Bipithalal Balakrishnan Nair / Satyajit Sinha / M.R. Dileep

What makes inauthenticity dangerous: An explorative study of ethnic cuisine and tourism

Abstract

This study inspects the dangers of being inauthentic while posing as apostles of authentic, ethnic service providers in tourism. The concept of authenticity was adopted to understand how the commodification of cultural features, especially food, of a multiethnic destination influences the realness of traditional cuisine. The study was conducted in Goa, India, also known as tourist Mecca. The research findings demonstrate that tourism acts as a dominant player in creating a transfigurative replica of tourist's expectations. This makes touristified versions of traditional foods, severely influencing the integrity of regional cuisines. These results are useful in understanding how inauthentic practices challenge the cultural identity of the destination.

Key words: authenticity; sustainability; postcolonial; cultural identity; Goa

1. Introduction

Authenticity, commodification and cultural identity crises are firmly related ideas and repeatedly deliberated upon in tourism studies for the past few decades. For Taylor (2001, p. 8) "authenticity has become the philosopher's stone for an industry that generally seeks to procure other peoples" realities. As a Western culture notion (Cole, 2007), these debates more often discourse as an etic, thus an under-researched and (un) intentional practice of tourism and its processes on the ethnic communities in the developing countries (Taylor, 2001; Cole, 2007; Esterik, 2018; Tan & Mura, 2019). In the current context, it is significant to understand the consequences of tourism to generate monetary benefits by following the tourists' quest for the authentic experience.

Cohen (2002) projects authenticity as a socially constructed, objective and negotiable concept that may or may not affect tourists since it varies according to their ideas and views (Cohen, 1988; Mantecón & Huete, 2007; Yeoman et al., 2007; Cheng, 2019). However, tourism-induced changes affect the culture of the destination in various milieus. This is very crucial for those 'unique' destinations that sell their extraordinariness as the main attraction (Cole, 2007). She emphasised that "if a remote destination develops, it modernises, and becomes more like the tourist's society. Less different and distinct, and no longer 'primitive', it loses its appeal" (Cole, 2007, p. 945). Staged authenticity deals within tourism by tugging tourists into more subtly designed back regions (Taylor, 2001).

This study looks into the modern tourism industry and the linked food and beverage sector as a platform for commercialising the indigenousness of a destination to identify the accompanying risk of being unauthentic. It occurs when a group of people or a service becomes the promoters of cultural identity through theme-based establishments, which are widely referred to as cultural ambassadors of

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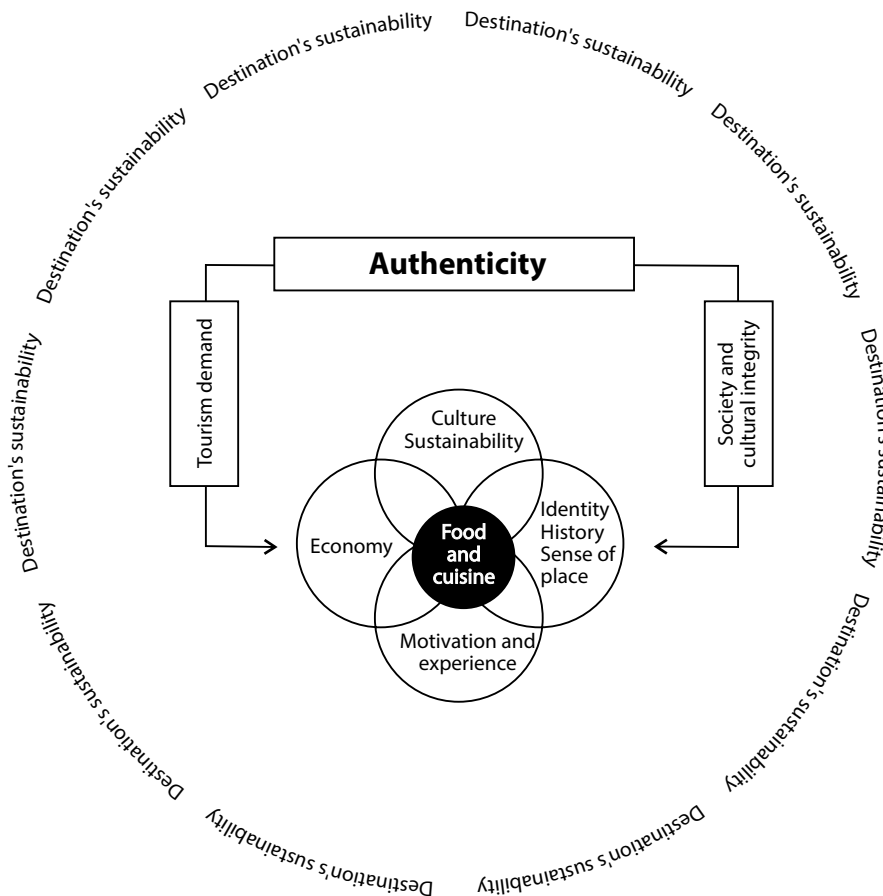
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the home country (Wood & Munoz, 2009). They brand ethnicity as a commodity in all levels of the tourism experience, such as attractions (arts, heritage and activities) and hospitality (food, culinary practices and service). They become tourist-oriented or touristified versions, which indeed affects the authentic culture of a place or its people. Authenticity is a current buzzword that sells very well in the tourism marketplace (Timothy & Ron, 2013). As a result, it is often exploited as a promotional gimmick, particularly in the area of heritage cuisines. This is one of the reasons for the mushrooming numbers of authentic, ethnic theme-based service providers all over the world.

