Ethnocentrism in Food Tourism: A Dual Perspective

Rahman Abdullah[1*], Muaz Azinuddin[2]

[1,2]**Faculty of Applied Social Sciences, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), 21300 Gong Badak, Terengganu, Malaysia**

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper examines how ethnocentrism shapes tourists' behavioural intentions by integrating the Theory of Planned Behaviour into the context of food tourism. As global interest in food tourism continues to expand, understanding the psychological aspect of ethnocentrism and how it influences tourist decision-making has become increasingly important. Ethnocentrism extends beyond the tourist perspective to encompass the values held or nurtured by Marketing Destination organisations (DMOs). To explore these dynamics, this study adopts a conceptual research design grounded in a structured synthesis of peer-reviewed literature on ethnocentrism, food tourism, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour in tourism studies. Through this theory-driven analytical approach, the paper develops a conceptual framework that illustrates and proposes how ethnocentrism influences attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, serving as an antecedent that eventually shapes local food purchase intention among tourists. The findings highlight that ethnocentrism, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control function as a whole, rather than in isolation, in influencing tourist food purchase intention. Theoretically, this paper extends the Theory of Planned Behaviour framework into a new domain. In practice, it underscores the need for tourism providers and policymakers to create specific, niche marketing and environments to attract ethnocentric tourists and tourists in general, gain leverage, and remain competitive in the tourism industry.

Keywords: Ethnocentrism, food tourism, attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control

INTRODUCTION

Food tourism has experienced exponential growth across numerous nations, representing up to 30% of total travel spending worldwide and generating billions in annual revenue for local economies through direct expenditures on dining, food-related tours, festivals, and supply chains that support agriculture and hospitality sectors, while creating millions of jobs and stimulating ancillary industries like transportation and retail (Sharma et al., 2024). This surge not only drives substantial economic development by boosting tourism's GDP contributions, often exceeding 10% in food-centric destinations, but also yields profound social gains, such as fostering community pride, enhancing host-guest interactions, and promoting social cohesion through shared culinary experiences that bridge cultural divides (Rybina, 2021). Furthermore, it safeguards cultural heritage by incentivising the preservation of traditional recipes, indigenous ingredients, and gastronomic rituals, enabling destinations to differentiate themselves through unique culinary identities that attract repeat visitors and elevate global recognition (Bigi et al., 2021).

Yet ethnocentrism, typically defined as the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own culture or ethnic group, manifests complexly within this burgeoning field. This phenomenon significantly influences how tourists perceive and interact with unfamiliar culinary traditions, impacting both their receptivity to new gastronomic experiences and the hosts' presentation of their cultural heritage (Rybina, 2021). Paradoxically, ethnocentrism can function as a destination-level mechanism to increase and build local food tourism by fostering cultural pride among hosts and marketers, who then prioritise promoting domestic culinary offerings, while simultaneously enhancing tourists' attitudes and intentions toward local gastronomy over foreign alternatives (Bigi et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2024; Vabø & Hansen, 2016). This dual nature necessitates a

comprehensive exploration of ethnocentrism's multifaceted influence on both demand and supply sides within food tourism contexts (Bigi et al., 2021). While often viewed as a barrier to cross-cultural engagement, ethnocentrism's role is multifaceted, presenting both detrimental and, paradoxically, some constructive aspects within this dynamic industry (Aziz et al., 2023).

Specifically, it can shape consumer behaviour towards ethnic foods, influencing their willingness to try new cuisines or, conversely, reinforcing preferences for familiar dishes (Aziz et al., 2023). The importance of ethnocentrism within the tourism context is further illuminated through extensions of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which highlight a theoretical problem. While TPB posits that attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control predict behavioural intentions, ethnocentric attitudes serve as key antecedents or moderators of these TPB constructs, rather than direct predictors shaping tourists' intentions toward local or foreign culinary consumption, particularly through norms favouring domestic products (Karaman & Girgin, 2021; Maksan & Jelić, 2022; Miguel et al., 2022; Vabø & Hansen, 2016). For example, consumer ethnocentrism positively influences attitudes toward domestic food purchases (Maksan & Jelić, 2022), moderates subjective norm effects (Vabø & Hansen, 2016), and extends to perceived behavioural control (Miguel et al., 2022).

