

## Himachali Culinary Experiences: A Comparative Analysis of Domestic and International Tourists

**Satish Guleria**

Research Scholar

Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University), Mullana-Ambala

**Rakesh Sharma**

Associate Professor

Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University), Mullana-Ambala

**Ishan Bakshi**

Associate Professor

Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University), Mullana-Ambala

Corresponding Author: Ishan Bakshi (ibakshi1988@gmail.com)

*Abstract*— This study investigates the satisfaction ratings of both domestic and international tourists concerning Himachali culinary experiences, focusing on food quality, service quality, ambiance, and cultural authenticity. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 570 individuals, and structured questionnaires were employed to gather the data. Cronbach's alpha scores that were higher than 0.70 showed that the measurement scales were reliable. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic characteristics. We used regression analysis, ANOVA, and correlation analysis to test our hypothesis and look at how different variables are related to each other. The findings indicate that food quality is the primary determinant of overall tourist satisfaction, succeeded by service quality, cultural authenticity, and ambiance. The results support previous studies on culinary tourism, showing how important these factors

are for making tourists' experiences better. ANOVA shows that tourists from the US and tourists from other countries are very different in how satisfied they are. This means that there should be a variety of foods available to please everyone.

The study says that tourism officials and businesses in the area need to work to improve the quality of food and service and keep the cultural authenticity of Himachali food. Making tourists feel like they are a part of the culture can also make their trip a lot more fun. The socio-economic benefits of culinary tourism, such as job creation and assistance for local farmers, are highlighted. The study's limitations include the use of purposive sampling and reliance on self-reported data, which may affect generalizability and accuracy. Subsequent research ought to integrate random sampling methodologies, longitudinal studies, and a broader spectrum of variables to augment the comprehension of

## elements affecting tourist satisfaction with culinary experiences.

**Keywords— Culinary Tourism, Tourist Satisfaction, Himachali Cuisine, Cultural Authenticity)**

### I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a complicated and ever-changing field that has a big impact on the economies and cultures of many places. Food experiences are becoming an important part of tourism that makes the whole trip better for tourists. The comparative analysis of tourist satisfaction concerning culinary experiences between domestic and international tourists highlights differing cultural expectations and preferences, which are crucial for enhancing tourism strategies and destination management. Tourist satisfaction with culinary experiences is a complex construct influenced by various factors, including food quality, service, ambiance, and the overall dining experience. Research on culinary tourism emphasizes the significance of understanding traveler's motivations, experiences, satisfaction, and loyalty. Gyeiwaah et al. (2018) conducted a study illustrating that the motivations of culinary tourists significantly impact their culinary experiences and satisfaction, consequently influencing their loyalty to the destination. This interaction underscores the imperative for destination management organizations (DMOs) to develop sustainable policies that cater to tourists' culinary preferences and experiences. Researchers have investigated the culinary experiences of domestic tourists in Indonesia to evaluate the influence of local cuisine on their holidays. Kristanti, Jokom, and Widjaja (2019) conducted a study in Denpasar and Yogyakarta, illustrating that the quality of culinary experiences elevates both culinary satisfaction and overall destination satisfaction. This finding is significant for individuals employed in the local tourism sector as

it underscores the importance of quality cuisine in enhancing tourist satisfaction. A study done in Kolkata looked at how happy domestic tourists were with the local food. It divided people into three groups based on what they liked to eat. Roy and Pradhan (2022) discovered that tourist engagement with local cuisine significantly influences their overall satisfaction and perception of the destination. These insights are crucial for tourism stakeholders in developing and executing effective strategies.

International travellers are very important to the culinary tourism industry. Widjaja et al. (2018) investigated the gastronomic experiences of international tourists in Indonesia, highlighting the significance of culinary experience quality on destination satisfaction and subsequent behavioural intentions. This study validates that positive culinary experiences can enhance the visitor experience, consequently increasing satisfaction and loyalty. The comparative analysis of foreign tourists' satisfaction across diverse geographies provides valuable insights. Yu and Goulden (2006) conducted a study in Mongolia examining the satisfaction of international tourists concerning various aspects of their travel experience, including culinary elements. The findings suggested that understanding regional variations in tourist satisfaction could facilitate the targeting of tourism markets and the enhancement of tourism services. The study by Omar et al. (2015) on holiday satisfaction in Penang, Malaysia, clarified the similarities and differences in satisfaction levels among local and international tourists. The research underscored the imperative for improvements in culinary and tourism amenities to enhance the positive experiences of visitors, particularly domestic tourists. Ponsignon et al. (2020) analysed the impact of hedonic value, escapism, and psychic distance on the heightened satisfaction levels of international visitors relative

to domestic tourists. The research indicated that international travellers exhibit greater satisfaction when deriving elevated hedonic value from their experiences. This shows how important it is to make food experiences that are fun and interesting to get guests from other countries. If a place wants to improve its culinary tourism programs, it needs to know what makes eating out and being a tourist more enjoyable. Satchapappichit (2020) conducted a study on the dining experiences of Chinese tourists with Thai cuisine in Bangkok. The study revealed that food imagery, cultural aspects of cuisine, perceived expenses, and travel-related factors substantially affected overall satisfaction. These findings are significant for developing targeted strategies for culinary tourism. The comparative analysis of tourist satisfaction concerning culinary experiences between domestic and international visitors yields substantial insights into the diverse expectations and preferences of tourists. By knowing these things, companies that run tourist attractions may be able to come up with good ideas for how to improve the tourist experience. This will make customers happier and more loyal. Culinary tourism is a great way to promote cultural understanding and a destination. It also makes visitors' experiences better. So, it's important to keep doing research and improving culinary tourism so that it works for people from both the US and other countries.