In contrast to this tourism-induced change, the so-called ethnic apostles modified (or were forced to alter) traditional cultural practices for commercial gains. In either case, there will be an identity crisis, which affects the legitimacy and destination stability of a place (Timothy & Ron, 2013). Ever since the sociological stream of cultural commodification and otherness, issues of authenticity are more visible in developing countries. However, few studies are addressing how these ethnic/authentic establishments work in a popular tourist destination to cope with the increasing demand for destinations (Crang, 1997; Cole, 2007). The main aim of this paper is to understand tourism-induced authenticity issues in Goa, with a focus on theme-based food establishments. This paper argues that food is an integral element of culture and plays a substantial role in the projection for a destination's culture, identity and image in tourism. Therefore, unauthentic culinary practices have a potential impact on the socio-cultural well-being of a destination, which in turns affects its sustainability.

Figure 1
Conceptual framework of this study

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2. Literature review

2.1. History of commodification in and throughout tourism

Commodification in tourism has been debated in tourism literature for some decades. As far back the 1970s, Greenwood (1977) pointed out the potential of altering the nuances of local culture as part of tourism. He stated that "we already know from extensive experience that local culture . . . is altered and often destroyed by the treatment of it as a touristic attraction. It is made meaningless to the people who once believed in it" (Greenwood, 1977, p. 131). The term commoditisation was used to mention the way the elements of the local culture are converted to create tourist attractions. Commodification, from the essentialist/objectivist standpoint, can harm the originality of a place and replace it with surrogate staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973).

Greenwood (1977) further states that commoditisation can be undertaken without the consent of the participants and result in the exploitation of local people. Later, Cohen (1988) opined that commoditisation is often correlated with local culture and can happen when the features of the local culture are utilised as touristic services or commodities, as they come to be performed or produced for touristic consumption. Such features may include local costumes and customs, rituals and feasts, and folk and ethnic arts. While commoditisation alters the possible elements to a form that can be used for consumption by tourists, commodification is the process of converting the commodities into value to exchange on the tourism market. Both terms are used interchangeably in tourism literature. For Cohen (1988), commodification denotes a process in which objects and practices are modified into commodities to be transacted for-profit, based on market value.

Smith (2009) argues that it is common knowledge among the so-called 'post tourists' that the tourist experience is largely commodified, and the search for authenticity is usually futile. Tourism causes commodification, which turns toured objects and activities into commodities to be transacted as part of commercial operations (Long, 2018). There is an argument that inauthenticity often emerges from the commodification processes, a phenomenon with alienating and exact exchange value (Halewood & Hanna, 2001). As part of commodification, the producers may be alienated, the utility of those commodities may be concealed underneath the exchange value, and their uniqueness may be replaced by a uniform social status (Shepherd, 2002). Commodification and the consequent possibility of staged authenticity can reduce the cultural value and appeal to tourists (Cole, 2007). As part of commodification, culture becomes an element of the tour package and turns into an explicit and paid performance (Greenwood, 1977).

Recent studies are also specifying the impacts of commodification. As part of commodification and commoditisation, culture is packaged, priced and sold like other consumer products; and even the experiences are packaged as a saleable commodity that results in pseudo-events (Yolal, 2017). Commodification targeting tourists is proposed to exert a profound impact on the authenticity of objects found in cultures and lifestyles (Ye et al., 2018). Wang (1999) considered commodification from two perspectives. The first is that tourism is commoditised and consumed as the product of hedonic and pleasurable experiences; the second perspective reveals the consumption of tourism as symbolic consumption.

2.2. The significance of being authentic in tourism

Authenticity, in general, is attributed to something genuine, honest and sincere (Krystallis, 2017). It is often viewed from the opposite perspective of inauthenticity, as Cohen (1988) pointed out a few

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decades ago. According to him, the modern man is in search of authenticity since society is inauthentic mainly. This leads those who wish to overcome the inauthenticity to look elsewhere for the desired genuine life (Cohen, 1988). In tourism practices, it has diverse elements, including the search for the authentic, pristine, pure, untouched and traditional (Wang, 1999).

Furthermore, authenticity can be the quest for something "exceptional in its actuality and valuable" (Trilling, 2009, p. 93). The significance of authenticity in tourism is interpreted in numerous ways, and many have stated that authenticity can enhance the quality of heritage tourism (Cohen, 1988; Chhabra, 2010; Chiang & Cheng, 2018). Three types of authenticities are often used in the realm of tourism: objective authenticity, constructive authenticity and existential authenticity (Zhu, 2012). Objective authenticity focuses primarily on the genuineness of objects, artefacts and structures (Wang, 1999), as in the case of Museum artefacts. Authenticity may be certified, measured, evaluated, approved, and the like. As per constructive authenticity, tourists search for symbolic authenticity instead of objective authenticity (Culler, 1981). Existential authenticity considers personal aspects of tourists, such as their feelings and perceptions, to analyse their experience (self-searching approach).

