TASTING TRADITIONS: THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHICS AND GASTRONOMIC KNOWLEDGE IN GYŐR-MOSON-SOPRON COUNTY, IN HUNGARY

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Abstract: The most important objective of this study is to explore people's attitudes regarding the values of gastronomy in Győr-Moson-Sopron County. Data collection took place between September 1, 2023, and November 30, 2023 (N=784). The sample is not representative, the respondents were selected arbitrarily and randomly. The survey data was processed using JMP Pro17 Statistical software and Google forms were shared on social media platforms. The most important result of the primary research is that the study revealed the personal preferences and attitudes of respondents that influence the frequency of attendance at gastronomic events. To this end, we wanted to conduct a cluster analysis. Secondary research shows that the preservation and transmission of gastronomic culture is a key task in all historical periods. In this context, it becomes justified to examine our sample with a view to preserving cultural heritage and identity and to explore how the individuals in our sample relate to the gastronomic traditions of their region, which may influence their choices and the preservation of traditions that are part of their identity. The preservation of cultural heritage and contributions to it hold a significant role in gastronomic tourism. The implications of the results of the empirical research go beyond the borders of Győr-Moson-Sopron county and highlight the relationship between gastrotourism and local traditions.

Keywords: attitude, gastronomy, hospitality, Hungaricums, tradition

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality are of strategic importance to many governments around the world, and many countries rely on this industry for a significant part of their GDP, such as Egypt and Bali. According to the latest report from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Egypt's tourism sector will contribute around 24% of the country's GDP in 2023, with around EGP 953 billion, up almost 21% from its previous high (Egypt GDP).

In categorizing the types and forms of tourism, the literature uses the influencing factors (motivation) and the environment as grouping criteria. Accordingly, the motivation of a tourist can be recreational, cultural, social sports, economic, and political. Based on the origin of the tourism, it can be either domestic or foreign. The number of people involved in tourism can be divided into individual, group, mass, and family tourism. Based on the length of stay, tourism can be short-term or long-term, grouped by season, spring, summer, autumn, and winter (Kaspar and Fekete, 2004).

Gastrotourism is one of the youngest branches of tourism, and its exploitation has enormous potential. The pandemic had a huge impact on this sector, professionals must look ahead and not deal with this, but they have to focus on how they are able to restore the previous prestige of tourism and hospitality. Dávid and Reményik's research on Gyimes in 2015 draws attention to the culinary geography of multiculturalism, according to them, a mix of influences (Roman, Byzantine, Armenian, Turkish, Austrian, Hungarian, and Romanian) that have shaped the region's gastronomy over the centuries, as well as the traditions and practices developed by the ethnic groups living here (the Gyimes Csángó).

The study scrutinizes the "Counties" of Győr-Moson-Sopron County, with particular attention to the age group of youngsters who are under 20 years. After the literature background and the conceptualization of the concepts, the methodology of the empirical research and the evaluation of the relevant quantitative research are presented.

Győr-Moson-Sopron County is located in the north-western part of Hungary, also known as the gateway to the west. Thanks to its geography, it has played an important role in the life of Hungary throughout history. Its capital Győr is

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located 123 km from Vienna and 74 km from Bratislava. It is home to several landscapes, such as the Szigetköz, also known as Hungary's vegetable garden, the Rábaköz, the Hanság, Lake Fertő and the city of loyalty, called Sopron. Each of these places has its own local food and drink specialties, and this study examines people's knowledge of these.

People are in a decision situation before they travel, then they choose the best offer from the alternatives. Nowadays there are different decision support methods, one of which is the decision tree. Thiengburanathum et al., 2015 offer tourists TRS (Travel Recommendation System) to help them choose destinations in an unfamiliar city using a decision tree. Dudás used his database to categorize the tourists interviewed (N=302), whether they were interested in any form of tourism, and if so, according to which categories more relevant groups are formed. On this basis, the decision tree was constructed (Dudás, 2018). The study attempted to identify the attitudes of the sample. The research also aimed to investigate respondents' knowledge of local gastronomy, their participation in local gastronomic events, preferred food and drink, and types of gastronomic events, in which they would like to participate. The demographic variables used to understand tourists' intention to participate in gastronomic events are gender, education level, and age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The scientific study of tourism started in Europe, which was the first region to experience the impact of mass tourism. In the period before the pandemic, this topic was also the focus of experts, how we could reduce the number of tourists in Venice or Barcelona, among others, so that those people who live in these places are not disturbed by tourists. "Overtourism" ended with the COVID-19 epidemic, and the most important issue of today has become the realization of sustainable tourism. Happ and Bolla (2020) outline a theoretical model of this for the realization of social sustainability in the synthesis of tourism, disability studies, and special education.

