"We are only scratching the surface" – A resource-based and dynamic capabilities approach in the context of culinary tourism development

ABSTRACT

This study examines the potential for developing culinary tourism (CT) from the perspective of restaurant operators in Lima, Peru, and develops a framework of CT based on the resource-based view of the firm and the dynamic capabilities paradigm. Fourteen restaurateurs and managers were interviewed, including two internationally renowned food and beverage entrepreneurs. The findings reveal that Peru's culinary potential is identified in various specific forms, including through the growing interest for local gastronomy among international visitors, the development of culinary neighborhoods, the growing trend of pairing of foods and local beverages, and experimenting with less known local foods and dishes. Nonetheless, to maximize CT's potential, improved organization within the industry, more knowledge dissemination of Peruvian cuisine domestically and internationally, and promoting other traditional products/dishes to maintain the momentum are vital. The usefulness of the proposed framework is presented, the implications of the findings discussed, and future research streams proposed.

Keywords: Resource-based view, dynamic capabilities, culinary tourism, development, restaurant operators, Peru.

Introduction

In the last decades, growing interest in food or culinary tourism (CT) research has emerged (e.g., Hall et al., 2003; Horng & Tsai, 2012; Long, 2010; Spilková & Fialová, 2013). Echoing this increase of academic literature, authors have proposed various definitions of CT. One of them (Long, 2004) asserts that CT represents an intentional exploratory involvement "in the foodways of an other" (p. 21), and includes preparation, presentation and consumption of food items, meal systems, cuisine, and eating styles that do not belong to one's culinary system. Based on this definition, CT also can be understood as a negotiation of the familiar and exotic, comprising such domains as class, age, ethnicity, region, or the nationality of a particular food (Long, 2013). Furthermore, CT includes practices and activities related to food consumption (Long, 2013).

In addition, Smith and Xiao (2008) refer to CT as a tourism experience, in which travellers appreciate, consume, or learn about "branded local culinary sources" (p. 289). These authors also posit that CT is based on reflective and intentional encounters "with any culture, including one's own through culinary resources" (p. 289). According to Nelson (2016), CT depicts travel motivated by travellers' interest in experiencing and learning about foods of a particular place. For some travellers, CT provides a primary motivation to visit a destination, and for many, the enjoyment of foods of a specific destination is basically part of visitors' expectations (Nelson, 2016). Nonetheless, whereas CT involves travel, and although culinary interest exists and culinary experiences take place, these elements may not be the primary motivation for the travel (Smith & Xiao, 2008).

Long (2013) illustrates that CT focuses on food as a destination and an attraction. Despite being a key component of hospitality services, only by the late 1990s was food highlighted by the tourism sector. CT nowadays includes various products and formats, such as restaurants, food guides, cooking classes, or culinary trails (Long, 2013). The bulk of CT emphasizes the experiential aspects of tasting or dining; CT also represents educational initiatives that channel curiosity about foods, and help learn about cultures of certain cuisines, or about the individuals involved in preparation of production (Long, 2013).

Importantly, CT comprises multiple issues, many of which are specific to foods, and others that are generally part of tourism (Long, 2013). Moreover, CT is an important element in globalization, and provides opportunities for intercultural understanding and communication (Long, 2013). Therefore, practitioners and scholars need to recognize the potential and complexity of CT (Long, 2013).

Despite copious articles and books written on CT, several gaps in knowledge and understanding exist. First, there is a predominant interest in the external environment, for instance, emphasizing consumers' experience and behaviour, and "no study" (Horng & Tsai, 2012, p. 797) has paid attention to unique capabilities and internal resources. Second, CT research and literature are inadequate (Beer, Ottenbacher, & Harrington, 2012), including limited knowledge of successful implementation and development of CT strategies (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2013). Third, limited research is also obvious concerning "the attitude of restaurants toward using and marketing local food as a way of promoting local identity and reinforcing the competitiveness of a destination" (Presenza & Del Chiappa 2013 p. 182).

Aligned with previous research (Long, 2013), the present study is concerned with the potential and the development of CT. Moreover, the first key objective of this study is to understand the potential of CT in the case of Lima, Peru, where gastronomy is an emerging, international phenomenon (Nelson, 2016) and, in particular, its signature dish, Ceviche. In agreement with Presenza and Del Chiappa's (2013) argument, the study examines the perspectives of restaurant operators in Peru's capital and largest city, Lima. The following overarching research question will be investigated:
1) How significant is the potential for developing CT?

This question is then further examined through the following two:

2a) How is Peru's CT potential illustrated?
2b) How could the further development of CT be achieved?

These questions seek to understand and delve deeper in CT within the context of Peru and its rising culinary focus. Despite the growing prominence of Peru's cuisine, particularly Ceviche, there is a dearth of knowledge concerning issues associated with its culinary potential. Indeed, only one recent study (Duarte Alonso, Kok, & O'Brien, 2017) sought to shed light on the sustainability of Peru's culinary tourism. Furthermore, international academic research conducted on Latin American CT is still under development. Thus, a second key aim of this study is to contribute to the CT literature of this region. By addressing the above questions, valuable insights will be gathered, with implications for various CT stakeholders such as restaurateurs, the hospitality industry, international tourism agencies, and the academic community in the form of increased knowledge and awareness. A third aim of this research is to develop a theoretical framework, which facilitates understanding of the potential and alternatives of creating a CT product in a developing CT destination.

