

STUDY OF THE DEMAND ON THE OLIVE-OIL TOURISM. CASE OF ANDALUSIA

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Tourism is a sector of the economy that has experienced a change in tendencies. This is due to the fact that it is changing from tourism of masses into a more individualized tourism. Nowadays we are having a more and more demanding tourist with new attitudes and needs. In this way, the touristic activity requires a new specific approach because of the variety of inter-relationships that are generated between all the elements that generate offer and demand and, because the visitors interact with the organizations that offers services, with the surrounding and the context in which the service is engaged. In this sense, tourism functions as a source of opportunities for the social, economic and cultural development of a specific region. Gastronomic products are a cultural element that encourages sustainable development of a geographic region through the potentiation of traditions and cultural customs of the locals. This has an effect of growing interest for tourism in the countryside, due to the increasing tourist demand as well as the increasing supply of infra-structure and tourist services.

This way, gastronomic literature has experienced a huge development due to the amenities associated with local food of a touristic destiny. This is an important element to certain regions and countries, then, people wish to travel and taste unique authentic meals. This represents an emerging phenomenon in the tourism industry. In the world of gastronomy have emerged other activities in the so called “thematic tourism” emphasize the gastronomic tourism itself, the wine tourism and the olive-oil tourism. Focused in the olive-oil tourism, when developing this activity, the territory has to be considered as one the factors determining the offer and demand. Taking in care that the countryside is an integral part of the experience, this destiny includes Landscape and weather.

The purpose of the present investigation is to analyze the social-demographic profile of the visitors, the activities they do, the reasons why they visit the place, their evaluation of the touristic destiny and their level of satisfaction. It is pretended to strengthen investigations in the field of olive-oil-tourism which still have deficiencies, since we are facing a typology of recent tourism, and therefore requires a suitable methodology for analysis. For the above mentioned reasons, it is necessary to increase academic investigations on topics related to olive-oil culture.

The here used methodology is quantitative, based on the survey, and directed to visitors who come to the region of Andalusia, in particular the areas of Jaén and Córdoba, the major provinces in production of olive oil from Spain. It has been used a convenience sample, commonly used in this type of research, where the target audience is available to be surveyed in a space and time. The structure followed in the questionnaire was based on previous studies and responds to three groups of variables analyzed during the visit of tourists: socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent tourist motivations to visit the geographic location and valuation by tourists on different variables related to the destination. The field work has been developed between the months of April and October 2014. Six strategic points in the most important oil-producing areas of Andalusia were chosen for its realization. Those points were two mills, two museums of olive oil and two interpretation centers, located in the provinces of Jaen and Cordoba. The named places correspond, according to the DOP, (Denominazione d'origine protetta), to the largest annual producers of olive oil in Spain. Visitors filled out the questionnaire with complete independence, although pollsters were present in the event that they might have any difficulty to fill it. The survey was distributed in four languages (Spanish, English, French and German) and remained totally anonymous. Prior to the development of the field work, was made a pre-test of 30 surveys to detect possible deviations and errors. A total of 414 valid surveys was obtained. The number of items in each survey was 19, while structured in questions based on a 5-point Likert scale to assess the opinion of visitors, answers yes/no for the perception on certain aspects related to the geographic area and closed and open questions where tourists expressed their olive-oil touristic experience. Considering that there are few investigations related to the olive-oil tourism, in the region of Andalusia, a reliable data about the amount of visitors is not available and therefore a target population cannot be determined. The index of reliability according to the alpha of Cronbach, was 0,747. In this regard, although there are authors who consider acceptable a scale if its alpha of Cronbach is above 0.7, there are other researchers who have suggested that values greater than 0.6 are acceptable. In any case, our study exceeds the minimum values accepted in the scientific literature. This research data has been tabulated and analyzed using the statistical system IBM SPSS 19.

