DEL CLIENTE EN EL TURISMO  
GASTRONÓMICO 2012- 2023**

**RELAÇÃO CONCEITUAL ENTRE TRANSFERÊNCIA DE CONHECIMENTO,  
INOVAÇÃO E SATISFAÇÃO DO CLIENTE NO TURISMO GASTRONÓMICO 2012-  
2023**

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### **Abstract**

In the last 50 years, three important elements have been of interest to organizations: knowledge, innovation and customer satisfaction. This article aims to visualize the possible conceptual relationships between these topics and their current research development, based on a descriptive documentary analysis divided into three phases: first, establishment of objectives, search criteria and selection of databases; second, visualization and analysis; and finally, conclusions. Sixty-two articles were found in the Scopus, ScienceDirect and Web of Science databases; the main results showed that knowledge transfer is an important element for the preservation of gastronomic traditions; likewise, innovation is related to knowledge transfer both in the improvement of products and processes, as well as in the adaptation and continuity of traditions, which in turn affects the gastronomic experience in customer satisfaction in the gastronomic tourism sector.

**Keywords:** innovative behavior; knowledge management; market; documentary review; local knowledge.

**JEL:** O35; M10; M30; Y9; Z130

### **Resumen**

En los últimos 50 años, han sido de interés para las organizaciones, tres elementos importantes, conocimiento, innovación y satisfacción del cliente. Este artículo, pretende visualizar las posibles relaciones conceptuales entre estos temas y su desarrollo investigativo en la actualidad, partiendo de un análisis documental descriptivo dividido en tres fases, primero establecimiento de objetivos, criterios de búsqueda y selección de bases de datos; segundo, visualización y análisis; finalmente las conclusiones. Se encontraron 62 artículos en las bases de datos de Scopus, ScienceDirect y Web of Science; los principales resultados evidenciaron que la transferencia de conocimientos es un elemento importante para la preservación de las tradiciones gastronómicas; así mismo, la innovación se relaciona con la transferencia de conocimientos tanto en la mejora de productos y procesos, así como en la adaptación y continuidad de las tradiciones, que a su vez incide en la experiencia gastronómica en la satisfacción del cliente en el sector del turismo gastronómico.

**Palabras clave:** comportamiento innovador; gestión del conocimiento; mercado; revisión documental; saberes locales.

**JEL:** O35; M10; M30; Y9; Z130

## Resumo

Nos últimos 50 anos, três elementos importantes têm sido de interesse das organizações: conhecimento, inovação e satisfação do cliente. Este artigo tem como objetivo visualizar as possíveis relações conceituais entre esses tópicos e seu desenvolvimento de pesquisa atual, com base em uma análise documental descritiva dividida em três fases: primeiro, estabelecimento de objetivos, critérios de pesquisa e seleção de bancos de dados; segundo, visualização e análise; e, por fim, conclusões. Sessenta e dois artigos foram encontrados nos bancos de dados Scopus, ScienceDirect e Web of Science; os principais resultados mostraram que a transferência de conhecimento é um elemento importante para a preservação das tradições gastronômicas; da mesma forma, a inovação está relacionada à transferência de conhecimento tanto na melhoria de produtos e processos quanto na adaptação e continuidade das tradições, o que, por sua vez, afeta a experiência gastronômica na satisfação do cliente no setor de turismo gastronômico.

**Palavras-chave:** comportamento inovador; gestão do conhecimento; mercado; análise documental; conhecimento local.

**JEL:** O35; M10; M30; Y9; Z130

## Introduction

Knowledge management, specifically in its transfer phase, is important in generating value by preserving and transmitting knowledge, an intangible asset considered an important resource for organizations (Herschel & Hamid, 2000). According to Nonaka et al. (2000), knowledge transfer is defined as the process of making knowledge available and connecting it across individuals and organizations. Interaction is key here, as the experience not only involves the dissemination of knowledge but also generates a distinctive experience that depends on the characteristics of those involved (Szulanski, 1996). Innovation is a new or improved business product or process (or a combination of both) that significantly differs from the company's previous business products or processes and has been introduced into the market or put into use by the company (OECD/Eurostat, 2018). Therefore, for innovation to occur, the business product or process must have characteristics different from those previously offered by the company.