Ogilvie's (1933) book on tourism was the first social science treatise on the subject (written in English), followed by Norval's (1936) tourism book. However, tourism itself received little attention until the period after the Second World War, when tourism began to develop rapidly. However, the concept of tourist was not adopted in the literature, none of its conceptual definitions aimed at tourists were accepted by professionals, only Pearce (1982) conducted empirical research on people's ideas about roles related to tourists, which was based on Cohen's approach. Globalization is not a new concept, according to Friedman (2005) three eras of globalization can be defined. First relation can be linked to Colombus set sail in 1492 and ending in the early 1800s. The second dates end in the twentieth century when the development of markets and innovation has brought new products to people. The third dates from late 1990s with the rise of web technologies to allow people and businesses to collaborate on a global scale.

Many definitions of the conceptual definitions of tourism are now given in both Hungarian and international printed literature. The Hungarian Interpretive Dictionary defines tourism as follows, "noun press 1. Tourist traffic. 2. rare. Tourism, nature walks" (Juhász et al., 2006:1414). Tourism has been present in people's lives since prehistoric times, and people visited their relatives, acquaintances and friends even at this time. In ancient times, friends and family members accompanied the competitors to the Olympic Games. Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that involves the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (who can be tourists or out-of-towners; residents or non-residents), and tourism refers to their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditures (https://www.unwto. org/glossary-tourism-terms). Also, tourism is frequently considered in terms of the demand side, meaning the tourists' motivations, and the supply side, the sector that satisfies tourist needs.

Other important terms associated with tourism are infrastructure, that components that an area's residents rely on such as roads, bridges, communications networks, markets and supermarkets, and so on; and superstructure, facilities that have been built to accommodate that needs of tourists such as cruise terminals, airports, and convention centers (although these support the area's residents), hotels, resorts, restaurants, and car rentals (Walker and Walker, 2011:7). Tourism is a general term used to cover supply and demand, which has been and is used in many forms around the world. The expansion of the services on the supply side is also justified by the increase in the number of users, and also by the fact that the service provider provides better and more comprehensive services than competitors (Happ, 2008). However, all tourism types exhibit negative inter-action effects, suggesting diminishing returns of digital information as engagement increases (Salem et al., 2024). According to According to Michalkó, tourism encompasses activities undertaken during an individual's discretionary time, outside of their regular working hours. These activities are typically the result of personal, autonomous decisions, reflecting a voluntary choice to engage in experiences beyond everyday routines Michalkó (2012).

The development of tourism on a huge scale is also shown by the fact that digitization has reached this sector as well, and thanks to the deepening of communication channels, service providers can directly deliver their messages to consumers and guests through their applications installed on smartphones (Happ, 2013). According to Cordova-Buiza et al., 2024 gastronomy has become a pivotal element in tourism, significantly influencing tourists' satisfaction and their choice of destinations. The seasonality of the Sopron-Fertő tourism region was analyzed by Barcza et al., 2023, identifying the extent to which the COVID epidemic makes a region vulnerable to seasonality and the need to find new ways for tourism destinations and their service providers to manage tourism through different management methods, as threats to tourism may return periodically in parallel with the current pandemic.

Gastronomic tourism, often referred to as "food tourism," "tasting tourism," or "culinary tourism," focuses on exploring distinctive and memorable dining and drinking experiences. It involves traveling to places where the primary attraction is the local cuisine and beverages, offering travelers a deep dive into the culture, flavors, and traditions of the destination through its food. This type of tourism highlights the unique culinary offerings of a region and is driven by the desire to taste authentic local dishes (Dávid et al. 2010). The conceptual definitions of tourism are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Conceptualising of the tourism and tourists (Source: The authors' editing, 2024)

Author	Year	Definitions
Rátz	2017	Democratized tourism consumption
Tasnádi	1998	Use of non-lucrative tourist services
Walker and Walker		Tourism is frequently considered in terms of the demand side, meaning the tourists' motivations, and the supply side, the sector that satisfies tourist needs
Böröcz	1996	Leisure migration
Lamb and Davidson	1996	„ ... purchaser of the tourism (tourist) must expereience the trip to access the product, the quality of the transportation experience…tourist require safe, comfortable, affordable, and efficient intermodal transportation networks…" (cited by Page 2011:20)
Jafari	1995	„Tourism is the study of man [the tourist] away from his usual habitât, of the touristic apparatus world networks, and of the ordinary [non-tourisml and non-ordinary [tourism] woÍlds and their diaÌectic relationship" (Jafari, 1995:5).
McKercher	1993	Industry
Leiper	1990	„…a traveller -generating region; tourism destinations regions; transit routes for tourists traveling between generating and destination areas …(cited by Page 2011:19)
Cohen	1984	Democratized travel: - modern leisure activity; - expression of basic cultural motifs; the process of adopting a foreign culture.
Greenwood	1982	It is an extremely large-scale and diverse industry that operates in different ways and under different circumstances.
Leiper	1979	Tourism can be thought of as a whole range of individuaÌs, businesses, organizations, and places which combine in some way to deliver a travel experience. Tourism is a multidimensional, multifaceted activity, which touches many lives and many different economic activities.
Wahab	1977	„A human intentional activity that serves as a mean of communication and as a link of interaction between the peoples, inside a country or even beyond its geographical demarcations. It involves the temporary displacement of people from one region to another, country or even continent, with the objective of satisfying necessities and not the reâlization of remunerated activiry. For the visited country, tourism is an industry whose products are consumed in loco, producing, invisible exports" (Wahab, 1977:26).
UNESCO	1976	Destroys the natural environment, • commoditizes host communities and their culture
Cohen	1974	Commercialized hospitality, the focus is on the visitor component of the role of the tourist, democratized travel: the focus is on the composition of travelers, tourism involvement; the tourist is seen as a kind of traveler marked by some distinct analytical features.
International Union of Official Travel Organizations	1963	Temporary visitors who stay at least twenty-four hours in the visited country and whose purpose of travel can be classified under one of the following factors: a) leisure (recreation, vacation, health, study, religion, and sports); b) business (family mission, meeting)
Krapf	1963	It has a positive economic impact
Hunziker - Krapf	1942	The summarise of connections resulting from people's travel and stay outside their place of residence (not settlement, not motivated by earnings)
Glücksmann	1929	„the bridging of distance by persons to a place where they do not have a permanent home" (cited by Lengyel 1992:21)