Literature Review

Several authors identify the important role of CT, as a pillar of economic and regional development, or in sustaining rural and destination identity. For example, for Montanari and Staniscia (2009), food does not only entail nourishment; indeed, depending on specific production approaches, food can become a component of regional development, a cultural point of reference, as well as a tourist resource. Furthermore, Green and Dougherty (2008) note that CT provides opportunities for communities to incorporate local food systems and tourism, and stimulate economic development while reinforcing a region's cultural heritage, CT also address and creates demand for quality dining and food experiences.

Despite CT's role in stimulating various forms of development, and increasing touristic options, the significance of already well-established culinary destinations highlight the competitive nature of culinary experiences while drawing a captive audience. Ab Karim and Chi (2010), for instance, identified the significant potential of Italy as a culinary destination, and its strong positive food image. Ab Karim and Chi's (2010) findings suggest the benefits of a positive culinary image and at the same time the challenges in developing such image, in terms of promotion, information dissemination, education, and eventual worldwide acceptance and reputation among consumers.

A study based on data from nine countries (Stone, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018) reveals that food activities appear to have an impact on travellers' level of satisfaction, on their intention to return and that of recommend the (food) destination. Along these lines, Stone et al. (2018) emphasise the fundamental associations between culinary experiences and visitors' memory, which may result in future purchases due to the influence of culinary recollections on destination image. Previously, Stone et al.'s (2017) research among 1,000 respondents from four different nations revealed five key elements contributing to memorable culinary tourism experiences. Indeed, the authenticity and novelty of touristic elements, the occasion, the letting/location, the food and drink consumed, and companionship appeared to be adequate to create memorable experiences (Stone et al., 2017).

Also recently, Ellis et al. (2018) highlight the contribution of foods suppliers as a crucial enabler of these experiences and the need for food systems to be manageable. They explain that an excessive arrival of visitors may increase demands for food supply, and result in disproportionate consumption. To avoid or manage these scenarios appropriately, Ellis et al. (2018) highlight the importance of planning and establishing local resource management concerning food supply, production, or its commercialisation with government bodies and wider stakeholders.

Either explicitly or implicitly the above studies suggest that resources are a determinant factor in the development and potential choice of a culinary destination. Wernerfelt (1984) defines a resource as "anything which could be thought of as a strength or weakness of a given firm" (p. 172), including efficient procedures, skilled personnel or capital.

Smith and Xiao (2008) refer to facilities, events, organizations, and activities. Within facilities and activities, and related to the present research, Horng and Tsai (2012) identify restaurants, resources from agriculture, livestock and fishing, including farms and orchards, and itineraries for CT consumption. Furthermore, the authors highlight the prominence of food in a range of traditional festivals. Finally, considering organisations, Horng and Tsai (2012) list culinary associations, organizations, and societies as vital. Importantly, Horng and Tsai's (2012) research developed strategic indicators and a framework for CT, employing the resource-based view of the firm (RBVF).

Partly in alignment with Horng and Tsai (2012), the present study incorporates the RBVF to enable a deeper understanding and reflection of the associations between CT and resources in the context of restaurants operating in an environment where CT is under development. In addition, to strengthen and complement this analysis, an extension of the RBVF (Barney 1986), the dynamic capabilities paradigm (e.g., Teece et al., 1997; Zahra, Sapienza, & Davidsson, 2006) will be adopted. These two fundamental theoretical frameworks are discussed in the next sections.

The resource-based view of the firm (RBVF)

From the pioneering work of various researchers (Barney, 1986, 1991, 2001; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984, 1995), a plethora of studies have discussed and adopted the RBVF (e.g., Acedo, Barroso, & Galan, 2006; Maurer, Bansal, & Crossan, 2011; Newbert, 2008). As Barney (1991) explains, "it has been suggested that in order to understand sources of competitive advantage" (p. 105), a theoretical framework should be developed. This framework should begin "with the assumption that firm resources may be heterogeneous and immobile" (p. 105). Barney (1991) also maintains that, to have appropriate "potential of sustained competitive advantage" (p. 105), firm resources must be valuable, help to increase firms' effectiveness/efficiency (Duschek, 2004), rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable.

Associated with Barney' (1991) research, Grant (1991) proposed a framework depicting a five-step process based on the fundamental tenets of the RBVF. For example, the first step entails the identification and classification of a firm's resources, the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in relation to competitors, and the identification of opportunities in order to maximize the firm's resources (Grant, 1991). Identifying capabilities, or those elements that allow effectiveness, and the complexity of these capabilities are part of the second stage. Furthermore, evaluating the potential for rent-generation of capabilities and resources concerning a) sustainable competitive advantage, and b) appropriability of returns, conform the third stage, while the fourth encompasses the selection of strategies that help exploit a firm's capabilities and resources in relation to external opportunities (Grant, 1991). The fifth stage underlines the identification of resource gaps that need to be addressed, and the recommendation to invest in augmenting, replenishing and upgrading a firm's resource base (Grant, 1991).