Therefore, this conceptual paper aims to deconstruct the dual nature of ethnocentrism in food tourism, analysing how it can either impede the appreciation of diverse culinary landscapes or, under certain conditions, inadvertently contribute to the valorisation of local food systems. This analysis extends beyond individual tourist behaviour to encompass the supply side of food tourism, examining how ethnocentric biases might influence destination management and marketing strategies (Bigi et al., 2021). Prior research has predominantly focused on the demand-side implications of ethnocentrism, particularly how it affects tourists' willingness to engage with local cuisine, while integrating ethnocentrism as an antecedent within TPB Behaviour frameworks (Karaman & Girgin, 2021; Maksan & Jelić, 2022; Miguel et al., 2022; Vabø & Hansen, 2016), yet its influence on destination decision-makers and marketers, and specifically the interplay between ethnocentrism and the TPB on the supply side, remains a significant research or academic gap (Bigi et al., 2021).

This paper addresses this gap by applying the TPB to understand how ethnocentric tendencies among destination marketers might shape the development and promotion of food tourism products, potentially leading to a prioritisation of familiar culinary offerings over diverse ethnic options (Aziz et al., 2023; Koufodontis & Gaki, 2025). This conceptual framework is formulated to delineate the theoretical underpinnings of ethnocentrism, dissect its manifestations in the food tourism sector, and propose a comprehensive model that integrates the TPB to illustrate its dual impact on both tourist behaviour and destination marketing strategies (Sharma et al., 2024).

The analysis will also incorporate existing literature on consumer ethnocentrism, which has demonstrated its significant influence on purchase intentions, particularly for domestic versus foreign food products (Miguel et al., 2022). This paper, therefore, extends this theoretical application by specifically investigating how ethnocentrism, as a core attitudinal construct, influences tourists' intentions to consume local food, thereby contributing to the existing culinary tourism literature (Aziz et al., 2023; Pouri et al., 2023). This conceptual paper seeks to address a notable gap in the existing literature by exploring the complex interplay among ethnocentrism, the TPB, and potential tourists' consumption behaviour of ethnic food, particularly in their country of origin (Aziz et al., 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Planned Behaviour and tourism studies

The TPB is a widely accepted model for explaining human behaviour, positing that an individual's behavioural intention is influenced by their attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Miguel et al., 2022; Pouri et al., 2023). In food tourism research, TPB has been extensively applied to predict tourists' intentions to engage with local gastronomy, including consumption of ethnic or novel foods,

organic products, and domestic culinary offerings, with constructs like attitudes toward traditional foods, norms favouring local consumption, and control over choices shaping destination selection and on-site behaviours (Karaman & Girgin, 2021; Maksan & Jelić, 2022; Pouri et al., 2023; Sutiadiningsih et al., 2023). Ethnocentrism integrates into TPB frameworks as a key attitudinal antecedent or moderator, where ethnocentric biases positively influence attitudes toward domestic food purchases, moderate subjective norm effects favouring local products, and extend to perceived behavioural control, thereby predicting intentions toward local versus foreign culinary consumption (Maksan & Jelić, 2022; Miguel et al., 2022; Vabø & Hansen, 2016).

This framework is crucial for understanding how ethnocentrism plays a dual, multifaceted role from both the supply and demand sides of the food tourism sector. On the demand side, tourists' ingrained ethnocentric biases influence their decision-making processes when confronted with diverse culinary offerings in a new destination, often reinforcing preferences for familiar or domestic-like foods while shaping intentions via TPB constructs (Aziz et al., 2023; Pouri et al., 2023). Paradoxically, on the supply side, ethnocentrism fosters cultural pride among hosts and destination marketers, who prioritise promoting local culinary offerings over foreign alternatives, thereby building local food tourism (Bigi et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2024).

In the context of food tourism, these constructs, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are critical in shaping tourists' intentions to engage with local gastronomy, including the consumption of ethnic foods (Pouri et al., 2023). However, despite its extensive application in predicting food-related behaviours like novel food consumption and organic food purchases, there remains a notable lacuna in research utilising the TPB to explain domestic food consumption or purchase, especially when integrated with the nuanced influence of ethnocentrism (Maksan & Jelić, 2022).

