

Abstract

The consumption of food is an important component in the tourist experience; yet, each tourist perceives food in a different way. This study examines the different attitudes of tourists towards food and illustrates these differences by conducting an empirical comparison between Generation X and Generation Y

The first part of the paper provides an overview of the already existing literature concerning this area of research. The discussed topics include the role of food for tourists and the factors that influence the tourist's food consumption, such as food-related personality traits and socio-demographic factors. Furthermore, this study refers to the characteristics and types of food tourists, illustrating their key personality traits. This is followed by an introduction to generational theory with a focus on the character traits and travel behaviours of Generation X and Y.

In order to examine the differences between tourists from Generation X and Y, with regards to their perception of food while travelling, a questionnaire survey is conducted in the following part of the paper. The main findings of the survey indicate that Generation Y perceives food as a prestigious factor, providing them the opportunity to inform their friends about novel food experiences. Regarding the context of food, Generation X reveals tendencies towards neophobic character traits and Generation Y towards neophylic. Furthermore, Generation X participated more often in food-related activities than Gen Y. Lastly, Generation Y shows a stronger Internet use than Generation X when searching for food-related information.