After various decades of existence, to date the RBVF has been only marginally employed in the hospitality (Kim & Oh, 2004), and tourism (Denicolai, Cioccarelli, Zucchella, 2010) academic literature. Regarding culinary tourism, a review of the literature identifies that only Horng and Tsai (2012) employed the resource-based theory, namely, to develop "a set of concrete indicators for a culinary tourism strategy to advance the study of culinary tourism strategy" (p. 813) in Taiwan. These indicators are structured into 10 different groups of factors, including a resources dimension, facilities and activities, of culinary tourism, diverse marketing strategies and promoting campaigns, an education dimension, and improving the professional skills in catering management and practices (Horng & Tsai, 2012).

Dynamic capabilities

The associations between the rapid change observed in the hospitality (Raub, 2008), and tourism industry (Saarinen, 2006) warrant the consideration of the dynamic capabilities approach in the context of culinary tourism development. According to Teece and Pisano (1994), there is a need for an expanded paradigm, which helps "explain how competitive advantage is gained and held" (p. 537). Teece and Pisano (1994) also posit that firms taking a resource-based strategy seek the accumulation of valued technology assets, or "employ an aggressive intellectual property stance" (p. 537). At the same time, however, those firms succeeding in a global marketplace based the strategy on timely responsiveness, flexible and rapid product innovation, and management's capability to redeploy and coordinate external and internal competences effectively (Teece & Pisano, 1994).

Teece et al. (1997) refer to dynamic capabilities as firms' "ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments" (p. 516). More recently, Zahra et al. (2006) redefined dynamic capabilities in terms of "the abilities to reconfigure a firm's resources and routines in the manner envisioned and deemed appropriate by its principal decision-maker(s)" (p. 918). In essence, the dynamic capabilities approach attempts to evaluate those sources of capture and wealth creation by firms; as a result, this approach can be perceived as potentially integrative in "understanding the newer sources of competitive advantage" (Teece et al., 1997). Nevertheless, despite the potential for dynamic capabilities to contribute to firms' recognition of opportunities in potentially effective or new ways, no organizational survival or success is guaranteed (Zahra et al., 2006).

To date, the dynamic capabilities approach has been employed in various contemporary tourism and hospitality studies (e.g., Alonso-Almeida, Bremser, & Llach, 2015; Crick, Chaudhry, & Crick, 2016). In the hotel industry, for example, Nieves and Haller (2014) investigated antecedents of dynamic capabilities, and identified the importance of skills and prior knowledge resources in helping develop these capabilities. The authors concluded that researchers are "now closer to understanding" (p. 229) those factors that enable firms to create, modify, extend, or reconfigure resources and be able to adapt to changing environments. Nieves and Haller (2014) also acknowledged that limited research has examined organizational variables that support or encouraged dynamic capabilities in the tourism industry. Similarly, there is a dearth of knowledge regarding the potential and merit of adopting the dynamic capabilities approach in the context of culinary tourism.

The context of the study - Peru

Peru is a South American nation, with a population of 31.38 million people, and a 5.9 percent yearly average economic growth rate, one of the fastest in the region (World Bank, 2016). In terms of industry significance, in 2016, mining constituted by far the largest source of export revenues ($US 25.1 billion) (National Institute of Informatics and Statistics, INEI, 2017). Nevertheless, the tourism industry also plays a significant socioeconomic role.

Figures from 2014 (World Travel and Tourism Council, WTTC, 2015) indicate that travel and tourism contributed 3.6 percent of Peru's gross domestic product (GDP), with PEN (Peruvian New Soles) 21.4 billion (approximately $US 7.56 billion). This impact includes economic activities generated by hotels, airlines, other transportation services, and travel agents, as well as the contribution of the leisure and restaurant industries (WTTC, 2015). In addition, forecasts suggest that travel and tourism will increase by 6.2 percent per annum through 2025, and will contribute approximately $US 14.45 billion (WTTC, 2015). Nationwide, the direct contribution of travel and tourism to jobs is 374,400, and total contribution is 1.25 million (WTTC, 2015).

Latest figures by Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (MINCETUR, 2016a) illustrate that, from January to October of 2016, 3.1 million foreign travellers arrived in Peru, or 7.8 percent more than in the same period of 2015. In terms of spending, a clear unbalance is noted between the domestic and international group (2015), with the first spending nearly $US 9 billion, and the second $US 4.15 billion (MINCETUR, 2016b). Among the visitor groups, the most predominant nationalities are Chilean (831,591), United States (453,084), Ecuador (211,535), Argentina (142,936), Colombia (134,600), and Spain (115,134) (MINCETUR, 2016a).

In fact, the nation's popularity among European and other groups of visitors is increasing (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013). This attractiveness is based on the country's diversity and development of travel offerings, which nowadays blend scenery, cultures, ecological diversity, and history (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013). As Matta (2013) explains, the visibility of Peruvian cuisine abroad has increased, and it is partly due to the work of Peruvian celebrity chefs. This ongoing culinary movement could have various ramifications, including the potential for building a national food heritage, including through adding value processes, for instance, emphasising products that still remain unknown (Matta, 2013). Concerning the present study, in recent years, Peru's image as a culinary destination has also grown and developed, earning international reputation (Nelson, 2016). Moreover, various reports highlight the potential for CT to become a magnet for visitors, particularly in Peru's capital, Lima (e.g., The Economist, 2014).