Ethnocentrism

To adequately frame this discussion, it is imperative to first establish a foundational understanding of ethnocentrism, tracing its conceptual origins and evolution within academic discourse, particularly as it intersects with consumer behaviour and tourism studies (Hyun & Lee, 2022). Consumer ethnocentrism specifically refers to a consumer's belief in the appropriateness and morality of purchasing domestically produced goods over foreign ones, extending this bias to cultural products such as food (Rybina, 2021). This predisposition often translates into a reluctance to engage with unfamiliar culinary practices, influencing destination choices and on-site consumption patterns. However, ethnocentrism, as a social identity construct, also manifests in consumers' purchasing patterns, in which individuals may exhibit refusal behaviour towards foreign products while simultaneously showing strong associations with and support for local brands and cultural expressions (Aziz et al., 2023). This can lead to a preference for authentic, locally sourced culinary experiences when visiting a foreign destination, subtly reinterpreting ethnocentric tendencies as a desire for genuine cultural immersion rather than outright rejection of the unfamiliar. This nuanced perspective highlights that ethnocentrism might not always manifest as an aversion to foreign cultures but can also drive deeper engagement with a destination's local foodways, albeit through a culturally anchored lens (Aziz et al., 2023).

Food tourism and ethnocentrism

In the context of food tourism, this translates into a preference for familiar dishes or interpretations of foreign cuisines that align with domestic tastes, or, conversely, a heightened appreciation for the "authenticity" of local food as a direct reflection of national identity. Furthermore, ethnocentrism can emerge at sub-national or regional levels, influencing consumer preferences for local food proximity and potentially leading to animosity towards products from other regions or countries, particularly within the food domain (Trentinaglia et al., 2023). This tendency highlights a protective mechanism in which consumers believe that purchasing domestic products supports the national economy and welfare, even if it means foregoing potentially superior or more affordable foreign options (Uzdavinyte et al., 2019). Crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, significantly reinforced these ethnocentric purchasing patterns, as consumers prioritised local supply chains and domestic producers (Miguel et al., 2022). This preference is further amplified by a heightened sense of responsibility to contribute to the national budget, as observed in countries like France, where consumers

predominantly choose local agricultural products not out of ignorance but from a conscious desire to support their national economy (Rakić et al., 2022).

This indicates that consumers with high ethnocentrism not only rate domestic products higher but are also willing to pay higher prices for them, reflecting a strong preference for national goods (Fleșeriu et al., 2023). Consequently, this behaviour transforms ethnocentrism from a mere cultural bias into a tangible economic force within the food tourism sector, shaping supply and demand dynamics for local culinary offerings. This also extends to short food supply chains, where consumer ethnocentrism significantly shapes the intention to use these products, fostering a strong attachment to locally sourced items and promoting sustainable agricultural practices (Scaramuzzi et al., 2025). Moreover, the intrinsic value of local products, alongside social, cultural, and psychological factors, heavily influences these purchasing decisions, often outweighing globalised trends or economic crises (Garai-Fodor et al., 2022). This suggests that consumer ethnocentrism, while often viewed negatively, can serve as a potent driver of the development and sustainability of local food systems within the food tourism industry (Hanus, 2020; Miguel et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this ethnocentric preference for local products is often intertwined with perceptions of superior quality, safety, and authenticity, factors that become particularly salient in the agri-food sector where consumers seek transparent information and quality assurances (Garai-Fodor et al., 2022). This is further evidenced by studies showing consumers' positive bias towards domestic food products, perceiving them as safer and of higher quality, a relationship that intensifies during health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Such crises not only amplify existing ethnocentric tendencies but can also catalyse a re-evaluation of global versus local food supply chains, thereby influencing tourism practices that prioritise regional culinary experiences (Armutçu, 2025; Miguel et al., 2022).