On the other hand, customer satisfaction can be defined as the post-purchase evaluation of a product or service, taking into account previous expectations or experiences before the purchase (Oliver, 2010). In general, the concept of customer satisfaction refers to the evaluation process between expectations, experience, and actual use of the product or service. In the case of gastronomic tourism, it can be said that it involves the evaluation of different aspects of the product or service, its quality, and the gastronomic experience, in addition to other variables that may motivate tourists to return (Abidin et al., 2020).

Regarding traditional knowledge, Valladares and Olive (2015) define it as:

Knowledge that is not scientific because it has neither arisen from nor belongs to any tradition that, from a sociological, historical, or epistemological perspective, is recognized as scientific. However, it does not lack dynamism, legitimacy, or rationality, as it serves certain purposes within the specific context or practice in which it is generated and applied (p. 90).

In this sense, traditional knowledge is currently gaining importance in certain sectors, such as gastronomic tourism. This sector includes both restaurant businesses and community organizations that engage in this type of tourism. Accordingly, this article aims to conduct a literature review to identify the conceptual relationship between traditional knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction in the gastronomic tourism sector from 2012 to 2023.

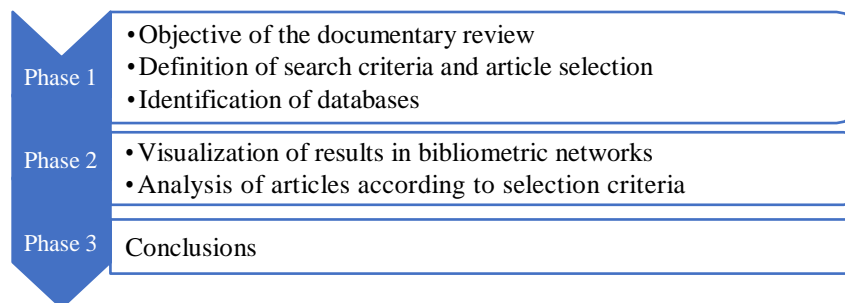
The methodology used was qualitative, based on a descriptive literature review. The sources of information are research articles, and the databases used were Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Web of Science. The analysis of the documents was carried out through the graphical observation of search results using the VOSviewer tool (version 1.5.5), as well as the journal data based on quartile and year of publication. Subsequently, the articles were classified and analyzed according to criteria that suggest possible relationships. The main findings of the research highlight the importance of studying the transfer of gastronomic knowledge, innovation, and customer satisfaction today, as well as the existence of a complex interaction between knowledge transfer, innovation, customer satisfaction, and cultural aspects within the context of gastronomy, gastronomic tourism, and related sectors.

## Methodology

The study was developed through a qualitative analysis that allowed for an in-depth conceptual exploration of the relationship between traditional knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction in the gastronomic tourism sector from 2012 to 2023, supported by a documentary review. According to Day (2007), a descriptive documentary review provides a current overview of a topic, strengthening teaching processes. In this regard, Guirao et al. (2008) argue that a documentary review should follow these stages: "Establish the review objectives, conduct the literature search (consult databases and documentary sources, establish the search strategy, and specify document selection criteria), organize the information, and write the article" (p.8). Figure 1 describes the documentary review method based on the stages proposed by Guirao et al. (2008).

### Figure 1

#### *Proposed Methodological Process*



*Source:* based on Guirao et al. (2008).

For Phase 1, the objective was established along with the criteria related to the information search (keywords, document type filters, time range, area of knowledge), and the criteria for article analysis (journal classification, year of publication, and relevance to the review objective). The selected databases were Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Web of Science, as these databases offer broad coverage of publications, are multidisciplinary, and include all scientific and academic specialties, in addition to providing greater geographic coverage and diversity compared to other databases (Codina, 2019).