There is still a lot of research to be done on how both local and foreign tourists feel about Himachali food, even though more and more people are interested in culinary tourism and how it affects tourists' enjoyment. The current study predominantly examines general culinary experiences across diverse regions or specific tourist destinations; however, it does not specifically explore the unique gastronomic offerings of Himachal Pradesh. Earlier studies have thoroughly examined the overall impact of culinary

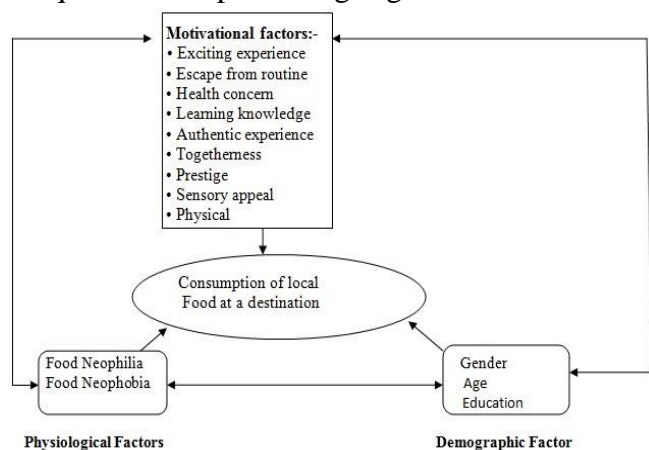
experiences on tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Agyeiwaah et al., 2018; Kristanti et al., 2019), as well as the significance of local cuisine in destination branding (Desy, 2023). The distinctive culinary traditions of Himachal Pradesh, especially the Dham feast, have yet to be thoroughly examined for their impact on the satisfaction levels of both domestic and international visitors. Furthermore, while some studies have examined tourist satisfaction levels in various Indian states (Roy & Pradhan, 2022; Updhyay & Sharma, 2014; Sahoo, 2020), there is a lack of research that compares the unique characteristics of Himachali culinary experiences that appeal to both domestic and international tourists in different ways. The distinction is significant as Himachal Pradesh possesses a distinctive culture and culinary landscape that could aid in formulating targeted marketing strategies and tourism regulations.

Moreover, while studies have explored the overarching factors influencing tourist satisfaction in Himachal Pradesh (Thakur & Chaturvedi, 2023) and the seasonal fluctuations in tourism within the region (Rana, 2014), there is a lack of focused research examining the distinct effects of culinary experiences on these satisfaction metrics. The impact of traditional food preparation techniques on tourist perceptions and satisfaction has not been extensively investigated, leading to an incomplete understanding of the full extent of culinary tourism potential in Himachal Pradesh. Subsequent research ought to focus on an exhaustive comparative analysis of domestic and international tourist satisfaction concerning Himachali culinary experiences to address these deficiencies. This study ought to analyse the unique attributes of Himachali cuisine, including traditional dishes and methods of preparation. how these things change how much fun tourists have and how loyal they are. Businesses in the tourism and hospitality industries in Himachal Pradesh can use this to learn more

about how to make their culinary tourism offerings and the overall experience of tourists better.

II. LITERATUTRE REVIEW

Food tourism is now a big part of the tourism industry. It helps the economy grow and brings people from different cultures together. This literature review explores different aspects of culinary tourism, focussing on gastronomy and comparing the satisfaction levels of domestic and international tourists. Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, and Huang (2018) examined the relationships between motivation, experience, satisfaction, and loyalty in the realm of culinary tourism. Their study of international visitors at cooking schools in Chiang Mai, Thailand, showed that motivation has a positive effect on the culinary experience and satisfaction. This makes tourists more loyal, which is good for business. The results show that when planning for long-term culinary tourism, it's important to know what tourists like and want. One of the main reasons people go to Himachal Pradesh is to try the unique food, especially the traditional Dham feast. Verma and Rana (2023) stressed how important it is for the hospitality industry to have unique roles in promoting regional cuisine. Their



study showed how important traditional foods like Dham are for getting fresh, clean food that helps local farms and workers.

