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Effects of Cultural and Tourism Policies on Local Development: the Case of Food Trails in Medellín, Colombia

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of Food Tourism worldwide has encouraged the rise of numerous food tourism strategies and initiatives everywhere, including Colombia. These are flourishing thanks to the tourism and cultural policies that recognise Colombian food processes and practices as intangible cultural heritage. One of the most representative strategies nowadays is the case of Medellín Sí Sabe (Medellín has a taste). The programme has been led by the local authorities and has been backed by different local organisations. This paper outlines an exploratory approach based on literature review, public documents, policies and the information obtained through nine semi-structured interviews applied to key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of this initiative in Medellín. The information provides some insights into how this strategy has had relevant effects on the local economic revitalisation by linking small and medium-sized food enterprises, which base their activity mainly on traditional dishes and products of the region. Firstly, it analyses the strategy's structure and its link to national tourism and cultural policies based on the main concepts of territorial development: knowledge, learning and innovation. By analysing Medellín (Colombia) as case study, it recognises the role played by local authorities in the promotion of food tourism.

Keywords: Tourism and Cultural Policies; Food Tourism; Heritage; Territorial Development; Cities.

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El surgimiento del turismo gastronómico alrededor del mundo ha propiciado el nacimiento de numerosas estrategias e iniciativas en diversas escalas geográficas, incluyendo Colombia. Estas son crecientes gracias a las políticas de turismo y cultura que reconocen los procesos y prácticas alimentarias colombianas como patrimonio cultural inmaterial. Una de las estrategias más representativas hoy en día es el caso de Medellín sí sabe. El programa ha sido dirigido por las autoridades locales y ha sido respaldado por diferentes organizaciones. El presente trabajo parte de la revisión de literatura científica, documentos públicos, políticas e información obtenida a través de nueve entrevistas semi-estructuradas aplicadas a actores relevantes responsables de la implementación de esta iniciativa. La información proporciona una idea de cómo esta estrategia ha tenido efectos relevantes en la revitalización económica local al vincular a las pequeñas y medianas empresas alimentarias, que basan su actividad principalmente en los platos y productos tradicionales de la región. Asimismo, analiza la estructura de la estrategia y su vínculo con el turismo nacional y las políticas culturales basadas en los principales conceptos de desarrollo territorial: conocimiento, aprendizaje e innovación. Al analizar Medellín (Colombia), se reconoce el papel que desempeñan las autoridades locales en la promoción del turismo gastronómico.

Keywords: Políticas Turísticas y Culturales; Turismo Gastronómico; Patrimonio; Desarrollo Territorial; Ciudades.

Introduction

The emergence of Food Tourism worldwide has encouraged the rise of numerous food tourism strategies and initiatives everywhere, including Colombia. For instance, in Mexico the government in 2015 has launched the national policy to promote Mexico's national culinary industry. On the other hand, is Spain, which has once again successfully reinvented itself by creating a brand as a tourist destination where sun, sea and sand are equal partners to paella, gazpacho and Rioja. The global impact of its local food has been surprisingly high (Ravenscroft & Van Westering, 2002). Another example is Peru, "peruvian gastronomy is a thoroughly modern project to forge solidarity from the shards of cultural difference, rediscover value and pride, and, assert that food itself can become a vehicle for real social change" (Fan, 2013, p.39). Furthermore, based on the research developed by Horg and Tsai (2010), local governments in Asia revealed a special interest in gastronomy as a driver for promoting their destinations, which is reflected on governmental tourism websites.

In Nordic countries for instance, the recognition of Noma (Denmark) as the best restaurant in the world has put Nordic European countries on the global map of food tourism. In fact, by analysing food and tourism knowledge in two regions, Bertella (2011) shows how food knowledge and scientific knowledge may contribute to fostering and developing food tourism. Berg and Sevón (2014) identified and described the poly-sensory cues related to food, which are used to describe and explain the ways in which city images are formed to strategically brand and position destinations. In a common line of research, Tsang and Wang (2016) identified some experiential values in food tourism in Taiwan by analysing consumer return on investment (CROI), as a key antecedent of place food image. Authors addressed practical implications for DMOs that can remarket their cities by defining them as food destinations that are supported by other tourism resources.