As authenticity increases insignificance, the role and influence that authentic foods play in the attractiveness of destinations are also growing. Travel for cuisine, often called Culinary Tourism, has turned out to be a trend in many countries the world over (Williams et al., 2018). Authenticity has utmost significance in culinary tourism. As it relates to food tourism, authenticity is evaluated in terms of the genuineness of the local food in each location and how well the menu preserves the local culture (Zhang et al., 2019). It has been pointed out that the consumers' quest for authenticity can be seen in the search for foods perceived to be traditional and local (Sims, 2009). As local food and cuisine with authenticity have been essential factors of the tourist encounter, experiencing them is often treated as one of the 'best things to do' in many destinations (Anton et al., 2019). A study by Gupta and Sajnani (2019) on the influence of street food authenticity and the degree to which its variations impact the tourists' destination experience reveals the significance of local food authenticity in tourism destinations and overall tourist satisfaction. The findings make the point that tourists are less influenced by cultural disparity when they can adapt to diverse cultures. That authenticity has a substantial effect on their overall destination experience.

Zhang et al. (2019) distinguish three categories of authentic food seekers in the parlance of tourism. One group consists of travellers who seek authentic and local food as well as producers, servers, and domestic settings and want to experience an objective, constructive, and existential authenticity. For them, experiencing food from local restaurants that are operated and visited by people from the local community provides a unique touristic experience. Another category consists of tourists who prefer food that is a blend of familiar and unfamiliar cultural attributes, a sort of 'staged authenticity' that offers local food varieties, everyday services, and a casual environment. The third category seeks only supportive food of local flavour, as in the case of all-inclusive resorts. While discussing existential authenticity, Chhabra (2019) clarifies that tourism, akin to all human activities, is a place-based endeavour. Place, which is part of the tourist experience, is a complex of physical, social, cultural and emotional qualities. Food and gastronomy become part of that complex set, and they facilitate the significance of authenticity in gastronomy/culinary tourism.

2.3. The cultural dimensions of food: The importance of being authentic

Regional culture has extreme significance in the context of utilising local food culture as a significant attraction (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Horng & Tsai, 2012; Walter, 2016). Generally, food, culture and

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the identity of places do share an intricate relationship among one another. Food can also be used by the destination to represent "cultural experience, status, cultural identity, and communicating" (Frochot, 2003, p. 82). Food and culture do possess a positive correlation, mainly since gastronomy acts as an essential vehicle for approaching popular culture (Tricárico et al., 2019).

The cuisine has significance as a cultural or national identity as well (Du Rand et al., 2016). An aspect of this significance is that food can add extra value to the image of the destination (Hall, 2006). This is crucial when the destination can offer traditional and local cuisine with cultural significance. Authentic and exciting food has been a key attraction for visitors (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010), and destinations are increasingly using food-related attractiveness to remain competitive in the international tourism sector. Gastronomy itself is being treated as a tourism product in some instances when destinations have a good mix of food varieties to offer. All these factors together provide an ideal tourism product for the consumption of gastronomy tourists (Fields, 2007; Ab Karim & Chi, 2010).

The gastronomic identity comes from a group of cultural factors, including historical events, religion, ethnic diversity, regional capabilities, traditions, beliefs and values. The gastronomic identity is utilised by many destinations to create a unique and memorable experience for travellers (Harrington, 2005). Everett and Aitchison (2008) discovered that food and food-related industries could be valuable in the formation of regional identities; that food tourism can strengthen identity and be an alternative means of local and regional development; and that food tourism can be a means of enhancing and extending tourist spending without compromising the region's environmental, social or cultural fabric.

Authentic food can add to the uniqueness and attractiveness of destinations (Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007) and can contribute to a destination's image (Frost, 2006; Okumus et al., 2007; Fusté-Forné, 2019). Perceived authenticity of the cuisine, the ambience and interior of a restaurant, evidence of traditional cultural practices in food preparation, cooking and consumption, the scope of cross-cultural interaction, and the ethnicity and perceived localness of hosts are all key elements for the presentation of local culture in and through tourism (Jang et al., 2012; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Chhabra, et al., 2013). These components of authenticity are cited by Walter (2016) in a study on culinary tourism accomplished through living history. The site of the study presents a complex and effective staging of authenticity and tourism, both spatially and temporally. Varied spatial dimensions of authenticity are presented on numerous stage sets — the market, the kitchen rooms and the dining room — for a presentation of culinary tourism.

Similarly, Horng and Tsai (2012) also pointed out the significance of the elements of gastro-authenticity. They stated that providing the unique flavour of local cuisines is an essential element of tourism, and the uniqueness of the destination's cuisine has become a significant factor in making a destination popular and attractive. The authenticity of the food and the culinary environment can be prime attributes in the perceptions of authenticity seekers (Sims, 2009; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017; Bertan, 2020). The availability of authentic foodservice products elevates its value in the eyes of the consumer (Keiningham et al., 2019). Sims (2009, p. 334) observes that "local products can appeal to tourists on several levels, from the simple demand for typical products that can be purchased and consumed as a symbol of place, through to the complex and deep-seated quest for a more authentic sense of self". It is also important to note that the perceived quality of culinary experiences in a destination may strongly influence a repeat visit to the same destination (Povey, 2011; Jang et al., 2012; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Sari & Nazli, 2019). Robinson and Cloffird (2012) point out that a re-visitation intention is positively correlated with the satisfaction of the perceived authenticity of the foodservice.