This complex interplay underscores how consumer ethnocentrism, beyond mere preference, contributes to the resilience and distinctiveness of food tourism destinations by anchoring demand in local culinary heritage and production (Topçu, 2023). Consequently, understanding consumer ethnocentrism is crucial for destination marketers and food tourism operators to effectively tailor their offerings, emphasising the unique cultural and economic benefits of local gastronomy (Özaslan & Doğan, 2017). This nuanced approach allows for the development of gastronomic tourism experiences that not only celebrate local identity but also foster sustainable practices and community engagement (RIVZA et al., 2022). It also underscores the importance for destination marketing organisations (DMOs) to accurately assess the perceived image of their food offerings to prevent misalignment with the destination image, as consumer ethnocentrism can significantly influence these perceptions (Bigi et al., 2021).

Conversely, ethnocentrism can also manifest as a barrier to the adoption of international cuisines within domestic food tourism, thereby limiting the diversity of gastronomic experiences available to tourists. This restrictive aspect can hinder the innovation and global appeal of a destination's food tourism offerings, potentially limiting its market reach and cultural exchange opportunities. Therefore, while promoting local heritage, it is essential to balance ethnocentric tendencies with strategies that encourage culinary diversity and international gastronomic integration to enhance the overall tourism experience and market competitiveness (Parrilla-González et al., 2024; Silva et al., 2025). This balance is crucial for destinations aiming to attract a broad spectrum of tourists, including those seeking novel and international culinary experiences, thereby preventing a narrow appeal that could otherwise limit tourism growth and economic diversification. Achieving this equilibrium requires careful consideration of how local identity can be maintained while integrating global influences, transforming potential conflicts into opportunities to enrich culinary offerings and attract a diverse tourist base (Baby & Joseph, 2023).

This strategic integration allows for the development of culinary products that appeal to diverse tourist groups while simultaneously respecting the needs of host communities and preserving local food identity (Stalmirska & Ali, 2023). Furthermore, while ethnocentrism often strengthens local food systems and cultural identity, an overemphasis can lead to a misaligned perception of a destination's food image among tourists, potentially overlooking opportunities for diversification and growth (Bigi et al., 2021). This can result in a significant disconnect between the offerings emphasised by suppliers and the actual culinary preferences of potential visitors (Bigi et al., 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a conceptual research design, relying on theoretical reasoning and structured literature synthesis rather than empirical data collection. Conceptual research is recognised as an appropriate and methodologically robust approach for developing theoretical models and advancing understanding in underexplored domains (Jaakkola, 2020; MacInnis, 2011). Given the paper's objective to explore the intricate relationship among ethnocentrism, the TPB, and food tourism, this design allows for the deeper articulation of theoretical constructs and their interrelations. It systematically integrates existing knowledge to build a comprehensive framework that elucidates how ethnocentric attitudes influence behavioural intentions within the food tourism context. Given that the paper's objective is to explore how ethnocentrism influences purchase intention within the food tourism industry through the TPB (Pouri et al., 2023), this methodology allows for the exploration of complex interconnections without requiring new data collection. To construct the conceptual framework, a comprehensive review of peer-reviewed literature was conducted. This review focused on three main domains: (i) ethnocentrism and the tourism industry, (ii) the TPB model, and (iii) consumer/tourist purchase intention of ethnic food. Academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, were used to identify high-impact sources relevant to each construct.

Using a deductive reasoning process, the TPB was adapted to the context of food tourism. The analysis synthesised prior findings and theoretical insights to construct logical linkages between ethnocentrism, food tourism, and behavioural intentions. The model was refined through iterative comparison with existing frameworks in consumer and tourism research studies to ensure theoretical consistency. This non-empirical, theory-driven method enables a structured exploration of the psychological mechanisms guiding ethnocentric travel behaviour, while providing a foundation for future empirical validation through quantitative or qualitative research (Gilson & Goldberg, 2015). Further investigation is needed to validate the conceptual model through empirical testing in diverse food tourism contexts (Cardoso et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2021).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The conceptual synthesis undertaken in this study yields several key findings regarding how ethnocentrism operates within the TPB framework to influence tourists' behavioural intentions. Although no empirical data were collected, the theoretical integration reveals clear patterns in how ethnocentrism, attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control collectively shape food travel-related behavioural intentions of local food. First, the analysis demonstrates that ethnocentrism precedes attitudes towards purchase intention. Therefore, a higher degree of ethnocentrism among tourists can negatively influence their attitudes towards consuming international or non-local food offerings, consequently affecting their intention to purchase such items (Wang et al., 2021). Conversely, a strong ethnocentric bias may foster a more positive attitude and heightened intention to consume local gastronomic products, especially when these products are perceived as integral to national or regional identity (Karaman & Girgin, 2021; Miguel et al., 2022). This perspective suggests that ethnocentrism acts as a filtering mechanism, shaping food choices through a traveller's cultural lens and promoting a preference for familiar or nationally aligned culinary experiences (Genç, 2021). This aligns with prior research indicating that consumer ethnocentrism can significantly influence the purchase of domestic products, including food items, by fostering loyalty to and preference for local options (Miguel et al., 2022).