The concept of hospitality is defined in many different ways in Hungarian literature; for example Csizmadia, 1996; Burkáné, 1999; Endrődy and Veres, 2005; Martos et al., 2007. CLXIV of 2005 the law defines it as follows: "the distribution of ready-made or locally prepared food and drinks, typically for local consumption, including related entertainment and other service activities; furthermore, it must have an infrastructure for business-like catering in any form at the workplace and in educational and educational institutions (https://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegydoc.cgi?docid= A0500164.TV).

"Hospitality is a specific commercial activity in which the local population and those participating in tourism are provided with food, drink and various services" (Voleszák, 2008:26). In a narrower sense, it is a specific sector of trade in which new value is created from the purchased goods through service and professional knowledge transfer. In a broader sense, it is a collective concept, during which the catering business provides complex services to the guests who come to it, meeting their wishes at the highest level; such as in connection with drinks, food and other services (Kőmíves, 2020).

Our national value system operates on the basis of the pyramid principle, i.e. it encompasses the entire Hungarian society, built from the bottom up. The Hungaricum Act, which entered into force on July 1, 2012, defines the term Hungarian as follows: "Hungaricum: collective term, which in an unified classification, classification and registration system denotes a value worthy of distinction and highlighting, which, with its characteristics characteristic of Hungarianness, with its uniqueness, specialness and quality, it is the peak performance of Hungarians" (http://www. hungarikum.hu/hu/content/mik-azok-hungarikumok-0). In Szákáli's interpretation, "...We cannot give up our values, the heritage left to us by our predecessors, because our common values provide guidance for us to know where we are going from and what is the true meaning of our lives (Szakáli, 2020:43). Attitude has been defined in the literature in several ways. Attitude is derived from the Latin word aptus meaning: aptitude or conformity to something: a subjective or mental state of readiness for activity. „*The attitude toward the behavior and refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question*" (Ajzen, 1991:188). Hence, in an accelerated competitive business environment, customer satisfaction and loyalty are the most important dimensions that influence the financial performance of a company (Untaru and Han, 2021). According to the Basic Dictionary of Foreign Words, "behavior, manner as a state of mind, attitude, action, conduct, behavior, attitude, attitude, position" (Tófalusi, 2015).

The Hungarian Dictionary of Interpretation describes a Tótfalusi Vocabulary defines it as "noun.1. [French <Italian<Latin] (Juhász et al., 2000). In Mészáros et al.,2006's interpretation, attitude is "...evaluative attitude...is a cognitive representation that summarizes an individual's evaluations of an attitude object" ourselves or others, a person, object, event, action positive, negative or neutral charge (Mészáros et al., 2006). Attitudes are learned by learning cognitive, emotional (affective), and behavioral (conative) conative components. Attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Eagly and Chaiken, 1988).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The objective of our study is to explore how personal preferences and attitudes influence the frequency of individuals' visits to gastronomic events. The foundational data collection for this research took place in Győr-Moson-Sopron County (presented on Figure 1.), from September 1 to November 30, 2023. The collected sample (N=784) is not representative, as the respondents were selected randomly.

Figure 1. Győr-Moson-Sopron County, the analysed region (Source: The authors' own editing; romantikusvendeghazak.hu, 2024)

Our research methodology relied on empirical data collection and computerized statistical analysis techniques. As part of the secondary research, we focused on the preservation of the region's gastronomic values and their exploitation as tourist attractions. Accordingly, the primary data collection emphasized the examination of the depth of knowledge related to local gastronomic traditions and specialties. The research methodology employed two main analytical techniques. The first was an attempt at cluster analysis, which yielded no results, leading us to choose the decision tree methodology as a second step.

In applying the decision tree, we initially based our approach on literature related to artificial neural networks (Zell et al., 1994; Porwal et al., 2003), which facilitate the determination of relationships and the classification of data. The advantage of neural networks is their capability to handle large volumes of data and approximate non-linear relationships, making them suitable for analyzing various gastronomic preferences and habits. In working with algorithms, we applied a simplified, top-down approach, providing clear guidance on which attributes to test and how to define divisions.