In an overall way, it may be claimed that these numerous strategies are just part of the flourishing of food tourism around the world. There is a multi-stakeholder nature of these food strategies which are cross-sectoral. Martinez (2016) confirmed the formation of complex interactions between stakeholders and public and private institutions at the local, regional, national and even international level in the creation of a place brand based on food. The strategy, according to the author, helps in the case of Colombia, to enhance the value and positioning of its resources in the context of the economic and cultural exchanges inherent in globalisation.

In Colombia, thanks to the tourism and cultural policies that recognise Colombian food processes and practices as an intangible cultural heritage, one of the most representative strategies nowadays is the case of Medellín Sí Sabe (Medellín has a taste). The programme has been led by the local authorities and has been backed by different local organisations.

In many cases, according to Leal (2013), local promotion strategies are a small-scale replica of those developed on a larger scale; thus, the responsibility for planning and design is highly relevant and relies on the institutions that are regionally and nationally responsible. In the Colombian's case, institutions have been aware of this process, therefore nowadays the promotion of dishes and products is a key element of several

initiatives linked to tourism and is one of the goals of the Medellín programme which is designed, and promoted by the City Hall. This paper outlines an exploratory approach based on literature review, public documents, policies and the information obtained through nine semi-structured interviews applied to key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of this initiative in Medellín. The information provides some insights into how this strategy has had relevant effects on the local economic revitalisation by linking small and medium size food enterprises, which based their activity mainly on traditional dishes and products of the region gathered around food trails. Firstly, it analyses the strategy's structure and its link to national tourism and cultural policies based on the main concept of territorial development and new institutionalism. Taking Medellín (Colombia) as the main case study, this approach allows not only the role played by local authorities in the promotion of food tourism strategies to be understood, but also how these local strategies might have an impact on local and regional development in large urban cities.

1. New institutionalism and food tourism

Institutions are understood as the rules or constraints devised by society's actors that give shape to human interaction and which provide the incentive structure for human exchange, be it political, social or economic; as such, institutional change charts the way in which society evolves over time and is, at the same time, the key for understanding historical change (North, 1991).

Following neo-institutional theory, and in line with the concepts first raised by DiMaggio (1991), an institutional field allows the emergence of the notion of institutional entrepreneurship to characterise organised actors with sufficient resources to contribute to the genesis of new institutions. Subsequent discussions of institutional fields have argued for the importance of two constituent elements: a) a set of institutions that includes practices, understandings and rules; and b) a group of organisations making up the network (DiMaggio, 1991; Lawrence & Philips, 2004).

According to Lawrence and Philips (2004) citing Berger and Luckmann (1967), the context in which new fields emerge is constituted by macro-cultural discourse, by which it means the broad discourses and associated sets of institutions that extend beyond the boundaries of any institutional field and are widely understood and broadly accepted in a society. In the emergence of a new institutional field, the macro institutions play a role through the ways in which they facilitate and constrain behaviour. For instance, Pastras and Bramwell (2013), by applying institutional theory, explored government involvement in coordinating and steering the policies and activities involved in Athens' tourism marketing. The authors' case study provided some insights into how contextual changes affect tourism policies, how there can be a rescaling of authority for tourism to new territorial tiers of government, and how specific individuals and events affect policies.

Taking the basic elements described by Powell and DiMaggio (1991), the concept of a new institutional field is crucial for understanding the emergence of new tourism phenomena as a result of institutions interaction. In fact, Lawrence and Philips (2004)

pointed out that to comprehend the emergence of a new institutional field in the structuring of institutions, it is essential to understand the way in which the patterns of social interaction are shaped by, and reproduce, the institutions and relationships that characterise the field. A new institutional field can be envisaged from two aspects: a) professionalisation and b) structuration. For DiMaggio (1991), and subsequent empirical research, the concept of professionalisation includes the production of experts trained in universities, creating a body of knowledge and increasing the relevance of professional experts. The second aspect (structuration), focuses on the density of inter-organisational contacts and an increasing flow of information.