Thakur and Chaturvedi (2023) examined the satisfaction levels of tourists regarding fundamental tourism services in Himachal Pradesh. They found that tourists would have a better time in the state if the infrastructure and service quality were better, even though the state has a lot of natural beauty and cultural richness. Sahoo (2020) looked at what tour guides in Himachal Pradesh thought about high-end tourism. The survey revealed a greater demand for professional food guide training programs, ethnic restaurants, and culinary excursions to promote Himachali cuisine. Bisht, Verma, Kishtwaria, and Pathania (2014) looked at how tourism affects the economy of Himachal Pradesh. Their study showed how important tourism is for making jobs and money. They also talked about how tourism can cause social problems and how important it is to do things that are good for the environment. Roy and Pradhan (2022) studied the food preferences of Indian tourists in Kolkata. They put visitors into three groups based on what they liked to eat and found that tourists who like local food are usually happier.

Rana (2014) examined the seasonal concentration of tourism in Himachal Pradesh from a comprehensive perspective. The study utilised the Gini coefficient to examine the influx of domestic and international tourists, providing insights into the seasonal trends of tourism in the region. Chaudhary et al. (2021) investigated the attitudes and intentions of tourists visiting prominent sacred sites in Himachal Pradesh. They stressed how important it is to keep a close eye on what tourists like so that they leave good reviews and come back. Tanwar et al. (2018) talked about the cultural and nutritional aspects of Himachali Dham and how important it is for local

Figure 1. The intended Framework for indigenous food construction

festivals and other important events. They also said that Dham follows Ayurvedic rules and is good for your health in a lot of ways. Upadhyay and Sharma (2014) looked into what international tourists in India like to eat. They discovered that the taste, quality, preparation, and cultural aspects of food significantly influence tourist satisfaction. Marketers who want to get more people to visit restaurants should pay close attention to what they found.

Thakur (2023) looked into how tourism has grown in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. The research highlighted the social benefits of tourism, including job creation and economic development, while stressing the importance of sustainable practices to mitigate environmental impacts. Verma et al. (2023) looked into the problems and progress of rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh. They stressed how important it is to get people from the area involved and come up with new ways for rural tourism to make money. Kumar and Rana (2017) looked into ways to make pilgrimage tourism in Himachal Pradesh more flexible. They made a strategic crystal framework to deal with the things that are always changing and affecting tourism, with the goal of making the whole experience better for spiritual visitors. Barbhuiya (2023) put forward ideas for how to improve tourism in Himachal Pradesh after the pandemic. The research identified pivotal challenges and sustainable strategies to rejuvenate tourism in the region, encompassing the restoration of trust and the enhancement of its reputation. Raj (2017) examined the influence of cultural tourism on the socioeconomic development of host communities in Himachal Pradesh. The study underscored the importance of preserving cultural assets in conjunction with tourism development. Rana and Kumar (2017) supported the progress of sustainable tourism through destination

discontinuity and branding in Himachal Pradesh. They said that having a unique location identity is very important for bringing in tourists.

Chauhan, Sharma, and Alene (2013) examined the potential applications of Himachali fruit wines within the tourism sector. They thought the wine business had problems and came up with ideas for how to make fruit wines better and sell them better to bring in more tourists. Thakur and Chaturvedi (2023) looked at how happy tourists were with the basic tourism services in Himachal Pradesh. They discovered significant issues with the infrastructure and service quality, indicating that modifications were necessary to enhance tourist satisfaction. Verma and Rana (2023) stressed how important it is for the hospitality industry to have different roles in order to promote regional cuisine. Their research emphasised the importance of traditional cuisine, such as Dham, in providing fresh, hygienic food that supports local agriculture and labour. The factors consider for food consumption at a Tourist place is shown in “Figure 1” The following theories are proposed based on the preceding statements.

H1: Domestic tourists are more satisfied with Himachali culinary experiences than international tourists due to greater familiarity and cultural resonance with the local cuisine.

H2: The quality of food, service, and ambience significantly influences the overall satisfaction of international tourists with Himachali culinary experiences, impacting their likelihood of repeat visits and recommendations.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a quantitative research methodology to examine the satisfaction ratings of both domestic and international tourists concerning their experiences with Himachali cuisine. The research methodology includes choosing respondents, the sampling process, the data collection process, and the sources of the variables

used in the study. In total, 570 people took this survey. The sample consists of tourists from India and other countries who visited Himachal Pradesh and sampled the local cuisine. The purposive sample method was used to pick people who had actually eaten Himachali food. This non-probability sampling strategy was selected to guarantee that participants possess the necessary expertise and knowledge required for the study, in accordance with the methodology outlined by Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016). A standardized questionnaire was employed to gather data regarding various facets of tourist satisfaction. The questionnaire had both closed-ended and open-ended questions to make people think deeply. The closed-ended questions used a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to find out how happy people were with different things.