As a second step in our research methodology, we applied principal component analysis (PCA). During the PCA analysis, we selected the following variables:

- Knowledge of gastronomic traditions,
- participation in gastronomic events,
- preferred types of food and drinks,
- types of events attended by respondents.

For the analysis of the selected variables, we converted binary and ordinal values to numeric, excluded missing data, and normalized the data considering the sensitivity of PCA. Taking into account the ethical aspects of the research, every step of data collection and analysis was conducted in accordance with applicable laws and ethical standards, including strict adherence to data protection regulations. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research and provided their consent voluntarily for the use of their data, which was documented in the form of a written consent statement. To preserve participants' anonymity, data were handled in coded form with identifying information removed.

Every step of the analysis process was documented to ensure the reproducibility of the research. In addition to a detailed description of the computerized analysis, we thoroughly described all methods and processes used during the research, as well as the tools and techniques employed. The process of the empirical research is illustrated in Figure 2.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our secondary research highlights that the preservation and transmission of gastronomic culture is a key responsibility in every historical era. Based on this, it becomes justified to examine our sample for the purpose of preserving cultural heritage and identity, and to uncover how the individuals within our sample relate to their region's gastronomic traditions, which may influence their decisions and the survival of those traditions that form part of their identity. Furthermore, our secondary research

examines the potential of gastronomic tourism as a relatively new sector of tourism. Therefore, it is worth exploring the results of our primary data collection not only from a cultural perspective but also in terms of the development of gastronomic tourism. Specifically, how our findings can assist local tourism organizations and businesses in better understanding and satisfying the gastronomic needs of visitors, thereby enhancing the region's tourist appeal and economic development. Accordingly, it may be relevant to raise the question: Q1: How do personal preferences and attitudes influence the frequency of participants' visits to gastronomic events? This is in order to understand how personal preferences affect individuals' visits to gastronomic events, which directly relates to the themes of regional gastronomic tourism and cultural preservation.

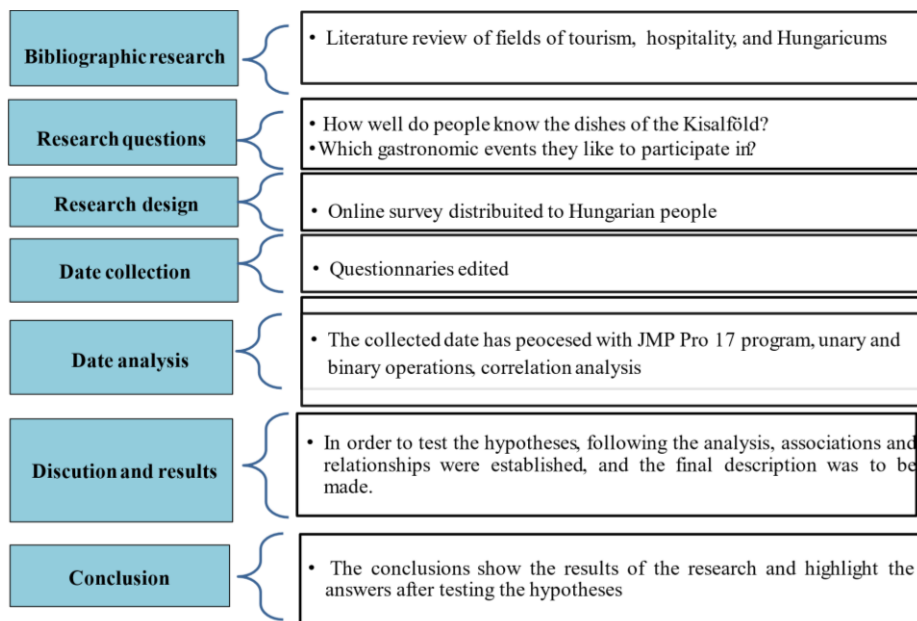| Bibliographic research | • Literature review of fields of tourism, hospitality, and Hungaricums |
Research questions	• How well do people know the dishes of the Kisalföld? • Which gastronomic events they like to participate in?
Research design	• Online survey distribuited to Hungarian people
Date collection	• Questionnaries edited
Date analysis	• The collected date has peocesed with JMP Pro 17 program, unary and binary operations, correlation analysis
Discution and results	• In order to test the hypotheses, following the analysis, associations and relationships were established, and the final description was to be made.
Conclusion	• The conclusions show the results of the research and highlight the answers after testing the hypotheses

Figure 2. Research model (Source: The authors' own editing)

Considering demographic variables mentioned in the literature, such as place of residence and education, and thus the impact of education on the knowledge of gastronomic traditions, our research suggests that knowledge of local gastronomic traditions can influence event attendance. This deserves to be examined concretely, hence H1: The frequency of participants' visits to gastronomic events is primarily influenced by their knowledge of local gastronomic traditions.