For Phase 2, the VOSViewer software was used, as it facilitates the visualization of bibliometric networks. This visualization and map exploration allow for the spatial representation of possible relationships between disciplines, specialties, and published documents (Milanés, 2022). After this visualization, the articles that met the selection criteria established in Phase 1 were analyzed.

In Phase 3, the selected articles were reviewed, and potential relationships between traditional knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction were identified. Finally, some conclusions were drawn.

## Results

Below are the results of the documentary review according to the methodology outlined in three phases: first, the definition of the objective, search criteria, and identification of databases; second, the visualization of results and analysis of articles; and third, the conclusions.

### Phase 1

The objective of the documentary review was: "To identify the conceptual relationship between traditional knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction in the gastronomic tourism sector between 2012 and 2023." Based on this, the search criteria for information were established, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Information Search Criteria*

<b>Document Type</b>	Articles
<b>Time Range</b>	2012-2023
<b>Area</b>	Business – management – gastronomy – social science – tourism.
<b>Keywords Used for Search</b>	"innovation", "customer" "satisfaction", "knowledge sharing", "knowledge transfer" "traditional cuisine", "traditional knowledge", "gastronomic tourism", "tourism", "gastronomy" Local knowledge, Know-how transfer.

*Source:* this research.

As a result of the search, 124 articles were found, which were analyzed through the co-occurrence network of keywords using VOSviewer, the publication quality criteria (journal quartile), topic relevance (year of publication), and the analysis criteria presented in Table 2.

## Table 2

### *Criteria for Article Analysis*

Analysis Criteria
Research focused on traditional gastronomy and/or gastronomic tourism and its relationship with knowledge transfer.
Research focused on traditional gastronomy and/or gastronomic tourism – Elements of knowledge transfer – Elements of innovation.
Research focused on traditional gastronomy and/or gastronomic tourism – Elements of innovation – Elements of customer satisfaction.

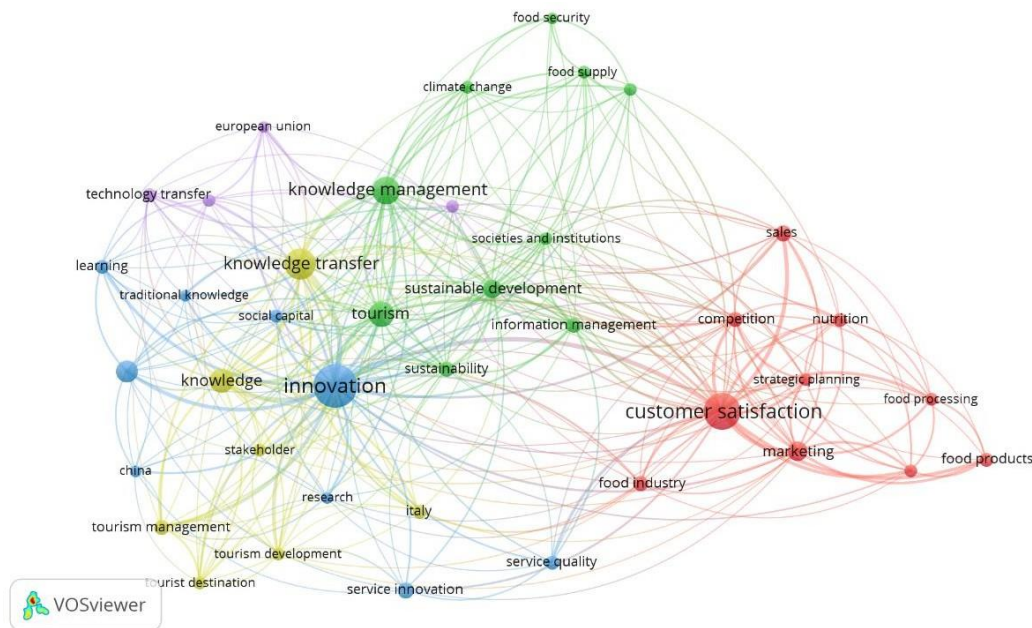
*Source:* this research.