Methodology

This study will develop understanding of the potential for developing CT in an emerging culinary destination, namely, ways in which such development is illustrated and how CT could be developed further from the perspectives of restaurateurs. In doing so, the study addresses knowledge gaps identified in previous research (e.g., Beer et al. 2012; Presenza & Del Chiappa, 2013), including the limited extent to which the RBVF's hypotheses have been empirically tested (Newbert, 2008). In addition, while the RBVF and dynamic capabilities approach represent the study's theoretical foundation, a theoretical framework emanating from these frameworks is proposed. This framework develops new theory in the context of CT development.

Aligned with contemporary hospitality and tourism research, a constructivist (e.g., Lacey et al., 2012) and an inductive approach (e.g., Zhang Qiu et al., 2013) are chosen. In discussing the work of Driscoll (2000), Siemens (2008) posits that constructivism emphasizes learning as a process that encompasses constructing knowledge and making sense within an individual's own context. The focus of the present study on Peru's culinary tourism justifies the adoption of these approaches. Fundamentally, as compared with more internationally recognised cuisines in terms of their tourism and therefore commercial potential, such as those from France or Italy, Peru's cuisine is at its infancy. Therefore, there is a learning process for restaurateurs and other stakeholders currently undertaken, to include tourism development offices, government business development agencies and chambers of commerce.

Moreover, learning takes place socially, with the meaning being created personally, that is, by the individual learner; furthermore, influencing factors include cultural, social, participation and engagement (Siemens, 2008). Essentially, the constructivist approach emphasises that the subjects under study must at the very least be 'knowing beings', and that their knowledge has significant implications for how actions and behaviours are interpreted (Magoon, 1977). At the core of constructivists' philosophy is "their view that research investigations would include an account of the social context of the phenomenon" (Magoon, 1977, p. 657). Again, in the case of this study, such context revolves around its unit of analysis, namely, how CT can be developed in the context of Lima, Peru, from the perspective of restaurant operators. The rich sources of information and the immersive element of case study research allowed for the different 'slices of reality', as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) posit, to contribute to an emotional and psychological unity and "an interpretive experience" (p. 5).

According to Jebreen (2012), an inductive approach fundamentally employs "detailed reading of raw data to derive concepts, themes, and models, through the researcher's interpretations of the raw data" (p. 170). In referring to Strauss and Corbin's (1998) research, Jebreen (2012) further explains that, using an inductive approach, researchers will start from an area of study and develop theory from the gathered data. Dessler and Owen (2005) posit that, fundamentally, by "calling constructive work inductive" (p. 599) constructivists support and develop claims concerning particular cases. In doing so, they can work 'upwards' based on the details gathered from those cases, and inform the claims theoretically, capturing relevant relationships and patterns within them (Dessler & Owen, 2005). Thus, an inductive approach entails a certain degree of subjectivity. In the context of this study, the inductive approach was manifested in the various threads that emerged through content analysis. These threads were revealed by working ‘upwards’, in this case, analysing the fundamental comments, and interpreting the associations between the emerging themes and the theoretical frameworks adopted in the research.

While Wildemuth (1993) posits “post-positivist research… is based on the assumption that the method to be applied in a particular study should be selected based on the research question being addressed” (p. 450), it was felt a constructive philosophy was a more appropriate fit for this study. Given the case study methodology applied and data collection through observation of processes and operations, the immersive nature of this approach fostered greater understanding and subjectivity. This allowed the emergent themes to be revealed richly and through one’s own context (Siemens, 2008).

To study CT, and in agreement with Stake (2006), a multiple case or multicase study approach is chosen. In multiple case studies, individual cases are examined to ascertain the complexity, situational uniqueness or self-centering (Stake, 2006); enabling researchers to investigate differences between and within cases (Yin, 2003). The objective of this method is to reproduce the findings across different cases; given that comparisons will be made across cases, researchers should choose the cases carefully (Yin, 2003). According to Baxter and Jack (2008), “the evidence created from this type of [multiple case] study is considered robust and reliable” (p. 550).

In accord with Yin (1999), an operational framework (Figure 1) based on the RBVF and dynamic capabilities approach is proposed. Yin (1999) posits that presenting the framework ahead of time will help “to define what is to be studied as well as the topics or questions that might have to be covered” (p. 1215).The framework considers the RBVF to illustrate relationships between resources and capabilities in the context of CT development in the chosen destination. Additionally, the dynamic capabilities approach complements the RBVF theory. Moreover, the relationships are hypothesized to contribute to the destination’s competitive and sustainable competitive advantage, with implications for the future of CT development, and the destination’s gastronomy.

To assist in the design of the research questions, studies focusing on contemporary CT development were consulted (e.g., Hall & Gössling, 2013; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2013; Sotiriadis, 2015).

The increasing popularity of Lima, Peru’s capital, as a culinary destination (e.g., Nelson 2016; Richardson 2015) was a fundamental reason for choosing this city. Complementing this decision was Lima’s demographic size, with nearly 10 million residents (United Nations, 2016), or one-third of Peru’s population at the time of the study. This demographic factor also suggested the significance of the restaurant industry in this city.