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Table 1
Theoretical review: Food, tourism and destination

Food, tourism and destination concepts	Theoretical review
As a motivation	• Food can act as a primary trip motivator (Quan & Wang, 2004). • Great food and drink experiences do significantly contribute to travel motivation and behaviour and influence the tourist experience in a destination (Wang, 2015; Hall, 2019). • Culinary products are valued not only as part of the group of factors that influence initial travel decision making but also as a vital and valuable factor for returning to a location (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2010). • Gastronomy is a motivating factor for many in visiting destinations (Sedmak & Mihalic, 2008; Hsu et al., 2009).
Economic contribution	• Increased tourist expenditure on 'local food' can lead to an increased multiplier effect in the local economy (Torres, 2002; Sims, 2009). • Green and Dougherty (2008) stated that culinary tourism is an innovative approach in promoting economic development, developing local food systems, and celebrating regional culture.
Sustainability	• Handszuh (2000) thinks that local cuisine is a valuable tourism resource, which can ensure value addition and can enhance sustainable tourism progress. • Concerning travellers, dining in a restaurant is often pronounced as the most frequent leisure activity and the second-largest daily expenditure while in the travel process (Hall et al., 2003). • Providing local food can help reduce the environmental consequences of transporting food across the globe to reduce carbon footprint in a positive way (Mitchell & Hall, 2003). • Local food samples and varieties become critical elements of a visitor's experience (Kim et al., 2009; Kivela & Crotts, 2009; Thompson & Prideaux, 2009; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017).

3. Research design

3.1. Information source and data collection

This study evaluated how tourism impacts the authenticity of traditional Goan Cuisine and its identity. Therefore, this research focused on checking the websites of restaurants and other dining services tagged or marketed as 'authentic' or 'ethnic' Cuisine (Tsai & Lu, 2012). The data collection process consisted of three main stages (see Figure 2). Purposive sampling was used in this study. Purposive sampling is helpful to identify information-rich, context-specific samples relevant to the study (Patton, 2002; Saunders et al., 2018; Jang & Eves, 2019). Compared to other random and non-random sampling techniques, purposive sampling was found to be more fit for the research questions of this study to understand the inauthentic culinary practices in Goa induced by tourism, which have a potential impact upon the cultural identity. The applied purposive sampling criteria were aimed to select the most context-specific data sources (Etikan et al., 2016).

In the first stage (screening), restaurants or dining services were identified through TripAdvisor and Google, and those tagged with 'ethnic', 'traditional', 'authentic' and 'Goan' foods were screened in. In the second stage (sampling), 35 ethnic food providers in Goa were screened in, and 13 of them were purposively selected by analysing factors including quality, quantity (the number of traditional foods offered), customer reviews, conventionalism, cultural/heritage ambience, and specialisations. The third stage (confirming) confirmed the choices by observation and was accomplished by three pilot visits to Goa in August 2019.

Three of the restaurants were found to be not functioning at the time of data collection and omitted from the study. Thus, the final ten providers were selected, and in-depth interviews were conducted from October to December 2019. Each interaction lasted between 90–120 minutes. The meetings were planned as unstructured to "allow respondents to let them express in their ways and pace, with the minimal hold on respondents" responses (Jamshed, 2014, p. 87). However, the topics of concerns oscillated around authenticity, ethnicity and traditional Goan Cuisine and followed by the interview guide.
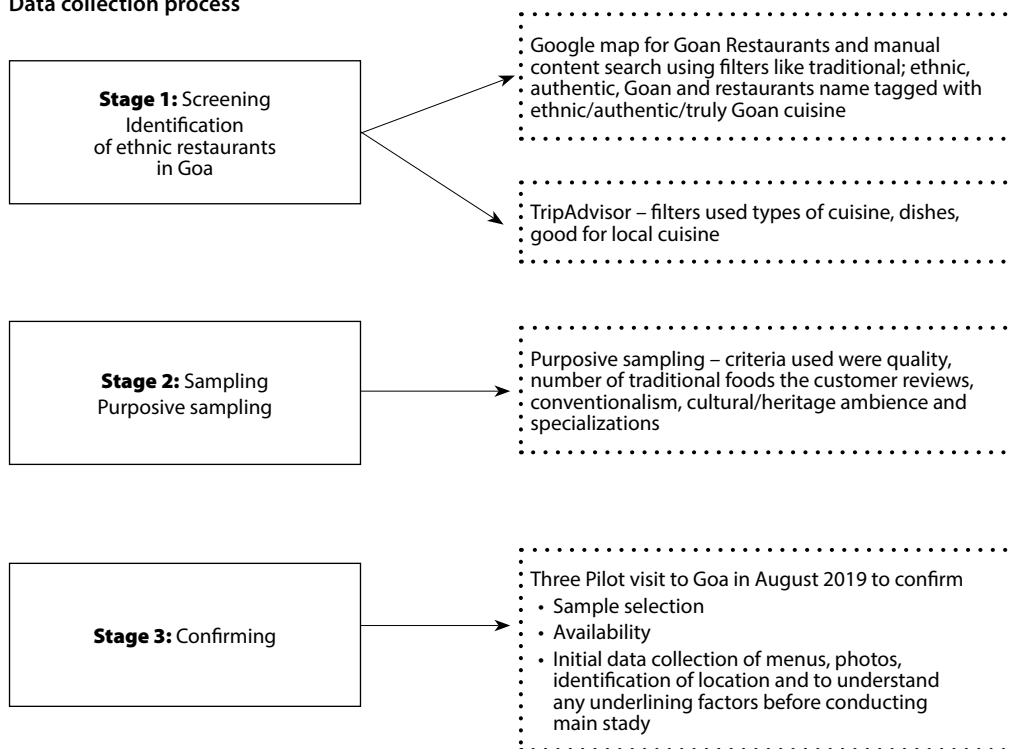
Figure 2
Data collection process