Second, the review reveals that ethnocentrism functions as a central mediating construct linking values to subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Specifically, ethnocentric beliefs can strengthen the influence of subjective norms, as individuals may feel greater social pressure to adhere to food consumption practices that align with their cultural group's values and traditions (Higgs, 2014; Miguel et al., 2022). For example, societal endorsement of local cuisine can amplify its desirability among ethnocentric tourists, who internalise these norms as expressions of group identity and belonging (Aziz et al., 2023; Miguel et al., 2022).

Third, the synthesis indicates that attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and ethnocentrism collectively influence purchase intentions in food tourism (Karaman & Girgin, 2021). This comprehensive interaction suggests a nuanced interplay where ethnocentric tendencies can moderate a tourist's evaluation of food-related experiences, the social pressures they perceive, and their perceived ease of engaging with diverse

culinary offerings. This integrated perspective underscores that ethnocentrism, rather than being an isolated factor, deeply intertwines with the core constructs of the TPB to shape destination choice and culinary consumption patterns in tourism (Sutiadiningsih et al., 2023). One example is that a highly ethnocentric tourist might exhibit a strong preference for local, traditional dishes, perceiving them as more authentic and desirable, while simultaneously dismissing foreign cuisines as inferior or less appealing (Aziz et al., 2023; Miguel et al., 2022).

Fourth, the conceptual analysis reveals that behavioural intention is significantly influenced by the interplay between attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and the direct or indirect effects of consumer ethnocentrism (Miguel et al., 2022; Pouri et al., 2023). This suggests that ethnocentrism does not operate in isolation but rather integrates with established psychological predictors of behaviour to form a more complete understanding of tourist decision-making in culinary contexts (Aziz et al., 2023). The findings reveal that a tourist's cultural identity, perceptions of social appropriateness, and confidence in their ability to engage with specific food offerings are critical determinants of their intention to participate in food tourism activities. Therefore, integrating ethnocentrism through tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control provides a more comprehensive framework for predicting culinary engagement (Sutiadiningsih et al., 2023).