Based on the findings in the literature, we consider it worthwhile to explore the proposition that frequent visitors likely possess a broader knowledge of gastronomy, which could facilitate the further dissemination and acceptance of gastronomic traditions. Therefore, we also examine the statement that H2: Participants who frequently attend gastronomic events are likely to have a wider knowledge and appreciation of various gastronomic traditions and specialties.

1. DTC Analysis

In the initial phase of our research, we sought to answer the question of which personal preferences and attitudes influence the frequency of visits to gastronomic events. For this purpose, we intended to conduct a cluster analysis process. However, during the hierarchical analysis, the leading distances justified the creation of a single group.

Ignoring this and attempting to run a K-means analysis for 2 or 3 groups resulted in distorted outcomes: unrealistic shifts in sample size towards one cluster group, and/or negligible differences in means, and/or overlaps in several examined attitudes. This suggests that the sample is quite homogeneous regarding this issue.

It implies that motivations related to gastronomic events cannot be uncovered through grouping, meaning that respondents do not have categorizable preferences but rather follow a certain pattern in their decision-making processes. Therefore, in this case, we found the application of decision tree methodology to be appropriate.

Artificial neural networks are a supervised machine learning technique capable of determining correlations and mapping out relationships among various variables for the classification of unknown data (Zell et al., 1998). Among the advantages of such networks, we count the handling of large amounts of data, the approximation of nonlinear relationships, but also the generalization from relatively inaccurate input data, and resistance to outliers and overfitting (Porwal et al., 2003). Decision tree classification (DTC) is a machine learning technique that operates by recursively partitioning the dataset in an attempt to categorize the target variable in a homogeneous manner. At every split, the DTC algorithm seeks to reduce the entropy of the target variable in the resulting datasets by selecting the optimal partition from a number of independent variables. The main advantages of this method are that it does not require as much computational resource as traditional artificial neural networks, it is not sensitive to the distribution pattern, and it is reliable in terms of missing data and redundant environmental variables (Tan et al., 2014). Therefore, the decision tree is a supervised, expressive, classifying algorithm consisting of a set of nodes, where the inner layers test the nodes. In applying algorithms, we relied on the traditional, top-down simplified approach for constructing the decision tree. These methods bring clearer choices for deciding which attribute to test in the decision tree and how to define the partitions. Figure 3, indicated above, displays a

ROC curve that represents the attendance at gastronomic festivals, wherein the green line symbolizes the "I attend all" path considered ideal by the current research, and attempts to explain deviations from this path using the DTC procedure.
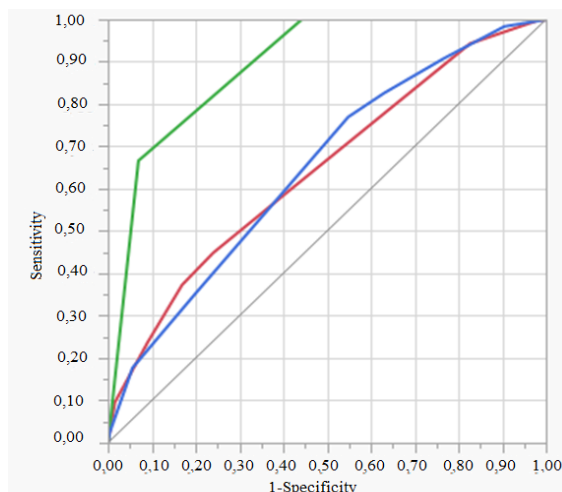

Figure 3. ROC curve (Source: Survey data, 2024)

The best paths and divisions can be marked by examining the G-squared sums, which led to the establishment of the DTC depicted in Figure 4. These G-squared sums can be viewed, if desired, as an explanatory force indicating the strength and nature of decision divisions. A striking, almost immediately noticeable result is the price factor's significant division capability. It fundamentally splits the sample based on the statement related to cost as a decision factor: "Businesses offer their products at an affordable price to festival participants." For a small segment of the sample (58 individuals), for whom this issue aligns with their expectations, their path ends abruptly (G2=90.9), without considering anything else.