An initial internet search identified 10 Cevicherías, or restaurants offering the typical Peruvian ‘Ceviche’ dish, in the Miraflores neighbourhood, a popular district in Lima frequented by different consumer groups, including tourists, business executives, and embassy and government officials. Initially, these businesses were contacted by electronic mail; the message contained a summary of the goals of the study, and made a request to interview the owner or manager of the Cevichería. Seven of these businesses responded to the message, and accepted to participate in the study. A subsequent visit by one of the authors, who is bilingual (English-Spanish), in December of 2016 enabled the completion of seven semi-structured, in-depth interviews with these businesses at the premises.

Essentially, the interview consisted of two sets of questions. The first set included questions pertaining to participants’ experience in the restaurant sector, such as the role at the business, the length of time since they have been involved in the restaurant sector, and the size of the business. These questions were demographically based and provided contextual information to segment the research data. The second set of questions addressed the RQs, and specifically asked participants:

- How do you perceive the potential of Peru's culinary tourism development? For instance, what specific elements illustrate the potential of Peru's culinary tourism?
- How could this potential be achieved? Specifically, in what ways could be such potential achieved?

Figure 1 Here

These questions were broadly based across the notions of CT, tourism, resourcing and opportunities or limitations in Peru, and were drawn from the literature and provided structure to the interview process.

While conducting these interviews, the respondents provided insights and information of other Cevicherías within the Miraflores neighbourhood, and elsewhere in Lima. This form of nominating other individuals who might take part in the research is associated with a snowballing sampling technique (Kitchenham & Pfleeger, 2002). The technique allowed for contacting and interviewing the owners and managers of nine additional businesses; the owners/managers of seven of these businesses eventually took part in the study. Thus, 14 individuals representing as many restaurants participated in the study. In alignment with case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2003), the data collection combined interviews, observations of the premises and processes (e.g., product/service delivery). In addition, archival information, that is information pertaining to the participating businesses was gathered through internet search, and by collecting brochures provided by the interviewees.

While the number of participants is modest, limiting the generalisability of the findings, and although "no one-size-fits-all method to reach data saturation" (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p. 1409) exists, the potential for saturation in more limited sample sizes is recognized. Indeed, as research by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) revealed, "saturation occurred within the first twelve interviews" (p. 59), and "…basic elements for metathemes were present as early as six interviews" (p. 59). Several researchers (Atkinson and Flint, 2001; Griffiths et al., 1993) identify shortcomings in snowball sampling, including selection bias that precludes generalisability from a specific sample. However, there are some ways to overcome such bias, including generating a larger response sample, as well as replicating the findings in order to reinforce any generalisations (Atkinson & Flint, 2001).

As indicated previously, and in line with Bowen (2009) and Patton (1990), this study used various forms of data triangulation to minimise issues of response bias. Moreover, on-site observations, as well as gathering printed and online information of participants' restaurants were specific forms of complemented the qualitative data gathered through interviews. In addition, in comparing the content of the responses between participants initially interviewed and those who were approached through snowballing, no major differences were noticed. Finally, also important is to note the case study approach of the present research. Therefore, while the number of participants is limited, the richness of data and information collected through a range of approaches affords strength to the findings of the study.

The average time of the interviews, which were recorded with participants' agreement, was 75 minutes. The interviews were transcribed, translated into English, and crosschecked by members of the research team for clarity and consistency. Subsequently, the data were analysed employing qualitative content analysis. This method consists of "assigning successive parts of the material to the categories of a coding frame" (Schreier, 2014, p. 170), is flexible, systematic, and helps reduce data. In agreement with contemporary tourism research (e.g., Lee, Scott, and Packer, 2014) the data management software NVivo, version 10 was employed.

Demographic characteristics of participants and the firms
Table 1 provides a snapshot of participants and the businesses. While all participants have worked in restaurants for at least five years, five (35.7) have two or more decades of experience. For example, Chef Javier Wong (P1), an internationally acclaimed chef and an expert in the preparation of the Ceviche dish, as well as numerous other Peruvian dishes, has been involved in the restaurant industry for over 40 years. Furthermore, Johnny Schuler (P4), an authority in both Peruvian gastronomy and Pisco, grew up as the son of a restaurateur and owned several restaurants in Lima for over 30 years.

Table 1 Here

Other individuals (P2, P7, P8) have made also important contributions, for instance, co-pioneering the growth of a 'Ceviche Boulevard' in the Miraflores neighbourhood, and have appeared in local television and radio programs. Finally, all businesses fit the category of micro and small firms in Peru. According to Peruvian legislation, the first group employs between one and 10 people, and the second a maximum of 50 (Arbulú, 2006).