## Phase 2

A total of 124 articles were found, resulting in 682 keywords, analyzing those keywords with a frequency of  $\geq 7$ , totaling 40. As a result, the co-occurrence network of keywords was generated (Figure 2), and organized into four main clusters.

**Figure 2**

*Bibliometric Network 2023*



Source: this research.

The links displayed the co-occurrence relationships of the keywords, and the color of the nodes highlighted the semantic connection present among them. Additionally, the size of the labels and the diameter of the circles are proportional to the frequency and strength of the connections of the respective keywords. Table 3 presents the four clusters, named according to the numerical order of those keywords.

**Tabla 3**

*Keyword Clusters*

Cluster	Keywords
1. Customer Satisfaction	Included 10 keywords related to marketing, the food industry, food processing, nutrition, product development, tourism development, innovation, and knowledge management.



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<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Keywords</b>
2. Tourism	Included 10 keywords related to knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction.
3. Innovation	Included 9 keywords related to knowledge transfer, tourism, and customer satisfaction.
4. Knowledge transfer	Included 7 keywords related to knowledge transfer, innovation, tourism, and customer satisfaction.

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*Source:* this research.

The network facilitates the visualization of the relationships between innovation, knowledge transfer, customer satisfaction, and innovation. It can also highlight how customer satisfaction is related to marketing, food, and service quality.

### **Phase 3**

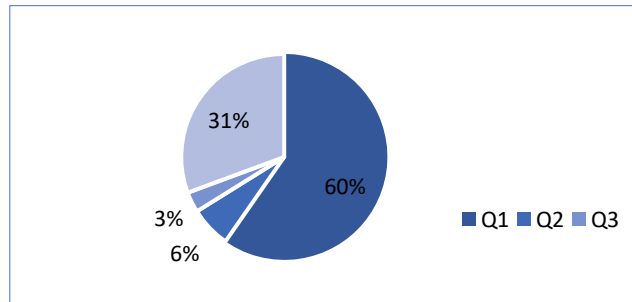
A total of 124 articles were analyzed according to the established criteria (Table 3), resulting in 62 articles that met the criteria. These articles were analyzed based on the quartile of the journal and year of publication. The findings indicate that a significant portion of the publications (60%) are being made in journals classified as Q1. This suggests that most of the articles included in the analysis were published in high-impact journals.

Additionally, 6% of the analyzed publications correspond to journals classified as Q2, which generally have a slightly lower impact compared to Q1 but still maintain a respectable level of influence within their research areas.

Finally, 3% of the analyzed journals are classified as Q3. Although Q3 journals tend to have a lower impact compared to Q1 and Q2, they may represent a broader range of research areas or less specialized fields (Figure 3).

### Figure 3

#### *Journal Classification by Quartile.*



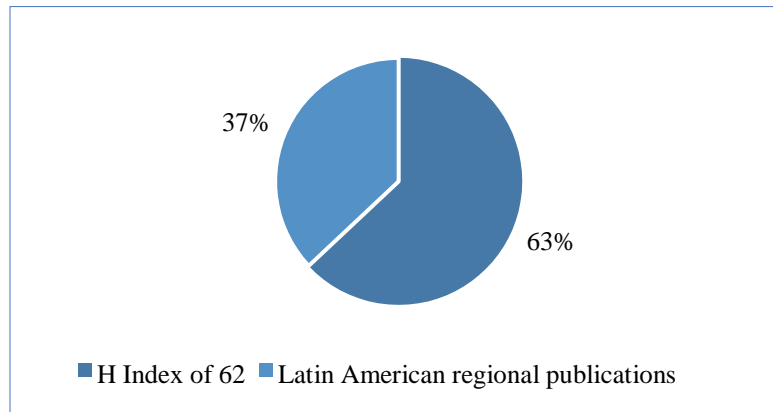
*Source:* this research.