For those for whom the price issue is not entirely satisfactory (G2=938), a previous habit is considered, namely, whether they are accustomed to buying from small producers. At this juncture, those who typically do not purchase from small producers generate a terminated path, clearly showing that price and previous habits are of cardinal concern.
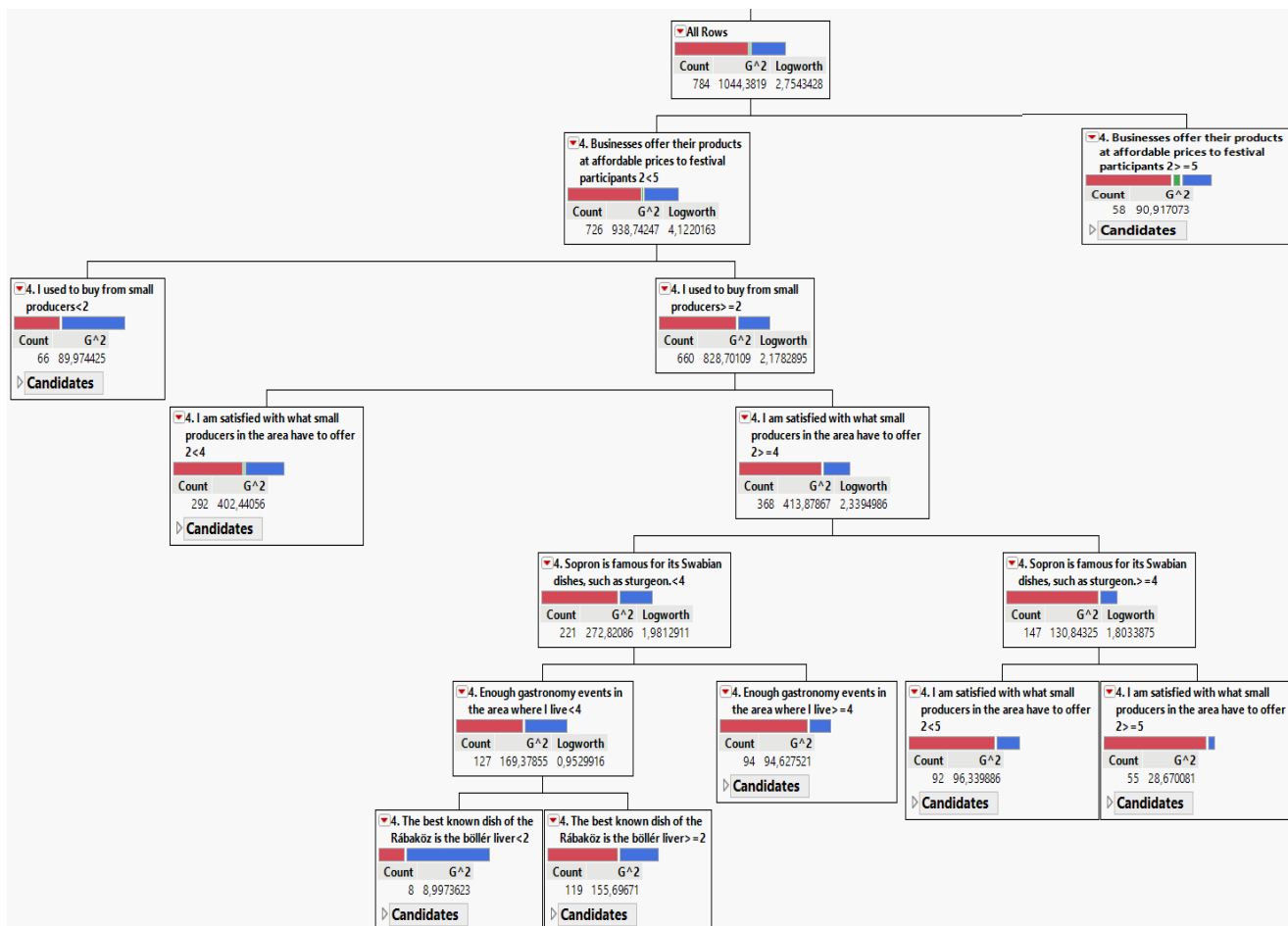

Figure 4. DTC tree (Source: Survey data, JMP output, 2024)

Those who typically do make purchases, precisely those for whom this factor does not fall into the negative range (2+), constituting 84% of the sample (660 individuals), examine the offerings of small producers. This factor has a G2 value of 828.7. The non-positive (less than 4) interval possibilities further divide according to interval values. At this point, respondents consider the offerings of small producers, which most significantly divides the sample: into those who thoroughly examine the offerings (292 individuals) (G2=402.4) and delve into the details before deciding on participation, and those who are generally satisfied with the offerings (368 individuals, G2=413.8).

A local specificity of Győr-Moson-Sopron county, the Sopron Swabian dishes, subsequently splits the sample. This local specialty is a particularly important decision factor for some (147 individuals, G2=130.8). For them, this essentially becomes the decisive factor at this point, as their division again focuses on the offerings – now from this context.

For the portion of the sample that considered the local specialty with a non-positive (4 and 5) interval value, the determining factor becomes the gastronomic events available in their vicinity (221 individuals, G2=272.2). For those with a positive opinion of this statement, their search ends, having found what they were looking for to decide whether to attend gastronomic festivals. For those for whom this is not decisive, another specialty comes under examination: the culinary delights of Rábaköz (127 individuals, G2=169.3). Following this, every branch of the DTC becomes more detailed, with further divisions not considered relevant.

2. PCA Analysis

In the second step, we aimed to assess whether Principal Component Analysis (PCA), a statistical procedure used for data dimensionality reduction, could identify the primary factors that most significantly determine the participants' gastronomic preferences and their relation to events. For the PCA analysis, we selected variables that focus on gastronomic preferences and event attendance habits. These data contain specific information about the types of food and events preferred by the participants, which can help uncover hidden patterns and groups within the data.