Results

How Peru's CT potential is illustrated
Employing qualitative content analysis, complemented by NVivo's nodes clustered by word similarity, facilitated the identification of various themes (Table 2). Three of these themes were referred to by at least half of participants, with the first being the growing knowledge and popularity of Peruvian cuisine among international visitors. This finding relates to those of an earlier study (Horng et al., 2012), which reveals the positive impacts of appropriate packaging and consistent image-building of a national cuisine in international markets. Horng et al. (2012) therefore conclude that, in investigating perceptions of CT among tourists, "managers can build destination brand equity among potential tourists, which might result in increased travel intentions" (p. 822). Another study (Kim & Eves, 2012) developed a scale to understand tourists' motivations to consume local foods; among other dimensions, the study revealed the significance of cultural experience, excitement, and sensory appeal. Regarding the above finding, P4's commented: *"…we are just scratching the surface. Peru is already becoming a gastronomic destination/pilgrimage… Lima is the gastronomic capital of Latin America by far."*

Table 2 Here

The second theme relates to the significant diversity of Peru's cuisine. Indeed, despite the vital importance of Ceviche, a dish made of raw fish/seafood, chilli, lime juice, onions and salt, participants acknowledged the wide repertoire of other dishes (P2): *"… Ceviche is the 'locomotive' of Peru's gastronomy, and behind that locomotive you have many other Peruvian dishes, many dishes."* P11 mentioned that, increasingly, international tourists were demanding dishes other than the popular Ceviche, and fruit-based desserts, such as the 'Aguaymanto' (Peruvian ground cherry). Moreover, the large diversity of foods in Peru, harvested and grown in multiple coastal, mountain (Sierra), and forest (e.g., the Amazon) regions and environments was recognized and suggested to add to Peru's culinary attractiveness: *"Gastronomy is, with Machu Picchu the only sector that is making this* *country more known internationally… Peru has much more than Ceviche, like the 'Papas a la Huancaína', topped with cheese from the sierras, the 'Causa a la Limeña'…"*

P7, P8, P10, P13, and P14 also mentioned desserts still unknown for an international audience, such as the 'Suspiro a la Limeña', 'Ranfañote', or 'Mazamorra morada' or 'Picarones,' or one of Peru's most popular non-alcoholic beverages, the 'chicha morada.'

In highlighting the diversity of Canada's foods, and its significance and impact as a CT branding strategy, Hashimoto and Telfer (2006) stated: "The diversity of the Maritime region as a whole is as complex as the history and geography of the Maritime provinces that make it up, resulting in a diversity of food and potential culinary tourism products" (p. 40). In addition, research by Chang, Kivela and Mak (2011) revealed the importance of diversity of food among international visitors, including the variety of dishes to "confer greater value upon the breadth of the travel dining experience" (p. 312).

The development of culinary neighbourhoods, in this case, a 'Ceviche Boulevard' in the Miraflores neighbourhood, was the third emerging theme, and perceived to boost the popularity and interest in Peruvian cuisine. This form of more upmarket culinary experiences in specific affluent areas was also believed to help visitors recognize destinations within the capital Lima. The term 'culinary neighbourhoods' is referred by Beiriger (2005) when she depicts Portland's culinary scene, with restaurants located in different neighbourhoods, offering farm-to-table foods.

Furthermore, participants highlighted the growing trends of pairing food and cocktails prepared with local products, for instance, Pisco, a traditional alcoholic beverage that is now in vogue. P8, for example, stated *"The product that has grown the most, which pairs well with Ceviche, other seafood and fish is Pisco. Today, the variety of Pisco-based cocktails has also grown (e.g., Pisco sour, Pisco chilcano, Pisco el capitán)..."*

The further development of Peru's CT

While participants illustrated the potential to develop Peru's CT in various ways, there was also recognition of substantial work ahead, to succeed in developing CT in Peru, and to minimize existing challenges. The themes revealed through participants' comments are depicted in Table 3; once again, these are supported by NVivo's nodes by word similarity. One key emerging theme is associated with the issue of promotion of Peruvian cuisine, in particular, dissemination of knowledge to an international audience, and create a culinary destination image.

> P3: *More consumer education at an international level.*
> P10: *Foreign customers do not know them [Peruvian foods] very well.*

An equal number of responses emphasized the need to exploit current opportunities CT provides fully, and build a foundation for further growth; P10, for instance, stated: *"I believe we are improving and we are becoming more known, but we must maintain the momentum and not miss this opportunity…"* Building 'culinary momentum' is further illustrated in participants' suggestions of introducing new products, and broaden the culinary repertoire on offer (P14): *"Peru has become one of the top destinations for culinary art. We can still carry on and invent new dishes."* Indeed, the interview, which was carried out during restaurant service, allowed for observations; these observations illustrated the restaurant's focus on creative and eye-catching culinary combinations. Similarly, other interviews carried out at other restaurants (e.g., P2, P4, P10, P13, P14), and complemented by the restaurant's information (menus, brochures, website) demonstrated strong attention to detail in product delivery. The observations also underlined the increasing importance of a highly professional, knowledgeable staff to provide high-quality service to a demanding clientele.

Some of the above comments, coupled with observations and restaurants' information are aligned with issues Stewart, Bramble and Ziraldo (2008) identified in the development of wine and CT. In particular, these authors underscored the significance of building awareness of the culinary destination externally, support infrastructure, service quality, and coordination within the industry. Another study supporting the comments (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2013) found the need to have a clear strategy, promotion of regions, leadership, communicating quality standards, cooperation among stakeholders, and to enhance the culinary profile of the region. One important implication is that promoting regional or local food can help strengthen and support "the tourism and agricultural sectors of local economies" (du Rand & Heath, 2006, p. 211). Moreover, promotional efforts also help preserve culinary heritage, add value to destinations in terms of authenticity, enhance and broaden regional or local tourism resource base, and stimulate agricultural production (du Rand & Heath, 2006).