To comprehend the emergence of a new institutional field in the structuration of institutions, it is essential to understand the way in which the patterns of social interaction are shaped by, and reproduce, the institutions and relationships that characterise the field (Lawrence & Philips, 2004). Therefore, this article draws on the concepts of neo-institutional theory by focusing on the interplay of the institutional context and the institutional actors that engage in food tourism. Furthermore, it analyses the main institutional discourses related to the sector that have influenced the development of programmes, policies and overall strategies related to food in the case of Medellín.

2. The context of the case study

Medellín is the second city with the highest number of inhabitants in Colombia (3,750,000) and the third most visited. The city reflects the growth of tourism throughout the national territory. In 2013, according to information published by the city's Department of Statistics, tourism showed a growth of 25.03% over the previous year.

In April 2012, the department of the First Lady of Medellín, Claudia Marquez Cadavid, along with the Secretary of Tourism, convened a meeting with different regional, local and national institutions linked to food, tourism and education in order to define a tourism food guide throughout the city. The phases in which the project was structured included a first stage focused on identifying establishments that used traditional recipes. In this first stage 154 establishments located throughout the metropolitan area were visited; in the end a total of 106 were identified as possible participants. The second stage, in turn, focused on diagnosing strengths and weaknesses of each of the establishments selected, the results led to a total of 60 establishments interested in engaging. The first step focused on providing support and training over a total of 60 hours which were provided by the different institutions involved. The training developed in 2013, and included the following modules (Table 1):

Table 1. Institutions involved in the training process

Training topic/ hours	Responsible Institution
Food safety regulations (8h)	Ministry of Health

Good Manufacturing Practices (12h)	National Education Service Department (SENA) Medellín
Nutrition: traditional cuisine and health (12h)	University of Antioquia
Standardised recipes: costs and budget (12h)	SENA (national level)
Final presentation of dishes (8h)	Educational Institution (local level)
Marketing (12h)	Educational Institution (regional level)

Source: the authors

Finally, the third and last stage was aimed at designing tourist trails focused on traditional cuisine. This phase included the launch of the project in 2014, and subsequent participation in various gastronomic events. At present, a total of 43 establishments are participating around the 16 city districts and the five districts that are part of the metropolitan area. The ten food trails designed for the case of this strategy are called “lines” and were divided into colours, each line focusing on a set of specialties. The idea is for customers to accumulate “stamps” in each of the establishments visited to complete a trail. Food trails or established lines were as follows:

1. Yellow line: includes popular products in Colombia, such as pies, chicken pies, stuffed potatoes and chicken.
2. Gold Line: includes bakery products, cakes and pastries.
3. Red Line: includes establishments offering typical meat and sausages from the region.
4. Blue line: the blue route is comprised of fish, shellfish and crustaceans.
5. Green Line: fruit, juices and traditional drinks.
6. Queen line: devoted to the arepa (corn pastry), visiting establishments that sell arepas of all kinds, such as white or stuffed corn bread.
7. Warm food Line: special dishes such as broths, soups and casseroles.
8. Return to Colombia: a compilation of the typical dishes of Colombia for each of its five regions.
9. Traditional line: traditional or classic city establishments, which over the years have become icons of the city.
10. Coffee line: best cafés and bars where you can taste this product.

3. Tourism policies based on discourses

In the case of food, the discourses emerge as perceptions of what is local and global. These perceptions, however, “are dynamic rather than static, as they are continuously (re)articulated and reconstructed in a negotiation of cultural identity — a negotiation

that intensifies as consumers are increasingly confronted with images of the other through the globalisation process” (Askegaard & Kjeldgaard, 2007, p. 140).

The context in which a new institutional field emerges comprises a macro-discourse associated with a set of institutions that extends beyond the boundaries of any institutional field and which are broadly understood and accepted in a society (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004). The conference on Local food and International Tourism, organised in Cyprus by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in 2000 was the first discourse that has led to the rise of gastronomy as a mechanism to promote local products and its association with tourism. The conclusions of this macro event point towards the fact that all countries and territories in every region of the world have expressed an interest in the culinary and gastronomy heritage that includes local food. The recognition of gastronomic tourism as a tourist modality, supported by the discourse derived from the WTO conference (2000), has been further strengthened by the macro discourse related to food security, above all in Europe. This discourse, promoted by the European Union, goes under the heading of the document *From Farm to Fork* (2005) and was developed as a response to the “food scares” during the nineties.