Table 2
List of respondents

Sn	Designation of respondents	Gender	Code
1	Restaurant manager	Male	R1
2	Sales and marketing manager	Male	R2
3	Restaurant manager	Female	R3
4	Restaurant owner	Female	R4
5	Restaurant manager	Male	R5
6	Restaurant owner	Male	R6
7	Chef	Male	R7
8	Chef	Male	R8
9	F&B service	Female	R9
10	Cook	Male	R10

3.2. Study region

Goa, one of the most popular tourist destinations on the Indian continent, is also known as a tourist Mecca. It is well known for long sandy beaches; multi-cultural, postcolonial heritage; and Goan Cuisine. "The Portuguese colonised Goa for 450 years, contributing to a distinctive combination of mixed religions, architecture, social structure and gastronomy" (Ransley, 2019, p. 5). Goan life and culture are amalgamated with such regional ethnic groups as the Saraswat (Konkani). This fusion can also be seen in its cuisine. Goa is famous for seafood, and Goan Cuisine is celebrated the world over and listed in acclaimed cookbooks like Clifford Wright's, *Some Like It Hot: Spicy Favorites from the World's Hot Zones.*

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Tourism produces both a positive and negative impact on Goa. Recent studies (Wilson, 1997; Falleiro, 2015; Ransley, 2019) listed the critical socio-cultural, tourism- induced issues in the region. Their list includes the "commercialisation of traditions; dilution of cultures; development of artificial culture; loss of identity; discontentment and uneasiness; forced changes and adjustments; inappropriate imitation of foreign lifestyles; and changes in food and local cuisines" (Falleiro, 2015, p. 86). These issues are also getting considerable public attention and leading to anti-tourism campaigns. Journalist Anjali Rao (Slow Food, 2017, p. 1) wrote the following:

> The growth of the tourism and hospitality industry has taken a heavy toll on Goan Cuisine, which is becoming endangered, these days it is difficult to find an authentic Goan restaurant, which is on the verge of closing as they are unable to face the competition of this onslaught of fast-food culture.

At the same time, there are several hotel and restaurant chains tagged with authentic or ethnic cuisine that stand out from the crowd. As part of the larger project, this study primarily focuses on Goan Cuisine and its authenticity issues to understand the level of crisis.

3.3. Data analysis

The data collected through in-depth interviews were qualitatively analysed through Leximancer software. Leximancer is content analysis software, which extracts and represents the main concepts contained within the text as well as how they are related. It differs from the other popular software like Vivo, ATLAS.ti and CATPAC since it does not employ word occurrence or coding of terminologies and phrases. This software is efficient in extracting the central concepts and ideas (Tseng et al., 2015), especially the detailed qualitative descriptions. Leximancer thus measures the presence of repeated concepts and the ways these concepts are semantically interrelated. Leximancer software is comparatively brand new to the tourism studies; this software found to be widely adopted in qualitative researches such as destination image analysis (Tseng et al., 2015; Qi & Chen, 2019); tourist experience and motivation (Li & Ryan, 2014; Wu et al., 2014) destination's food identity (Brochado,2019); and authenticity (Trinh et al., 2014; Nichele, 2019)

Figure 3
Codes used, and themes found in Leximancer analysis
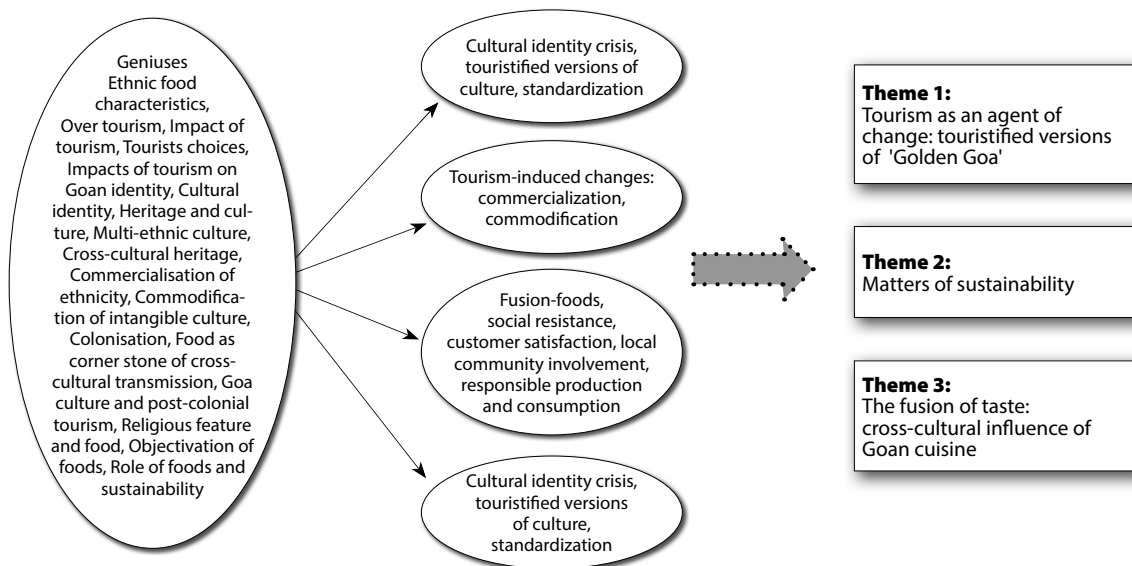
4. Findings and discussion