This study briefly investigates food quality, service quality, ambiance, cultural authenticity, and overall satisfaction with the dining experience. These traits came from the most recent studies on culinary tourism and how happy tourists are. Agyeiwaah et al. (2018) emphasized motivation, experience, fulfilment, and loyalty as essential attributes in culinary tourism. The study by Upadhyay and Sharma (2014) highlighted taste, food quality, preparation, and cultural influences as significant determinants of tourist satisfaction. Statistical software was used to analyse the data to make sure the results were accurate and reliable. Descriptive statistics were utilized to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their responses to the questionnaire items. We used inferential statistics, such as regression analysis, to look at how the variables were related and to find big differences in satisfaction ratings between tourists from the US and those from other countries. The structured questionnaire, along with the purposeful sampling method, made it possible

to get important and useful information that showed how satisfied tourists were with Himachali food experiences. The study focused on individuals with direct experience of local cuisine to yield valuable and pertinent insights for stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

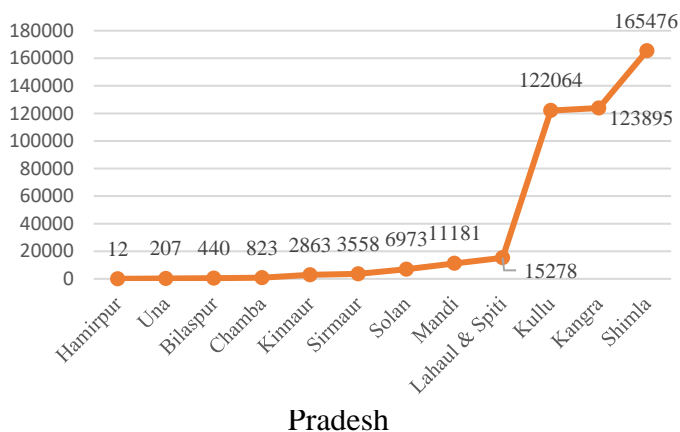
This paper also concentrated on secondary data sourced from various newsletters, a multitude of research papers, magazines and journals, as well as articles authored by researchers and scholars, along with reference books pertaining to culinary tourism.

The public service industry has significantly advanced in recent years and has emerged as a key economic driver for the state. In 2024, the services sector accounted for 41% of Himachal Pradesh's Gross State Domestic Product at current prices. The IT sector in Himachal Pradesh positions the state as an appealing industrial hub. Information technology generates numerous employment opportunities and contributes to governmental revenues. The state has proposed information technology parks and provided various incentives to IT enterprises. The Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) operates a centre in Shimla. The total count of IT students is 80,861. Kangra district was the inaugural region to implement 'geo tagging' of assets under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Job Guarantee Scheme in January 2024.

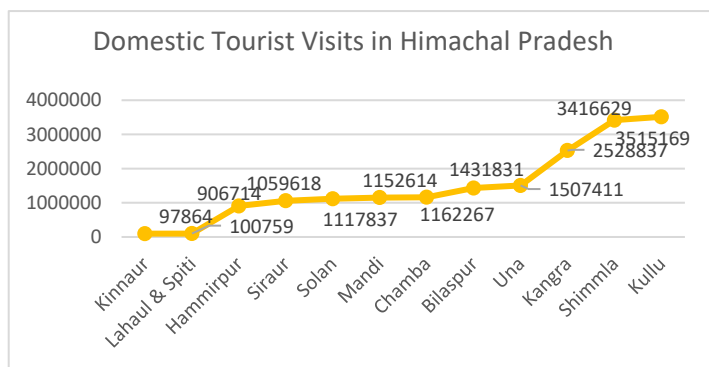
Tourism is a vital economic sector for the state, as it propels future growth. Tourism constitutes 7% of the Gross State Domestic Product, which is considerable. Tourism flourishes in the state owing to its geographical and cultural diversity, secure and serene atmosphere, scenic waterways, sacred sites, historical monuments, and hospitable populace. Domestic tourism is most prevalent in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh, and least prevalent in Kinnaur.

Kinnaur's infrastructure is inferior than that of other tourist locations in the state, highlighting the necessity for tourism infrastructure development. Each state's economy requires robust infrastructure to foster the growth of all sectors. The state government advocates for public-private partnerships to establish a robust infrastructural foundation. "Figure 2 and 3" represent the chart of foreign and domestic tourist visit in Himachal Pradesh.

Foreign Tourist Visits in Himachal Pradesh



Domestic Tourist Visits in Himachal Pradesh



IV. RESULT

This study utilised diverse statistical methodologies to examine the interrelationships among variables and evaluate the satisfaction levels of both domestic and international tourists concerning their experiences with Himachali cuisine. The analysis employed statistical tools, such as SPSS.

A. Demographic characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate that the sample is heterogeneous and that the male and female participants are approximately equal in number. Most of the people who answered are in their 25 to 30. The next most common age group is 35 to 44. 62.28% of the people who answered are from the area, while 37.72% are tourists from other countries. 36.84% of the people who came for the first time, 43.86% came two to three times, and 19.30% came more than three times. This distribution shows that the people who were surveyed came from a wide range of backgrounds and had a lot of different experiences as shown in Table 1 and its representation as shown in "Figure 4 and 5"

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age Group</b>		
18-24	95	16.67
25-34	185	32.46
35-44	140	24.56
45-54	95	16.67
55-64	45	7.89
65 and above	10	1.75
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	290	50.88
Female	280	49.12
<b>Nationality</b>		
Domestic	355	62.28
International	215	37.72
<b>Frequency of Visits</b>		
First-time visitor	210	36.84
Visited 2-3 times	250	43.86
Visited more than 3 times	110	19.30