Table 3 Here

In addition, and as emphasized in the contemporary hospitality literature (e.g., Ha & Jang 2010), the importance of consistent, high quality product and service offerings was also revealed. In fact, the need for professionalism and commitment to provide excellence and maintain standards high was recognized, particularly among restaurateurs operating in the 'Ceviche Boulevard':

> P10: *...The public has become much more demanding, and has higher expectations, for example, of the food quality, service delivery, and infrastructure...*
> P14: *The real 'boom' is the communication, the word-of-mouth that results when we can provide excellent food and service.*

Importantly, while tourism promotion at government level was praised, in that PromPerú, a government agency, was helping to promote tourism in its various forms outside Peru (P8), there was also a critical view toward government:

> P1*: If the Peruvian state supported our [restaurant] industry, it would… dominate the world of gastronomy. There is little support for people like us who want to contribute to the international knowledge of Peruvian cuisine. That we have an excellent gastronomy? Undoubtedly. But we could have a better one if we had an improved infrastructure, and less red tape…*

This finding is partly echoed in previous research. First, Yang (2012) identified the lack of government support in helping develop agritourism, and the urgent need for investments in infrastructure. Second, Ateljevic (2009) underlines ways in which government support could make a significant impact on businesses involved in different forms of tourism, including wine tourism. These ways include investments in both intangible and tangible infrastructure, for instance, events promotion and planning, booking services and visitor information, or business training (Ateljevic, 2009). Along these lines, P2 reflected on some of the challenges ahead:

If we talk about gastronomic culture, we still have a long way to go… we are very creative but need to become more organized… we need to present our foods in a much better way, make the link with Peru's history… educate people at a very early stage, making it more authentic, more 'ours.'

Discussion

The RBVF, dynamic capabilities and the findings

The adoption of both theoretical frameworks helped extend the understanding of CT in the context of a developing CT destination. This understanding is illustrated in the proposed framework (Figure 2), which is based on the refinement of the RBVF and dynamic capabilities approach, and represents the study's main theoretical contribution.

Various key elements revealed during the interviews, including the increasing interest in Peruvian cuisine among international consumers and visitors, or the establishment of culinary neighbourhoods, identify the strong potential for Peru's CT development. Consequently, and from the perspective of firms' strategy as discussed by numerous proponents of the RBVF (e.g., Barney, 1986; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984), these findings underscore significant opportunities for Peru's restaurant sector, especially Lima's, to build and achieve competitive advantage. As P12 stated, *"the world is watching Peru's gastronomy. We need to draw people, so that they experience Lima, the gastronomic capital of Peru..."*

The numerous resources identified through participants' comments, in particular, the availability of unique products- and, importantly, strategies to transform these products into sought-after dishes and memorable culinary experiences- are strongly associated with the elements of heterogeneity and immobility (Barney, 1991, 2001). Furthermore, in accord with Duschek (2004), the valuable resources element is illustrated, for instance, in participants' commitment to product/service quality delivery, efficiency/effectiveness (e.g., P10, P14). This performance factor, added to the accumulated knowledge and experiences of many restaurateurs, renders the sector difficult to imitate or substitute (Duschek, 2004) by potential competitors.

Grant's (1991) proposed five-stage resource-based approach to strategic analysis framework provides a clear path to understand the study's findings. The first research question inquiring the perceived potential to develop CT comprehensively addresses two stages. In fact, the identification and classification of firms' resources (Stage 1), and that of appraisal of rent-generating (Stage 3) are clearly demonstrated through the increasing popularity of Peru's cuisine for an international audience, the rich diversity of Peru's cuisine, and the development or establishment of culinary neighbourhoods.

Figure 2 Here

Additionally, the acknowledged ways in which further development is required (Table 3) are related to the second, fourth, and fifth stages. Fundamentally, participants' comments referring to the need to increase consumer education and knowledge of Peruvian cuisine internationally, and maintain the momentum of culinary growth and popularity suggest ways to perform efficiently and remain competitive (Stage 2). Addressing these needs may help Peru's gastronomy to continue elevating its culinary status both regionally, or even globally, and distancing itself from other, less developed culinary destinations. Furthermore, the needs participants identified (Table 3) underscore the importance of selecting appropriate strategies to tap into external opportunities (Stage 4). For example, the needs indicated in Stage 2 could be addressed introducing new foods, and maintaining consistency of standards.

Consequently, and in agreement with Grant (1991), making investments on human resources training, new product development, promotion and dissemination of knowledge, alongside the monitoring of the business, supplier and production environment for possible market/consumer gaps or challenges can significantly and positively affect the culinary sector's resource base (Stage 5).