The selection of relevant variables for the PCA analysis included:

● Knowledge of gastronomic traditions (e.g., traditions of Szigetköz, Rábaköz, Sopron-Fertő, Pannonhalma)
● Participation in gastronomic events,
● preferred types of food and drinks,
● types of events participants are keen to attend. In this process, we handled categorical variables, such as "familiar/unfamiliar" type responses, by converting them into binary variables. We then reviewed and converted ordinal variables into numerical values, excluded missing data from the analysis, and normalized the data since PCA is sensitive to the scale of values. The distribution of the data and the groupings are shown in Figure 5.
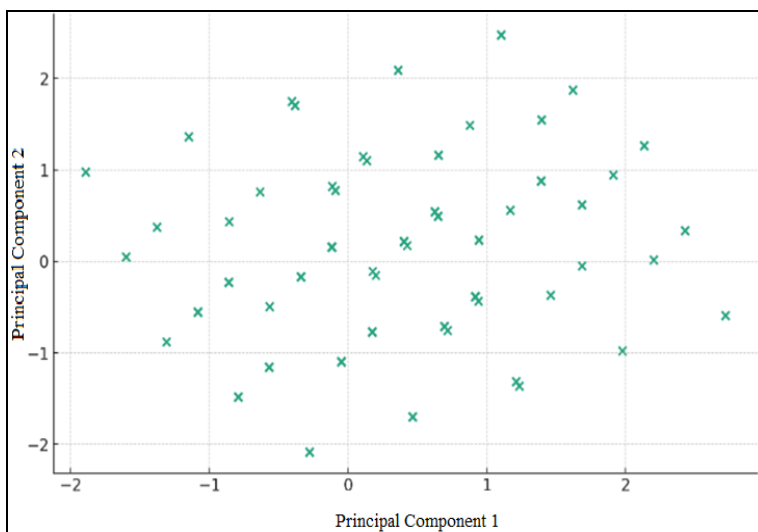

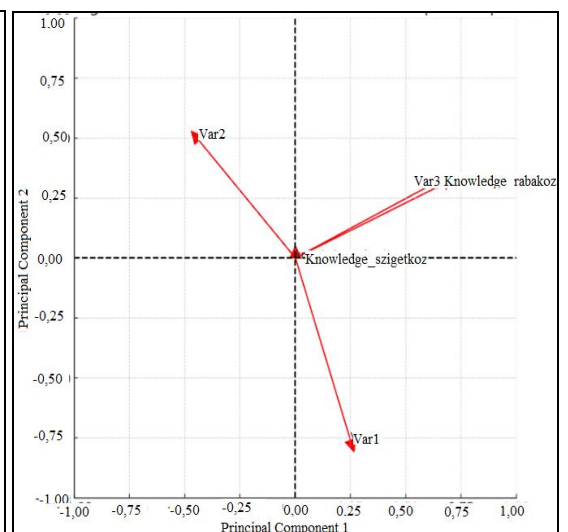Figure 5. PCA Analysis of survey data (Source: Survey data 2024)

Figure 6. Loadings Plot - Contribution of Variables to Principal Components (Source: Survey data 2024)

The first principal component accounts for approximately 27.4% of the variance in the data, while the second principal component explains an additional 25.3%. This amounts to a total explanation of more than 50% of the variance. The loading plot shown in Figure 6 illustrates the contributions of the variables to the first two principal components. The plot uses arrows to denote the contributions of the variables, where the direction and length of the arrows indicate how a given variable relates to the first two principal components. The starting point of the arrows is at the origin of the coordinate system (0,0), meaning that the contributions of the variables "originate" from this point. This plot allows us to examine how different variables contribute to shaping the main trends in the data. From the analysis of the variables' contributions, it is evident that the **knowledge_rabakoz** variable (knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions) makes a significant positive contribution to the first principal component, while **Var1**, **Var2**, and **Var3** contribute to both principal components in varying degrees and directions. Notably, **Var2** exhibits unique behavior by contributing negatively to the first principal component and positively to the second, suggesting that this variable captures different aspects of the observations in the data.

Given that **Var2** reflects the frequency with which respondents attend gastronomic events, its negative contribution to the first principal component indicates an inverse relationship with the trend encoded in the first principal component. That is, the first principal component mainly distinguishes those respondents who are less familiar with gastronomic traditions, so **Var2**'s negative contribution means that those who frequently attend gastronomic events are likely more familiar with these traditions, or vice versa. Positive contribution to the second principal component:

This suggests that the frequency of attending gastronomic events is positively related to the trends represented by the second principal component. This dimension signifies the active participation or interest of the sample participants in various gastronomic activities, which moves in the same direction as frequent visits.

The significant negative contribution of the **Var1** variable to the first principal component and its lesser contribution to the second principal component suggest that gastronomic interest tends in the opposite direction to the trend represented by the first principal component. Var1 represents the general interest in gastronomy, indicating that the first principal component may distinguish respondents with less interest in gastronomy. In other words, individuals with a higher interest negatively correlate with the first principal component, which encompasses those with less interest.