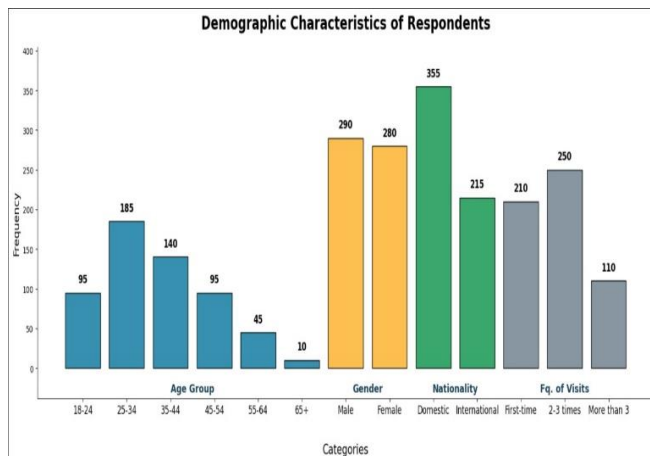


Figure 4. Demographic Frequency characteristics of Respondents

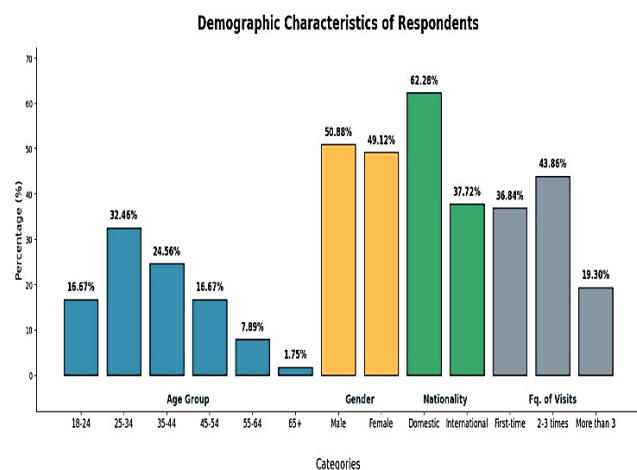


Figure 5: Demographic percentage characteristics of Respondents

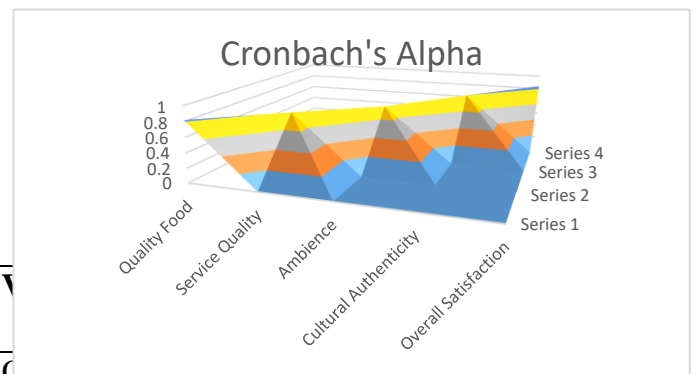
**B. Reliability Analysis**

According to the reliability study, all of the variables have Cronbach’s alpha values that are higher than the acceptable limit of 0.70. This means that they are very consistent with each other. The Quality of Food (0.82) and Overall Satisfaction (0.84) scores are the most reliable, which means that the questions about these areas are very consistent. Service Quality (0.79), Cultural Authenticity (0.80), and Ambiance (0.75)

all have levels of reliability that are good enough. The results of Table 2 show that the scales used to measure things in the questionnaire are reliable, so they can be used for more research and Figure 6 represent the reliability analysis graph.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha)

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality of Food	0.82
Service Quality	0.79
Ambience	0.75
Cultural Authenticity	0.80
Overall Satisfaction	0.84



Variable	Series 1	Series 2	Series 3	Series 4
Quality of Food	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82
Service Quality	0.28	5.18	<0.001	
Ambience	0.22	4.02	<0.001	
Cultural Authenticity	0.26	4.89	<0.001	
Overall Satisfaction	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84

Figure 6. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha)

C. Regression Analysis

The p-values for all four independent factors are less than 0.001, which means that they all have a big effect on total satisfaction. The beta coefficient for food quality is the highest (0.35), which means it has the biggest effect on how satisfied people are overall. Next, they list Service Quality (0.28), Cultural Authenticity (0.26), and Ambiance (0.22). All of the t-values are significant, which means that they do have an effect on how satisfied people are overall. These results of Table 3 imply that enhancements in these domains could markedly elevate tourists' overall satisfaction with Himachali culinary experiences and its representation as shown in Figure 7 & 8.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results