The dynamic capabilities approach further complements the understanding provided by employing the RBVF framework, reinforcing the various stages. For example, the reconfiguration process of firms' routines and resources postulated by Zahra et al. (2006) is clearly illustrated in the findings. Such reconfiguration re-emphasizes the need to maximise the current momentum of Peru's culinary popularity and build upon such success, introduce new culinary offerings, or maintain the consistency of product/service quality. Similarly, other conceptualizations of dynamic capabilities appear to fit in the context of the findings, including that by Zahra and George (2002), referring change-oriented capabilities that enable firms to reconfigure and redeploy the resource base to address evolving competitor strategies and consumer demands.

The response patterns identified in Table 3 are in agreement with Zahra et al. (2006) and Zahra and George (2002), in that they highlight existing capabilities among restaurateurs and the sector to address issues and future trends that may affect the development of Peru's CT. Moreover, reflecting on the response patterns through the dynamic capabilities approach also helps clarify some of the perceived new ways, or new sources (Teece et al., 1997) in which CT could be further developed, and achieve competitive advantage, for instance, against emerging culinary destinations.

Conclusions

While the CT literature has grown significantly in the last decades, authors identify several under-researched areas (e.g., Beer et al., 2012; Horng & Tsai 2012; Presenza & Del Chiappa, 2013). In addition, there is a dearth of academic research regarding the development of CT in emerging gastronomic destinations, including in Peru, whose cuisine has received increased media and consumer attention. The main objective of this study was to address some of the knowledge gaps identified, and make a contribution to the tourism and CT literature. The study examined the potential for CT development in Peru, and ways in which such development could be furthered, gathering the perspectives of Peruvian restaurant operators. In doing so, the study made an important theoretical contribution, by extending existing theory (RBVF, dynamic capabilities approach), proposing a refined framework (Figure 2) in the context of CT development from the perspective of restaurant operators in Lima, Peru.

The research revealed a number of practical and theoretical dimensions. For instance, among other emerging themes (Table 2), the rise or establishment of culinary neighbourhoods where Peruvian dishes are at the core of culinary experiences, suggests the strength of current strategies elevating the national cuisine on an international stage. Furthermore, the fit between Peru's cuisine and the growing popularity of cocktails, also based on local beverages (Pisco) and products (Peruvian lime, other tropical fruits) lends itself to current trends, and at the same time represents an original, valuable and unique pairing element, which sets apart Peruvian cuisine from others.

Notwithstanding, to capitalise upon the potential of Peruvian cuisine and work toward sustained competitive advantage, several key strategies are required. Table 3 identified three predominant ways or strategies that could enhance the current state of Peruvian CT. Intensifying consumer education both domestically and internationally, by taking advantage of the current popularity of Peruvian cuisine, and maintaining such momentum were perceived as fundamental. However, equally important was the complementing of these strategies by continuously creating new products and offerings based on the seemingly endless repertoire of Peruvian food production. These strategies have various key theoretical implications that were manifested through the development of Figure 2, and discussed below.

Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings shall be considered by Peruvian government representatives, particularly individuals in leadership positions of economic development agencies, to design and develop CT development strategies, both in Lima and in other cities and regions where further development could be achieved. Furthermore, new venture creation and other forms of entrepreneurship will be stimulated, potentially leading to increased employability, wealth creation, preservation of food cultures, and more fulfilling experiences for national and international visitors seeking traditional foods or cultural value. Notably, participants indicated the need to promote local cuisine robustly, both at industry and government level. In this context, the concerns raised by P1, one of Peru's gastronomy pioneers and leaders suggest the need to provide support and recognition to those baring the flag of Peru's gastronomy.

The proposed refinement of the RBVF and the dynamic capabilities approach (Figure 2) provides a rigorous lens through which guidance and a more in-depth understanding on the issues, resources, capabilities and potential related to CT development can be achieved. The different points and illustrations respondents made of such potential, the alignment with the two frameworks, and the extensions made; for instance, regarding change-related strategies, clearly illustrate the usefulness of the proposed refinement. Thus, one fundamental implication is that this refinement could be adopted to examine CT development in the context of Peru, namely, nationwide, as well as in other destinations experiencing CT development.

Limitations and Future Research

While this study provides an original component, investigating an emerging CT destination, as well as valuable practical and theoretical insights resulting from addressing various fundamental questions, the study is not free of limitations. For example, half of the participants were operating in or near a culinary neighbourhood (Miraflores district) at the time of the study. Moreover, the element of physical proximity may have contributed to a more favourable view of the potential of culinary neighbourhoods. Future studies could attempt to investigate other neighbourhoods, restaurants in other parts of Lima or in different regions of Peru to include a more balanced sample of participants, and a broader spectrum of views concerning Peru's CT potential.

Another limitation is the lack of consumer participation; future research could consider the inclusion of this important stakeholder group; for instance, by researchers working together with restaurateurs. Similarly, future studies could include tourists travelling to or leaving Peru to learn about culinary experiences. All these proposed research avenues could highlight strengths, potential challenges or weaknesses in product/service delivery, or identify needs and wants among visitors, for instance, more information on food and beverage offerings.

Future research could also incorporate, test, and confirm/disconfirm the usefulness of the proposed theoretical framework (Figure 2). In addition, researchers could consider the combination of the RBVF, the dynamic capabilities approach, or both, with existing or new theoretical concepts. In doing so, theory could be further developed, guiding and encouraging rigorous, in-depth research endeavours that could produce new ways of understanding CT, especially in emerging destinations.

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