Additionally, it was found that 31% of the publications were in journals not classified in any quartile, suggesting that a significant portion of the analyzed articles are published in journals that may not have a well-established impact factor or are not included in widely recognized indexing systems.

When investigating the H index of these non-quartile journals, it was found that 37% of them have an H index of 62. The H index is a metric that measures both the productivity and impact of an author's publications. An H index of 62 indicates that the journals in question have published a significant number of highly cited articles. On the other hand, the remaining 63% of journals or publications outside the quartile are described as regional. These publications typically focus on research relevant to specific geographic areas or communities. While they may not have a high global impact or recognition, they play an important role in disseminating research that is specifically relevant to the regional context (Figure 4).

#### Figure 4

##### *Journal Classification by H Index*



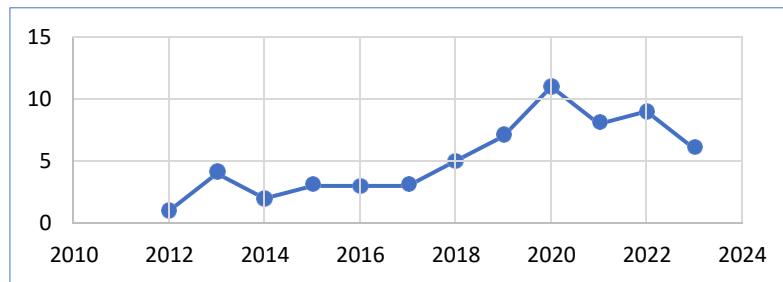
*Source:* this research

Regarding the analysis of publications by year, it is found that the field of gastronomic knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction has experienced a significant increase in attention and research activity over the years. As shown in Figure 5, the initial period from 2012 to 2014 exhibits some variability; from 2014 to 2017, there is a relatively stable number of publications, suggesting that the field was already established and attracted a certain level of interest during that period. However, since 2018, there has been a clear upward trend in the number of publications, indicating a growing recognition and importance of these topics within the field of study. The peak of publications in 2020 represents a period of intense research activity focusing on gastronomic knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

The subsequent decrease in publications observed in 2021 may be influenced by various factors, including the global COVID-19 pandemic, which had a widespread impact on research activities and publication timelines. However, the growth seen in 2022 indicates a resurgence of interest and research output in the field; this suggests that despite the decrease in 2021, the field of gastronomic knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction continues to attract attention and remains an active area of research (Figure 5).

## Figure 5

*Journal Classification by Year (2012-2023)*



*Source:* this research.

## Results of the Analysis by Criteria

Below is the analysis of the 62 articles found according to the criteria established in Phase 1 (Table 2), which shows the possible relationship between the concepts of traditional knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction in gastronomic tourism.

## Traditional Gastronomy and/or Gastronomic Tourism and Its Relation to Knowledge Transfer

According to the 21 articles found, the possible relationship focuses on the following aspects:

The importance of transferring traditional gastronomic knowledge in preserving tradition, recognizing oral communication, observation, and practice as strategies used in this process (Nor et al., 2012). It is also suggested that knowledge transfer is necessary to preserve cultural knowledge, skills, and techniques for preparing traditional foods (Sharif et al., 2013a; 2013b; 2015; 2016). Cooking is an exchange of knowledge between cooks and apprentices, mostly transmitted from one generation to the next. The interest of some in continuing traditions goes beyond economic motivation, being related to pride in linking their activities and the products they create to the territory, their traditions, and the culture rooted in it, as well as its revaluation in the gastronomic tourism sector, promoting its culinary uses and values (Noguer et al., 2021; Palladino, 2020).