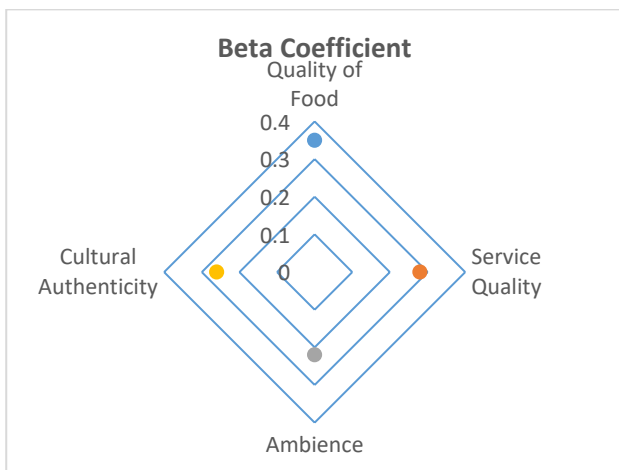


Figure 7. Regression analysis result for Beta Coefficient

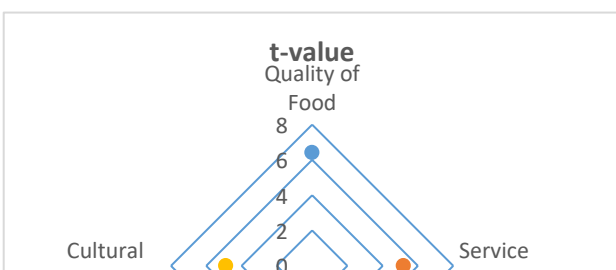


Figure 8. Regression Analysis for t-value

D. Anova (Analysis of Variance)

The ANOVA results show that tourists from the US are much more satisfied than tourists from other countries. The p-value is less than 0.01 and the F-value is 8.56. The origin of tourists, whether local or international, has a significant impact on their enjoyment of Himachali culinary experiences. This study underscores the imperative for tailored culinary tourism initiatives to address the varied interests and expectations of distinct tourist demographics.

E. Correlation Analysis

The correlation study demonstrates that all independent variables (Quality of Food, Service Quality, Ambiance, and Cultural Authenticity) exhibit a robust association with Overall Satisfaction. Food Quality and Overall Satisfaction have the strongest link (0.68), which means that making the food better is likely to make people much happier overall. Overall Satisfaction is also strongly linked to Service Quality (0.62), Cultural Authenticity (0.64), and Ambiance (0.56). These results show how

important these things are for making travellers' food experiences and overall enjoyment better.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

V. DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide important information about how happy both domestic and international tourists are with their experiences with Himachali food. The results indicate that numerous factors, including food quality, service quality, ambiance, and cultural authenticity, significantly influence tourist satisfaction. These results support previous research on culinary tourism, highlighting the importance of these factors in enhancing tourist experiences.

Meal quality was recognised as the principal factor influencing overall satisfaction, consistent with Agyeiwaah et al. (2018), who emphasised that meal quality profoundly affects the motivation and contentment of culinary tourists. Traditional meals like Dham are very important in Himachal Pradesh. Verma and Rana (2023) said that traditional food is very important to the hotel business. They said that

fresh, clean food helps local farmers and workers, which makes tourists happier. The strong positive correlation of 0.68 between meal quality and overall satisfaction backs these claims even more. The quality of service was the second most important thing, which is what other studies have also found. Upadhyay and Sharma (2014) noted that service quality significantly impacts travellers' culinary experiences and overall satisfaction. The regression analysis of this study showed that service quality had a strong beta coefficient (0.28), which shows how important it is for how tourists see things. This study demonstrates that enhancing service standards in Himachal Pradesh can substantially enhance tourist experiences, aligning with the hotel industry's primary emphasis on superior service quality as a critical determinant of satisfaction.

The atmosphere and cultural authenticity have a big impact on overall satisfaction, but not as much as the quality of the food and service. Prior research (Ryu & Jang, 2007) has illustrated the importance of ambiance in dining experiences. The study's finding that ambiance has a beta coefficient of 0.22 shows that the setting of the meal has a big effect on the whole experience. The beta value of 0.26 shows how important it is to keep and promote traditional cooking methods to keep the culture real. Tanwar et al. (2018) show how important Himachali Dham is for culture and nutrition. They stress that these traditional dinners are a big part of the region's food culture and what makes it so appealing. The ANOVA results showed that tourists from the US and tourists from other countries were not very happy with the same things. This implies that every group possesses distinct expectations and experiences. This outcome aligns with the research conducted by Roy and Pradhan (2022), which indicated that domestic tourists possessed diverse culinary preferences. The large difference in satisfaction ratings shows

Variable	Quality of Food	Service Quality	Ambience	Cultural Authenticity	Overall Satisfaction
Quality of Food	1				
Service Quality	0.45**	1			
Ambience	0.38**	0.40**	1		
Cultural Authenticity	0.42**	0.43**	0.35**	1	
Overall Satisfaction	0.68**	0.62**	0.56**	0.64**	1



that tourists from the US and other countries need dining options that are tailored to their tastes. This is especially important for destination management organisations (DMOs) that want to improve the experience for all visitors and get a wide range of tourists to come back.