Overall, this conceptual analysis highlights the TPB framework's unique potential to explain the role of ethnocentrism in the food tourism industry. It identifies ethnocentric belief as one of the components that translates into actual food tourism behaviours, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of how cultural predispositions impact travel decisions (Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022), providing a foundation for future empirical validation.
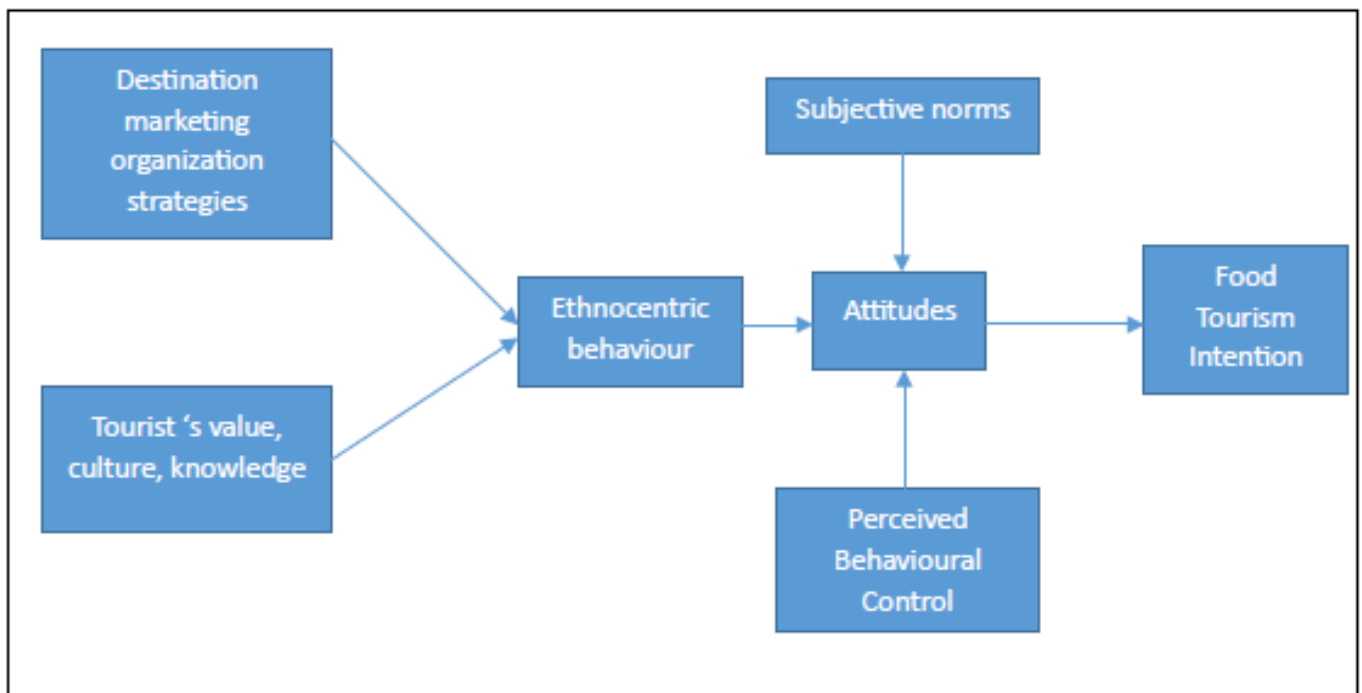

Figure 1. Proposed dual perspectives conceptual framework for Ethnocentrism within the food tourism industry

Guided by the TPB (Ajzen, 1991), this study proposes a conceptual framework in which ethnocentrism plays a central role in shaping tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control toward food tourism. These components subsequently influence tourists' behavioural intentions. In parallel, the framework incorporates the DMO's perspective, recognising the role of marketing strategies in influencing ethnocentric perceptions and TPB components. Specifically, marketing initiatives that emphasize the cultural authenticity and national significance of local cuisine can strengthen ethnocentric attitudes and subjective norms, thereby reinforcing the intention to consume domestic food products (Pouri et al., 2023). This strategic alignment between marketing efforts and consumer psychology underscores the importance of tailoring promotional

messages to resonate with the cultural values and identity of target tourist segments (Aziz et al., 2023; Miguel et al., 2022). to diverse palates while maintaining the integrity of the destination's culinary heritage (Aziz et al., 2023; Bigi et al., 2021). By understanding the mechanisms through which ethnocentrism interacts with TPB constructs, Destination Marketing Organizations can better navigate the tension between preserving local traditions and accommodating the expectations of a globalized visitor base (Komariah et al., 2020; Miguel et al., 2022). Such strategic alignment enables destinations to leverage cultural pride as a competitive advantage while mitigating the risk of exclusionary practices that might limit market expansion (Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022; Miguel et al., 2022). This equilibrium allows destinations to capitalize on the loyalty of ethnocentric tourists while simultaneously attracting a broader demographic seeking diverse culinary experiences (Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022; Miguel et al., 2022).This enable destinations to strategically position their culinary offerings in a way that resonates with culturally minded travelers while remaining attractive to a wider international audience (Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022; Sharma et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