Among the main results of this research, and focusing first on the socio-demographic profile of visitors, stand out women, aged 60 years or more, foreigners, retired individuals with a medium-high income and college-educated. For 68.1% of the olive-oil tourist is the first time that they visit this geographical area. Thus, 75.6% of visitors are tourists, being the remaining 24.4% hikers who make day trips to visit these tourist resources related to olive oil. Of the percentage of tourists visiting these destinations, 47.1% remains in the geographical area between 3 and 7 days. 40.8% travels with coworkers or friends and

34.6% with partner and only few individual tourists appear in these places. 33.1% chose this geographic area as a tourist destination by own decision, also highlighting a 24.6% who chose these resources on the recommendation of friends and family. 33.1% chose this geographic area as a tourist destination by choice, also highlighting a 24.6% who chose this destination on the recommendation of friends and family. Among the activities that have been made during the trip, highlights cultural tourism (74.6%). This could possibly happen due to the fact that the main areas of production of olive oil in this research are located near cities that are world heritage (Córdoba, Úbeda and Baeza), and are close to the province of Malaga, very consolidated as tourism of Sun and beach destination, but that needs complementary offerings to diversify the main offer of the destination. The main motivations for activities during this trip in this geographical area, we have analyzed via a Likert scale of 5 points, with 1 being-very little, and 5-much, and with an index of reliability according to the alpha of Cronbach of 0,767. Thus, the most valued by visitors is hospitality, conservation of the environment, cultural activities and restoration. These results of assessment highlight that this tourist activity is closely related to rural tourism and has important cultural components, as has been also concluded in other investigations. Meanwhile, 42.2% are satisfied with the conducted tour, and a 41.7% very satisfied. In this sense, 85.7% would repeat the trip.

On the other hand, the best service in this geographical area has been in Mills (36.1%), followed by the restoration (34.9%), accommodation (24.6%) and the complementary offer (4.4%). Thus association between the level of satisfaction and the following variables has been detected: sex (Pearson Chi-square = 10,224; $p = 0.037$), level of education (Pearson Chi-square = 56,565; $p = 0.000$) and country of origin (Pearson Chi-square = 121,130; $p = 0.000$). In this way, it was found association between the satisfaction of visitors with the trip and if they would repeat the trip to this geographic area (Pearson Chi-square = 21,743; $p = 0.000$). On the other hand, it was also found association between the level of income and whether the visitors would repeat the trip (Pearson Chi-square = 11.950; $p = 0.018$). In this sense, all the variables analyzed present a significant and positive correlation to the satisfaction of tourists, highlighting the mill, hospitality, information, communications, and public safety as the variables that have a greater influence on the satisfaction of the olive-oil tourists in this geographical destination. Thus, the quality of a tourist destination and the satisfaction of tourists are part of the elements to take into account to improve the management and promotion of a tourist area. Therefore, those aspects that are not taken into account to meet the needs of visitors should be improved, and those others that are currently considered, should be boost to obtain greater satisfaction among tourists. Finally, this affects the intention to repeat the trip, since elements like the image of a destination or satisfaction of a trip positively affect the loyalty of tourists. The main findings of this investigation show that:

Women, aged 60 years or more, from Spain, retired, with a medium-income and college-educated, as the main tourist group demand in these geographic areas of Andalusia. Most of the olive-oil tourists have visited for the first time these destinations, highlighting tourists against hikers. The majority of visitors travel with coworkers, friends or couple. The choice of these olive-oil touristic destinations comes by own choice or by the recommendation of friends and family. Cultural tourism as the main activity the

tourists do during the trip, and may be due to the fact that these areas are close to three cities patrimony of the humanity (Córdoba, Úbeda and Baeza) stands out. The main motivations are visiting the geographical area, learn about the world of olive-oil and eat and drink local products. Among major estimations of visitors to the tourist destination were: the hospitality, the conservation of the environment, cultural activities and the restoration. As best service received, in this geographical area, highlight Mills, followed by restoration, accommodation and the complementary offer. The majority of visitors are satisfied with the trip made by or very satisfied. The majority of visitors are satisfied with the trip made by or very satisfied. Most of the tourists agree with the possibility of repeating the trip. Finally, it should be noted that the mill, hospitality, information, communications, and public safety are the variables that have a greater influence on the satisfaction of the olive-oil tourist in this geographical destination.

The main limitation of this research comes from short temporality in the study, since data have been collected only in the months of spring and early fall, and therefore do not value the motivations and satisfaction of the olive-oil tourist arriving at another time, who might have different motivations. Also, the study focuses only from the point of view of demand, making difficult the dissemination of these destinations to other groups of stakeholders.

As future lines of research, it is intended to conduct this study in other destinations of olive- oil tourism of Spain, in order to compare the results obtained in this work with the results obtained in other destinations. Another possible line of research could be this same study in other competing countries in this geographical area (for example, Italy or Greece), in order to compare results of the appraisals and opinions of the olive-oil tourists. Finally, the olive oil tourism could be analyzed through other stakeholders, of different demand, as well as from the perspective of the offer or public administration.