According to Given (2015, p. 103), "qualitative researchers need to balance three voices in their writing about the research result: the data (participant's voice); the interpretation (researcher's voice); and the published literature (disciplinary voice)". At that juncture, this study merges findings and discussion sections (Blaer et al., 2020; Egger et al., 2020; Faisal et al., 2020) to represent and balance these three prominent voices.

As Beer (2008, p. 153) opined, "consumers are increasingly demanding more of their food in terms of originality and authenticity, whatever authenticity means, which can create problems". Food on holidays can be described in several ways since it is correlated to the reasons for the visit, typologies of tourists such as their culture, personal interest, and intention. However, it is significant to note that increased tourism demands create enormous pressure on the local hospitality industry to cope with tourists' requirements.

4.1. Tourism as an agent of change: Touristified versions of 'Golden Goa'

The positive and negative impacts of tourism are a widely discussed topic, mainly in terms of environmental, economic and socio-cultural perspectives. Currently, more studies are focused on specific research areas like heritage, food and the arts. The modification of ethnic foods suitable to tourists' taste and demand seems to be influencing the regional identity. This study also has shown how tourism affects the Goan Cuisine through commercialisation. Most respondents commented that tourism is an agent of change to authentic Goan Cuisine, and they have to adjust the taste according to the demand. As per respondents,

Yes, it is happening. Over tourism is harming environmental factors and impacting the traditional way of living which in due course deviating the authentic identity. See historically, and food has always been influenced by one another (R3).

Nowadays when you go to many restaurants, and they will say, here Goan food is served, and they will do few Goan dishes such as Cafreal, Vindaloo and along with it, they will serve Chinese and other cuisines because they want to cater more customers to make more profit (R4).

As one of the most central features of the tourism experience, "food authenticity could be regarded as the genuineness of local food which is specific to a place and a kind of description of local culture" (Zhang et al., 2019, p. 3). In this sense, touristified versions of Goan cuisines (for whatever reason) are affecting the ethnic cuisine.

I think there is an identity crisis in ethnic Goan Cuisine, and it is going towards like everyone is trying to innovate, like a trend. Somewhere in this process, the food is losing its identity. It's watering down, for an example of a tourist ask more spice to my dish in that case that particular recipe is not supposed to be that, you are already changing it according to the tourists liking, but it is not supposed to be eaten like that. In this way, if you are replacing a small proportion of the ingredient, it will lose its authenticity and taste, and by the time it will not be a Goan dish but something else. (R7)

Issues of staged authenticity are not uncommon in modern tourism, especially in food tourism. According to Hayley (2019, p.1), "staged authenticity is primarily a cultural practice, event or activity that is *staged* for the tourists. It could be that this is an outdated practice or that it has been modified for tourism". In this case, staged authentic practices are one of the leading concerns that are shaping the real Goan taste. This has been mainly noticed in the case of 'ethnic restaurants' abroad (Tsai & Lu, 2012). However, in the case of Goa, everything seems to be 'modified' or 'altered' by or for tourism.

If you go to Calangute, Baga and the entire tourist places, there are many places selling fish curry- rice. Only the local would know how actual Goan fish curry-rice is an authentic one, but they trick accordingly, and you know people don't know what Goan fish-curry-rice is and will eat and it will be like ok this is it, or it is probably like this only. (R2)

This modification can be linked to the theoretical complexities of authenticity. As Beer (2008, p. 152) commented, "consumers are increasingly demanding more of their food in terms of originality and authenticity, whatever authenticity means, which can create problems". However, most tourists are not sure what is authentic. This may be due to the subjectivity of the concept. It is not uncommon in tourism to project something else as genuine, which lies somewhere in the middle of staged authenticity and unauthenticity, due to demand or for marketing purposes. Here the term staged authenticity is one used by tourism and cultural resource management researchers to define a way that traditional cultures are presented (i.e. staged) to outsiders.

There are many examples of 'touristification' of local cuisine restaurants altering their ingredients, preparations, dining styles, and presentations.

We have to serve the dish as it is being served in a Goan house and the house, we put rice than put the curry on top of it and the rest of the fish and vegetables are served in the side of the plate. But, if you go to many other outlets, it may not be the same, they changed everything for the tourists, and eventually, you can have the only fusion of foods, not Goan. (R10)

4.2. The fusion of taste: Cross–cultural influence of Goan Cuisine

In this exploratory study, we looked at Goan gastronomy and tourism through a "cultural lens" (Boniface, 2003, p. 1), which indeed opened the cross-cultural definitions of Goan Cuisine—the celebration of hybridisation of ethnic identity. This is often linked to a colonised way of food tourism , as respondents are still under the nostalgia of colonisation (Nair, 2017). Food and its mundane nature of being a cornerstone in the cross-cultural transmission are vital to consider in the context of tourism and authenticity. The cross-cultural, multiethnic definitions of Goan foods are well-narrated in the interviews.