The preservation of local food identity in this context is not merely about safeguarding traditional recipes but also about ensuring the economic viability and cultural continuity of local producers and communities (Suna & D. Alverez, 2019). This holistic approach contributes to sustainable tourism development by fostering a deeper connection between visitors and the destination's unique cultural landscape (Kim et al., 2021). It necessitates understanding the complex interplay between local heritage, global culinary trends, and tourist perceptions to craft an authentic and appealing gastronomic identity for a destination (Havadi-Nagy, 2020). Ethnocentrism, therefore, exerts a dual influence on food tourism, simultaneously serving as a bulwark of cultural preservation and a potential impediment to broader culinary diversification and market reach. However, balancing the promotion of local gastronomy with the incorporation of global influences is crucial for creating a comprehensive and appealing food tourism offering that caters to diverse palates (Naderi et al., 2024; Putri & Wijoyo, 2023). This balance is essential for achieving economic, environmental, and social sustainability in destinations, particularly through gastronomic tourism, which can both preserve local traditions and offer new products that appeal to consumers (Sánchez et al., 2025). This approach enables the reinvention of traditional recipes, adapting them to current trends without losing their cultural value, and fosters innovation in local food and wine pairings to attract new consumers and tourists (Rachão et al., 2019). This delicate equilibrium ensures that destinations can leverage their unique gastronomic heritage as a core attraction while simultaneously adapting to evolving consumer demands and global culinary landscapes (Mak et al., 2011; Zrnić et al., 2021).

Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical implications of this study primarily centre on refining and expanding the TPB by integrating ethnocentrism as a significant, multifaceted construct within the food tourism context. This integration offers a more nuanced understanding of how cultural predispositions, specifically ethnocentric tendencies, influence tourists' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control regarding food choices and destination selection (Aziz et al., 2023). Specifically, it posits that ethnocentrism can act as an antecedent in the relationships between these TPB constructs and the intention to consume local or ethnic foods, thereby enhancing the model's predictive power (Aziz et al., 2023; Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this enhanced model suggests that DMOs can strategically address tourist ethnocentrism by framing local culinary experiences in ways that resonate with cultural familiarity or by developing targeted campaigns that mitigate perceived risks associated with novel food consumption (Naderi et al., 2024; Sutiadiningsih et al., 2023). This includes developing strategies to enhance food involvement and reduce food neophobia among potential visitors (Güdek, 2023). Such approaches can involve educational initiatives that highlight the authenticity and safety of local culinary practices, thereby fostering greater openness to diverse gastronomic experiences (Ineson et al., 2022). This integration of ethnocentrism into the TPB framework enables a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in food tourism, particularly regarding healthy eating tendencies and sustainable local food consumption (Balıkçıoğlu et al., 2022; Bayraktar et al., 2023).

Practical Implications

The practical implications of this study include strategies for local food producers to enhance food quality, safety, and hygiene, which are crucial for maintaining positive tourist attitudes and purchase intentions (Baby & Joseph, 2023). Additionally, marketing campaigns should emphasise the unique cultural narratives embedded within local culinary traditions, thereby appealing to tourists' desire for authentic experiences while simultaneously mitigating potential ethnocentric biases towards unfamiliar foods (Baby & Joseph, 2023). Furthermore, understanding consumer mindsets and decision processes, particularly concerning attitudes towards local foods, can inform targeted campaigns that highlight their benefits, encouraging wider acceptance and consumption (Užar & Filipović, 2023). These strategies can promote sustainable consumption patterns by leveraging consumer ethnocentrism as a driver for local food appreciation, rather than an impediment to culinary exploration.

Moreover, by segmenting tourist markets based on their ethnocentric tendencies, destination marketers can tailor promotional messages to either reinforce cultural pride in local cuisine or gently introduce novel culinary experiences through familiar contexts (Bigi et al., 2021). For instance, providing food samples or tastings can effectively mitigate aversion to unfamiliar items, thereby increasing perceived value and consumer satisfaction for local businesses (González et al., 2021). This can lead to increased consumption of local products and services, benefiting destination stakeholders and operators (González et al., 2019). Such targeted interventions, informed by a deep understanding of consumer psychology, can therefore contribute to both the economic prosperity of local communities and the diversification of culinary tourism offerings, addressing the complexities of consumer ethnocentrism (Maksan & Jelić, 2022; MAZAN & Çatır, 2023).

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