Some studies, such as those by Acebedo (2017) and Quintero et al. (2022), find that new generations show different interests in gastronomy, making it difficult to complete the transfer process and jeopardizing the continuity of these traditions. However, in this context, at a time when the globalization of food systems, dietary patterns, and multinational food companies are rapidly expanding, other studies mention the interest in preserving and continuing this knowledge through the documentation of traditional dishes from certain regions, such as Achú, an African dish, the compilation of gastronomic adaptations from the Afro-Colombian Pacific, or the gastronomy of Sincelejo, Colombia (Bhuiyan et al., 2022; Granados et al., 2017; Grimaldi et al., 2018; Malagón, 2019; Ministry of Culture and Fundación ACUA, 2015).

Promoting traditional knowledge transfer processes fosters intergenerational family ties, well-being, and health (Burnette et al., 2020). One strategy used for this purpose is artisanal workshops, aimed at revaluing agrobiodiversity, traditional gastronomy, and food security (Arnés & Astier, 2019; Astier et al., 2019).

Ultimately, it can be seen that in the relationship between gastronomic tourism/traditional gastronomy and knowledge transfer, topics such as women's financial autonomy in the continuity of their gastronomic traditions (Botelho & Santos, 2016), the cultural configuration and identity-building of ethnic populations such as Afro-descendants and Indigenous peoples in the processes of transmission-acquisition and concealment-forgetting of culinary knowledge (Brena, 2017), as well as the exploitation of traditional knowledge from ethnic communities from a market logic, pose a risk to the cultural and spiritual identity of knowledge (Granados and Gomezcasseres, 2017; Rodríguez and Rendón, 2017). It is important to understand the difference between the social appropriation of knowledge and its alienation.

### **Traditional Gastronomy and/or Gastronomic Tourism – Elements of Knowledge Transfer – Elements of Innovation**

According to the 18 articles found, the possible relationship focuses on the following aspects:

Some articles mention that the effects of modernization on traditional food may arise due to advancements in the food processing industry, which enhances the varieties of new ingredients for these dishes (Muhammad et al., 2013; Ramírez et al., 2023).

According to Moonga et al. (2022), Setyowati et al. (2023), Thampi & Priya (2023), and Yew (2020), these transformations could result from generational change, where individuals have innovated in their traditional food products, finding that valuing tradition can facilitate innovation by building knowledge and resources.

The use of both formal and informal socialization practices impacts the exchange of knowledge and improves product development outcomes. In this regard, the greater the availability of transfer practices to disseminate, integrate, and apply organizational knowledge, the better the performance in innovation (Dónate & Sánchez, 2015; Espejel et al., 2014; Molano, 2019). Additionally, analyzing traditional gastronomic trends and seeking to preserve gastronomy as an intangible heritage is relevant (Acle et al., 2020; Mejía et al., 2014; Silva et al., 2023).

The exploration of the concept of authenticity regarding the use of food by hosts in tourist destinations, the relationship between food and tourism, especially foods produced and sold by market vendors, and the various uses of authenticity by vendors and tourists is important (Caballero et al., 2023; Luchaprasith & MacLeod, 2018). Moreover, it is necessary to conceptualize food heritage and identify risk factors that may compromise safety and authenticity in traditional gastronomy (Almansouri et al., 2021). In this sense, Muhammad et al. (2016) state that there is acculturation and assimilation in traditional cuisine. Almansouri et al. (2022) find risks to food authenticity, such as "adaptation to customer preferences," "ingredient costs," and "non-native chef origin." Thus, future studies must continue valuing concepts of acculturation and assimilation in traditional foods.

Some studies express interest in developing management models that allow for the evaluation and subsequent decision-making regarding the preservation of food heritage to support the evaluation and subsequent decision-making regarding the preservation of food heritage to support the development of gastronomic tourism.

It is essential to consider that the tension between innovation and tradition in gastronomy is a constant process; innovation signifies movement, learning, and the production of knowledge, while the transformation of practices and traditions is how cultural production flows (Aguagallo & Pérez, 2022; Mahecha, 2020).