There are two types of Goan Cuisine one is 'SARASWAT' which is more of Hindu origin came from the coastal belt, villages and old Saraswat Brahmin families and the other one is "Portuguese Origin". It is the Saraswat Cuisine followed by the Portuguese Cuisine arrived here in the early 16th century with the arrival of Portugal's in Goa. There are many Goan Restaurants, but there few places where you would get authentic Goan dishes. Yes! There are items like Cafreal, Vindaloo and Balchao…these items originate from the Portuguese which is now an integral part of Goan Cuisine. (R 1)

According to Long (2018, p. 1), ethnic foods are defined "partly by how they differ from the foods of the dominant culture, and their place within that culture reflects a history of being other". In this way, the cross-cultural, postcolonial characteristics of Goan foods are prominent in many responses. Some respondents are trying to explain them with Goa's historical background; and, as it slightly differs from the mainstream cultures, they have shown cultural politics while describing the 'real Goan taste'. Indeed, it is a common practice in tourism. This study also has shown how "some individual members of ethnicity might want to highlight those differences, while others choose to downplay them and emphasise similarities" (Long, 2018, p. 2).

See, in Hindu Saraswat form of cuisine, they use more of coconut and Kokom and avoid much of Tamarind (it will be used pinch basis). There are few items like Goan Prawn Curry – there two versions one is

Saraswat version where the curry is Yellowish colour and the Christian (Portuguese) …Soups like 'Caldo Verde' and 'Canja De Galinha' these are of Portuguese origin; locals do not have any kind of soups they have Kokam sharbat or Sol Kadi. Take the example of "Dried Shrimp Kismoor" there are two versions of preparing Kismoor. One is Christian, and the other one is Saraswat version(R8).

Moreover, broader descriptions of gastronomic authenticity in the context of tourism and the characteristics of foodstuffs and how they are used and offered in their traditional style is also significant (Chhabra et al., 2003). Therefore, consuming ethnic food made by local people, according to indigenous culinary practices and served or consumed in its traditional way in regional settings, is an authentic experience (Kim et al., 2009). Interestingly, many conventional utensils are placed inside the dining area to create the ambience of ethnicity (see Figure 4). However, in terms of practice, traditional appliances are not viable for commercial use.

Here the preparation is done in utensils like any other commercial restaurants. Only the Sandras and all those things are done in a cafra made up of copper; it is a vessel similar to Idli making vessels. Traditional slices of bread come from Goan bakery located very near to us (R 10).

Yah we use…there are few items…..especially in Xacuti which is prepared in mud pot but to make it commercially, we use silver utensils (R3).

Although many definitions for authenticity lie within the sociology of tourism, we draw upon the observations of Smith and Xiao (2008) by arguing that if a food provider markets themselves as authentic, they should follow the cultural practices and parameters of the local cuisine as this allows tourists to learn about local culture. According to Özdemir & Seyitoğlu (2017, p. 4), "authenticity seekers have a strong tendency to experience authenticity in their travels, and the first context provides a suitable environment for them". This study has shown the objectification of traditional culinary food to create an ambience of indigenousness as part of the tourist gaze. This may not apply to those establishments that are multi-cuisine; but for those *ethnic, authentic*, Golden Goan restaurants, this may be vital. Most of the participants designated their establishments as ethnic, but not authentic. One of the basic sustainability concepts of Goan tourism and authenticity is practising the regional culture. Furthermore, culinary traditions are an integral element of the socio-cultural gaze of a destination.

4.3. Matters of sustainability

This study provides valuable insights into the connection between authenticity, quality and sustainability. As one of the predominant attractions, local foods play an imperative role in destination development and promotion. Drawing from Zhang et al., (2019, p. 1) "the sustainability of rural development, both economic and environmental, has been increasingly linking to local food, which plays an indispensable role by preserving traditional culture, attracting tourists, and supporting the regional economy". This development is mainly obtained by creating job opportunities, especially for the regional hospitality sector. This study argues that the role of local cooks plays a crucial part in delivering authentic food through traditional culinary practices. However, in the case of Goa, many restaurants employ foreign chefs, which affects sustainability in terms of the socio-economic development of destinations. As per respondent,

No… The chef who prepares Punjabi dishes also makes Goan Food. In case for Goan Restaurants were Goan locals dine, they are very particular about Goan Recipes, and you cannot cheat them. We cannot cook up anything and serve them. In restaurants were limited Goan Items are served like in case of ours, we manage it with North Indian Specialist cooks (R4).

These comments are crucial in this context. They know they are cheating tourists, who are ignorant of Goan Cuisine as the locals want dishes in a real authentic form (R8). This opens up questions of loyalty, as illustrated by the following:

First of all, the tourists do not even know what they are eating, but when they experience it, it is something very new. Nevertheless, in the case of locals, it has to be very particular because they know what an authentic Goan recipe tastes like. To conclude the answer, we keep the recipe for each market same and intact (R1).