Previous research has demonstrated the socio-economic benefits of gourmet tourism. Bisht et al. (2014) noted that culinary tourism is vital for creating jobs and income in Himachal Pradesh. The findings of this study support the notion that enhancing culinary experiences can increase visitor satisfaction, thereby attracting more tourists and subsequently generating greater revenue for the local economy. The report also pointed out other areas that needed work, though. People would still be happier if the problems were fixed, even if the ratings for the food, service, atmosphere, and cultural authenticity were higher. Thakur and Chaturvedi (2023) emphasised the necessity for improved infrastructure and service quality to enhance tourist satisfaction in Himachal Pradesh. The findings of the present study support this viewpoint, indicating that while tourists appreciate the cultural and culinary offerings, improvements in these areas could further enhance their experiences. This study contributes to the literature on culinary tourism by comprehensively analysing the factors influencing tourist satisfaction regarding Himachali gastronomic experiences. The results show how important food quality, service quality, ambiance, and cultural authenticity are to travellers' experiences and satisfaction. The big differences between domestic and international tourists show how important it is to offer different kinds of food to different groups of tourists.

#### A. Implications

People who work in tourism and hospitality in Himachal Pradesh might be able to use the results of this study in a lot of different ways. The food is the most important thing for keeping tourists

happy. People who work in tourism and businesses in the area should make sure that the traditional Himachali food is of the highest quality. To reach this goal, you can use fresh, locally grown foods and keep old-fashioned cooking methods alive. Verma and Rana (2023) said that traditional food is very important for hotels. They said that promoting meals like Dham might bring in more tourists and make their stay better overall. Another big thing that made travellers happy was the quality of the service. If you want to improve the level of service, you should make training programs for hospitality staff a top priority. Upadhyay and Sharma (2014) discussed how the quality of service could affect people's feelings about food and suggested that better treatment could make tourists much happier. You can make your service better by training your staff and learning from the best practices of other successful culinary tourist spots.

How a restaurant looks and feels is also very important for how tourists feel. Making the restaurant feel like home and true to its culture can improve the meal as a whole. Ryu and Jang (2007) said that the mood of a place is very important to how happy customers are with their food. Restaurants and other places that serve food should use traditional music and decorations to make the atmosphere reflect the culture of Himachal Pradesh. This will give guests a full experience. How real the culture is is another important factor in how happy tourists are. Promoting traditional cooking skills and staying true to the heritage of Himachali food can bring in tourists who want to try new things and learn about other cultures. Tanwar et al. (2018) said that traditional Himachali food is very important for both health and culture. The tourism board should help promote traditional food festivals and cooking events that show off the area's long history of great food. Domestic and international tourists are very different in how happy they are, so marketing strategies need to be

different for each group. People who visit the US may have different needs and wants than people who visit other countries. Roy and Pradhan (2022) said that people who travel within their own country have different tastes when it comes to food. Tourism officials need to come up with marketing plans that show off the unique things about Himachali food that would make people from India and other countries want to try it. Talking about how proud people are of their area and how much they love the food can help tourists from the US. International tourists might be interested in Himachali food if you talk about how unique and culturally rich it is.

Also, the social and economic benefits of culinary tourism should be used to help the people who live there. Bisht et al. (2014) wrote about how tourism affects the economy in Himachal Pradesh. Tourism officials can help communities by promoting local food traditions and helping local food producers. This will make it possible for the economy to grow over time. One way to improve culinary tourism and help local farmers is through farm-to-table programs, where visitors can go to local farms and eat fresh vegetables. Finally, fixing the problems with the infrastructure and the quality of the services is important for making tourists happy overall. Thakur and Chaturvedi (2023) said that it is very important for Himachal Pradesh to improve its infrastructure. Tourists will have a better time if you spend money on transportation, places to stay, and places to eat. Public-private partnerships can quickly and effectively build the infrastructure that the growing culinary tourism industry needs.

#### *Conclusion and scope for Future Work*

This study offers significant insights into tourist satisfaction regarding Himachali culinary experiences; however, it possesses several limitations that must be recognised. First, purposeful sampling might make it harder to use the results in other situations. This sampling

strategy guarantees that respondents have relevant experience; however, it may not completely reflect the entire tourist demographic. Subsequent research ought to employ random sampling methods to improve the sample's representativeness. Second, the study depended on self-reported data, which could be influenced by biases like social desirability and recall bias. Respondents may have given answers they thought were expected or good instead of what they really thought. Subsequent research may utilise observational methodologies or experimental designs to corroborate self-reported data and deliver a more objective evaluation of tourist satisfaction.

Third, the study concentrated on a particular geographic area and cultural framework, which may restrict the generalisability of the results to alternative contexts. Himachali cuisine possesses distinct characteristics; however, the factors that satisfy tourists regarding their culinary experiences may vary across cultures and regions. Future research ought to investigate analogous studies within various geographic and cultural contexts to facilitate the comparison and contrast of findings. Fourth, the study's cross-sectional design offers a temporary view of how satisfied tourists are. This method does not consider the temporal variations in tourists' emotions and enjoyment. Longitudinal studies that monitor variations in tourist satisfaction and preferences across several trips may yield more profound insights into the dynamics of culinary tourism. Fifth, the study only looked at a few variables: the quality of the food, the quality of the service, the atmosphere, and the cultural authenticity. These things matter, but other things like price, how easy it is to get to, and advertising could also change how happy tourists are with their food experiences. Future research should investigate a wider range of factors to achieve a more thorough comprehension of the

elements that influence tourists' satisfaction with their culinary experiences.