The contribution of the **Var1** variable also indicates that this dimension is not the primary factor determining the grouping of respondents in the data, as the deviation in the direction of the first principal component is relatively small compared to the second. This may suggest that while interest in gastronomy is an important variable, it is not the most defining factor in the behavior patterns hidden within the dataset. The result can also be interpreted to mean that a greater interest in culinary novelties may be associated with another, perhaps less obvious dimension captured by the second principal component. This could be a factor such as openness to new experiences or a broad search for cultural activities.

The contributions of the variables to the principal components, or loadings, help to understand which variables have the greatest impact on the main trends within the data. Positive loadings mean that an increase in a variable coincides with an increase in the principal component, while negative loadings mean that the variable's increase moves in the opposite direction to the value of the principal component. In this case, the positive contributions of the **knowledge_rabakoz** and **Var3** variables to the first principal component indicate that these variables are important in understanding the main trends in the data.

The **knowledge_rabakoz** variable indicates knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions. This variable contributes positively to both principal components, especially to the first. This suggests that respondents who are well-acquainted with Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions may form a distinct group within the sample, exhibiting specific preferences and behavior patterns. **Var3** represents respondents' food category preferences, which play a significant role in shaping the main trend found in the data. Since **Var3**'s substantial contribution is positively directed with the first principal component, it suggests that respondents whose preferred food category closely relates to the gastronomic traditions represented by the knowledge_rabakoz variable may form a specific group within this data space. The combined positive loadings values of **Var3** and **knowledge_rabakoz** indicate that respondents who appreciate local specialties or certain types of food likely have a better knowledge of local gastronomic traditions, and this knowledge or preference could be a significant identifying factor in their grouping. This specificity, which intertwines with food knowledge, demographics, and behavioral dimensions, and is based on cultural interest and knowledge of foods and drinks, can be most clearly identified among them.

Based on the results, it can be determined that gastronomic knowledge and preferences significantly influence the grouping of participants in the sample. Notably, knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions plays a prominent role in this context. In our research question – namely Q1: How do personal preferences and attitudes influence the frequency of participants' visits to gastronomic events? – it has been established that the gastronomic preferences and attitudes of the sample participants are complex and potentially behave according to different patterns when attending gastronomic events. This was indicated by our DTC procedure.

The DTC analysis highlighted that price is the primary decision factor, which, while not a surprising outcome given the pronounced price sensitivity of Hungarian society, precludes the clear validation of our first hypothesis that H1: The frequency of participants' visits to gastronomic events is primarily influenced by their knowledge of local gastronomic traditions. However, this hypothesis need not be discarded, as the knowledge_rabakoz variable contributes positively to both the first and second principal components, indicating that knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions plays an important role in event attendance, thus we consider our H1 hypothesis partially validated.

Our second hypothesis can be confirmed, which states that H2: Participants who frequently attend gastronomic events are likely to have a broader knowledge and appreciation of various gastronomic traditions and specialties. This confirmation is based on the combined positive contribution of the Var3 variable and knowledge_rabakoz, which show that a diverse interest in gastronomy correlates with the frequency of visits to gastronomic events.

CONCLUSION

Upon examining the results of our study in terms of their significance and interpretability, it is paramount to consider how they relate to previous studies and our working hypotheses. We found that in Szigetköz, place of residence and education, and in Rábaköz, age groups, occupation, and education have a significant impact on the knowledge of the region's gastronomic traditions. In Sopron and Lake Fertő, only occupation showed a significant difference in the knowledge of their gastronomic traditions. When contextualizing our results, it is crucial to highlight that gastronomic knowledge and preferences have a significant influence on people's frequency of visiting gastronomic events.

Particularly, the knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions stands out as a dominant factor, aligning with previous research that emphasizes the importance of a deep understanding and connection to local culture in gastronomic tourism.The DTC analysis conducted during our research illuminated that price is the most crucial decision factor, which is

not surprising in a price-sensitive society like Hungary. However, this result challenged our first hypothesis, which suggested that the knowledge of gastronomic traditions primarily influences the frequency of visits to gastronomic events. Nonetheless, the positive contribution of the knowledge_rabakoz variable to both the first and second principal components validates that knowledge of Rábaköz's gastronomic traditions indeed plays a significant role, thus partially confirming our H1 hypothesis. The PCA analysis provided further in-depth insight into how gastronomic interest and the frequency of attending gastronomic events are interconnected. Based on the findings, our second hypothesis was also confirmed, suggesting that frequent visitors likely possess broader knowledge of various gastronomic traditions and specialties. This implies that the preservation of cultural heritage and contributions to it hold a significant role in gastronomic tourism.

The implications of our findings extend beyond the confines of Győr-Moson-Sopron County, shedding light on the relationship between gastronomic tourism and local traditions. Future research should therefore expand to other regions and explore changes in gastronomic knowledge and preferences over time, as well as their socio-economic impacts. Additionally, further analysis of the organization and marketing strategies of gastronomic events, particularly with a focus on sustainability and community involvement, would be important.

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