They (tourist) have minimal knowledge of Goan Food, but they know two or three popular Goan Dishes like Xacuti, Cafreal, etc. (R3).

See what happens is as tourists you would go to a shack for a prawn curry or Xacuti. Now the important here is who is cooking for you. Same way, certain restaurants in Goa serve you the real authentic food and when I say 'authentic' which is prepared the way it has to be. I have been to many restaurants for Vindaloo or a Balchao . . . I have always found it sweeter. Yeah. Balchao is supposed to be a pickle, and today it becomes the key ingredient in all the menus in Goa. Balchao is a pickle made with red chilli paste soaked in vinegar for a week for its flavour/texture, and then to that, you add meat or whatever you want, it takes time to prepare. Today, everything becomes instant and made in minutes due to high demand (R8).

A key finding in this regard is that even those hoteliers and restaurant managers generally show the least concern about 'authenticity and sustainability'. This suggests that improving knowledge among them is a crucial challenge to sustainability; quality and authenticity depend on the expertise and the level of participation of local communities. Quality characteristics of ethnic foods can be enhanced by deploying local people who can prepare and deliver regional cuisines. Similarly, this participation will increase the sustainable tourism development of Goa by providing employment opportunities and minimising economic leakage.

Figure 4
Traditional; cooking utensils, now displayed as showpieces

Source: Author's photography.

5. Conclusion

This study has discussed tourism-induced authenticity issues of ethnic Goan Cuisine. The research has shown how tourism's supply and demand and commodification influence the cultural politics of

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a place. This, in turn, highlights power equilibrium through the representation of standard customs and practices, for instance, highlighting the Saraswat and Catholic religious traditions as part of authentic Goan Cuisine. This notion explores "food as a window on the political with the premise that food practices are implicated in a complex field of relationships, expectations, and choices that are contested, negotiated, and often unequal" (Watson & Caldwell, 2005, p. 1). However, the voices of marginalised ethnic communities such as the Goan Muslim are not in the gastronomic tourism map of Goa. Participants interviewed consider the tourism system that shapes current dining practices to be under the power of authorities who do not listen to the voices of those working in the field of gastronomy. As a result, the commercialisation of *authentic ethnic establishments* can successfully sell 'original' Goan foods by neglecting *others*.

This explorative study opens the issues of authenticity and the dangers behind unauthentic while marketing 'ethnicity' through tourism. Similarly, we argue that the tendency to present a commercialised replica of an authentic dish that meets the expectations of tourists by changing the traditional way of preparation or the combination of ingredients. This formation of touristified versions and blending of Goan Cuisine attracts an ample number of criticisms. However, this practice of staged authenticity is not uncommon in tourism.

Unlike physical tourist attractions, "food itself is complex, intertwined with all aspects of life, and carries multiple meanings" (Long, 2018, p. 23). Like other intangible charms, local cuisines are shaped by commodification to cope with market pressure. At this juncture, we point out the dangers behind the inauthentic practices of sidelining traditional cooking practices through the framework of sustainability. This study identified several issues that cause a severe impact on the local community. The most important relate to the socio-economic systems of Goa. Touristified versions of cuisines often weaken the employment prospects of residents, who are the experts in making traditional foods. We identified many areas that are overpopulated by foreign cooks, who they are diligently creating their versions of Goan cuisines; furthermore, conventional cooking utensils are now positioned as objects for tourist gaze. Moreover, the preparation, presentation, and combination of ingredients are drastically affected by commercialisation, which undeniably impacts how 'authentic ethnic' restaurants in the region are tagged (Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017).

This paper widens current knowledge by furthering the understanding of authenticity issues in local communities, which is an under-researched area (Muhammad et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). This study values the ethnic cuisine and recognises the food as a cultural icon, where trans-local and transregional societal representativeness merges and are reshaped. Therefore, in a postcolonial, multi-cultural space, food is a political element that showcases the dominant power which overrides and authorises the system. This study delivers some practical insights into the tourism industry by emphasising how imperative it is for tourism to monitor the over-commodification of a place and culture to ensure sustainable tourism development by preserving attractions and empowering local communities. For example, the unemployment of local cooks and low demand for traditional ingredients will affect the local economy. As opined by Zhang et al. (2019, p. 3437), "the sustainability of rural development, both economic and environmental, has been increasingly linking to local food, which plays an indispensable role by preserving traditional culture, attracting tourists, and supporting the regional economy".

Although this study has several theoretical and managerial implications for food authenticity and tourism, it has limitations that can be addressed in future research. Firstly, the current study identified the possible dangers of being unauthentic and its impacts on the local community, which is an area where the future research must be concentrated on as the part of 'responsible production and consumption'.

Secondly, this study did not examine the famous shacks in Goa. Accordingly, this can be considered for future studies to understand the role of popular street food establishments to alter traditional cuisine as part of staged authenticity or over commodification. Finally, the researchers collected data individually from each participant; however, it is more prolific to include focus group discussion to get a holistic, contextual understanding.

Future research can explore the possible dangers of being inauthentic in tourism aspects (ethnic Goan Cuisine as an example) and its impacts on the local community. This is an issue where more research needed to develop further the links between inclusive tourism and responsible production and c ntic Goan F&B providers. This inclusion into future studies will promote understanding of the role of popular street food establishments in altering traditional cuisines as part of staged authenticity or over commodification.

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