Finally, the study did not examine the influence of demographic variables, such as age, gender, and income, on tourist satisfaction. These factors could affect what tourists like to eat and how happy they are with their meals. Future studies should investigate the influence of demographic variables on the experiences and satisfaction of tourists engaged in culinary tourism. Even with these limitations, this study greatly improves our understanding of culinary tourism and how happy tourists are. It emphasises the significance of food quality, service quality, ambiance, and cultural authenticity in shaping tourists' perceptions of their experiences. The results show that different types of tourists need different types of food and ways to market. The study is also helpful for businesses and tourism officials in the area. It talks about how important it is to keep and promote old-fashioned ways of cooking to make tourists happier.

#### REFERENCES

- Agyeiwaah, E., Otoo, F., Suntikul, W., & Huang, W. (2018). Understanding culinary tourist motivation, experience, satisfaction, and loyalty using a structural approach. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36, 295-313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2018.1541775>
- Barbhuiya, M. R. (2023). Post-pandemic tourism strategies: A case of Himachal Pradesh. *Journal of Opioid Management*, 21(7), 315-337. <https://doi.org/10.5055/jem.0709>
- Bisht, H., Verma, A., Kishtwaria, J., & Pathania, P. (2014). Expansion of tourism in Himachal Pradesh: An economic analysis. *Quest-The Journal of UGC-ASC Nainital*, 8, 119-128. <https://doi.org/10.5958/22490035.2014.01073.0>
- Chaudhary, A., Kukreti, R., Upreti, Y., Khan, M., & Yadav, C. S. (2021). Tourist perception and their revisit intention at major holy places of Himachal Pradesh. *Webology*, 18(4), Article 19. <https://doi.org/10.29121/web/v18i4/19>
- Chauhan, S., Sharma, S., & Alene, Y. (2013). Bridging the gap between producers and consumers of Himachali fruit wines. *Asian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 8(3), 33-42. <https://doi.org/10.12727/ajts.9.3>
- Desy, E. (2023). Unique Culinary Success in Medan City as a Tourism Destination. *International Journal of Management, Economic and Accounting*. <https://doi.org/10.61306/ijmea.v1i2.14>
- American Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Kala, D. (2020). Examining the Impact of Food Attributes and Restaurant Services on Tourist Satisfaction: Evidence from Mountainous State of India. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 21, 430-453. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2019.1672235>
- Kristanti, M., Jokom, R., & Widjaja, D. (2019). Culinary Experience of Domestic Tourists in Indonesia: A Study on Denpasar and Yogyakarta Tourist Destinations. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Tourism, Economics, Accounting, Management, and Social Science (TEAMS 2018)*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/TEAMS-18.2019.23>
- Kumar, S., & Rana, G. (2017). Formulation of flexible strategy for pilgrimage tourism in Himachal Pradesh, PSN: Other

- <https://doi.org/10.2139/SSRN.3010869>  
Domestic Development Strategies.
- Raj, D. (2017). Cultural tourism: A tool for socio-economic development of the host community: Case study of Himachal Pradesh. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 5.
- Rana, A. (2014). Seasonal concentration of domestic and international tourists: An overview of Himachal tourism. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 2.
- Roy, M., & Pradhan, B. (2022). Food motives in a visitor destination: A study on domestic tourist visit. *NMIMS Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.53908/nmmr.300206>
- Sahoo, D. (2020). Analysing the tour guides' perceptions about gastronomy tourism in Himachal Pradesh. In *Agro/Organic Tourism* (pp. 132-153). <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-3725-1.ch008>
- Tanwar, M., Tanwar, B., Tanwar, R. S., Kumar, V., & Goyal, A. (2018). Himachali dham: Food, culture, and heritage. *Journal of Ethnic Foods*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JEF.2017.10.006>
- Thakur, S. K. (2023). Growth of tourism in Himachal Pradesh: A study of district Shimla in Himachal Pradesh. *International Journal of Engineering Technologies and Management Research*.  
<https://doi.org/10.29121/ijetmr.v10.i12.2023.1383>
- Thakur, S. K., & Chaturvedi, A. K. (2023). Tourists satisfaction level analysis of basic tourism facilities: A study in hill region of Himachal Pradesh. *International Journal of Advanced Research*.  
<https://doi.org/10.21474/ijar01/17424>
- Thakur, S. K., & Chaturvedi, A. K. (2023). TOURISTS SATISFACTION LEVEL ANALYSIS OF BASIC TOURISM FACILITIES: A STUDY IN HILL REGION OF HIMACHAL PRADESH. *International Journal of Advanced Research*.  
<https://doi.org/10.21474/ijar01/17424>
- Upadhyay, Y., & Sharma, D. (2014). Culinary preferences of foreign tourists in India. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 20(1), 29-39.