### **Gastronomic Tourism and/or Traditional Gastronomy – Elements of Innovation – Elements of Customer Satisfaction**

Upon analyzing the 23 articles found, the possible relationship focuses on the following aspects: Studies on consumer perceptions of traditional food products find that these products are often considered more natural and authentic, and consumers request that they be healthier, more nutritious, and more convenient. Consequently, innovation, while controversial in this context, is essential to meet consumer demand; however, despite customers showing that they may be open to innovations, it is suggested that not all developments in food production align with consumer acceptability (Bigliardi, 2019; Fibri & Frøst, 2020; Leroy et al., 2015; Nazzaro et al., 2019; Olsen et al., 2021; Roselli et al., 2020).

Important factors for tourists' gastronomic satisfaction are evaluated, considering elements such as food quality, food image, culinary identity, cultural experiences, and taste for food in traditional gastronomy. These factors are relevant in positively evaluating food consumption by visitors, outweighing the effects of price (Akdag et al., 2018; Ellis et al., 2018; Mora et al., 2021; Su et al., 2020; Yılmaz et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Esparza et al. (2022), Hernández and Huete (2021; 2022), López et al. (2018), Suntikul et al. (2020), Türker & Süzer (2022), and Youn et al. (2022) show that a satisfactory experience with food from a traditional restaurant positively impacts the destination image, cognitive and affective images, local gastronomy, as well as visitors' intentions to recommend and revisit the destination.

One factor to consider in the reviewed studies was the labeling with "denomination of origin," as traditional restaurants were valued more highly if their products bore this type of designation. Additionally, there is an intention to promote the "destination brand" by highlighting the value of traditional regional cuisine (Barska & Wojciechowska, 2018; García et al., 2021; Jerez, 2023; Maezawa & Kawahara, 2021; Xu et al., 2022).

### **Conclusions**

The majority of publications in the analyzed journal set are found in high-impact Q1 journals, indicating a strong focus on disseminating research in prestigious media. The smaller percentages in Q2 and Q3 suggest that a smaller portion of publications falls into journals with relatively lower impact factors, yet still contribute to academic discourse in their respective fields.

The existence of ongoing publications on these topics suggests a continuous interest and recognition of their importance within academic and professional communities.

Through the VOSviewer diagram, it is concluded that, according to the size of the labels and the diameter of the circles, there is a significant relationship between knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction in the analyzed research.

The analysis also highlights the importance of traditional gastronomy and gastronomic tourism as economic alternatives for regional development, considering food as part of a community's cultural heritage. Despite cultural differences among the analyzed research, traditional gastronomy and gastronomic tourism play a significant role and are viewed as important aspects related to cultural legacy.

It is found that there is a relationship between gastronomic tourism and/or traditional gastronomy and traditional knowledge transfer, evidenced in knowledge transfer processes, the participation of various actors, influenced by variables such as the motivation to give and receive knowledge, the importance of documenting and socializing knowledge for its preservation.



Regarding innovation and gastronomic tourism and/or gastronomy, a connection is observed with knowledge transfer and adaptation to changes in the economic, social, and environmental fields. Innovation is important for improving gastronomic products and processes, but aspects such as authenticity, acculturation, and assimilation must be considered to maintain the valued traditional elements.

For the gastronomic tourism and/or gastronomy sector, the relationship between innovation and customer satisfaction shows that some customers value innovations in gastronomic products and processes, with the consumer experience being a relevant factor for returning or recommending. However, it is essential to be cautious in these innovation processes not to lose the traditional aspects valued by consumers.

Ultimately, the impact and potential trends of topics such as knowledge transfer, innovation, and customer satisfaction are appreciated in the field of research, identifying possible knowledge gaps and potential areas for exploration, in addition to simplifying decision-making for future projects in the research field, both in tourism and gastronomy.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This research did not require ethical approval, as it was based on a documentary review.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All authors made significant contributions to the document and declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the article.

### **Author Contribution Statement**

Neidy Lorena Lopez Eraso: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, and formal analysis, Writing - Original draft. Oscar Martín Rosero Sarasty: Validation, Resources, Writing: review and editing. Sandra Cristina Riascos Eraso: Validation, Resources, Writing: review and editing.

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