In addition to the various options, the legal discourse can also be considered important regarding the emergence of gastronomic tourism because a system of rules (or a set of regulations) contributes to organising the operation of a territory (Santos, 1996). It should be stressed that the legal and institutional role, via the implementation of programmes and projects, has led to changes in the spatial patterns of food production, distribution and consumption. For instance, in Europe funds for rural development have facilitated the recovery of local food products through the conversion of cottages, farms, fairs and festivals, among many other actions, which have contributed to the shift in the spatial distribution of both the food industry and tourism.

In Colombia, the national policies that have highlighted dishes and traditional products as mechanisms for culture transmission have been identified as discourses. These discourses are promoted by cultural institutions such as the Ministry of Culture through its policy entitled “Knowledge, safeguarding and promoting food and traditional cuisines of Colombia” which was adopted in 2012. The concept of “cuisine” in Colombia is the element underpinning the discourse related to gastronomy, strategies and programmes at different levels, unlike other countries like Argentina or Mexico, where the discourse is more linked to the word “gastronomy” (Leal, 2015).

The policy of 2012 recognises different traditional cuisine as a manifestation of intangible cultural heritage. In general, this policy as a discourse brings together ideas, concepts and needs that had previously been generated through conferences and forums on food and cultural cuisine in Colombia.

On a legal level, the policy relies on the Colombian Constitution (1991) when it comes to safeguarding cultural heritage, also, in the General Law on Culture, Law 397 (1997) and the Decree 2941 (2009) on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Regarding institutions responsible for promoting gastronomy, at the forefront is the Ministry of Culture as a body, which sets the guidelines for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, where culinary heritage is included. Likewise, the Vice Ministry of Tourism is also involved, as it is in charge of tourism policy and planning in the country, and

therefore the development of the Tourism Sector Plan 2014-2018 in which the gastronomy promotion strategies of Colombian tourism are included. In a second line, it is worth mentioning the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in charge of food and agricultural resources and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development in charge of natural resources and biodiversity management, as influencers on food and tourism policies. Another discourse that has induced the political focus on gastronomy in Colombia has been the Cultural Tourism Policy (2007), which focuses on strengthening traditional cuisine in cultural tourist destinations. Finally, it can be argued that policies, documents and standards at a macro level, along with practices provide important material from which actors can create new patterns of activity and new relationships (Lawrence & Philips, 2004).

4. Local development and food trails

Food tourism can facilitate the diversification of the rural community, and for marginal, isolated and peripheral areas, it can also serve as a vehicle for economic and social regeneration and development (Boniface, 2003). As Armesto and Gómez (2006) argue, it also contributes as a source of income and for improving the levels employment for local people (especially women). The actual notions of development are socially determined by certain social groups and interests located in specific places and times (Pike, Rodríguez-Pose & Tomaney, 2006). The local embeddedness of participants (the social, economic and institutional actors), the dynamics of proximity and strengthening of local cultural identities, are all factors that make development a territorial phenomenon (Carrasco & Puebla, 2009). However, for Carrasco and Puebla (2009), achieving territorial development does not depend solely on business or economic variables, rather it is essential that there is a development strategy that is common to the social and institutional actors and which is upheld by a given social and territorial unit.

Food trails are an example of a territorial strategy that engages different actors and one of the main strategies developed by institutions in charge of food tourism promotion. The trail is one of the most developed products in food tourism (Fandos Herrera, Blanco & Poyuelo, 2012). According to Antonioli Corigliano (2002), trails are said to usually link regional raw materials to other environmental and cultural tourism resources to ensure tourism use of the region. The trail is a complex tourism product that entails interaction between different tangible and intangible components, and one of the most crucial issues for creating a trail is the management of the relational dynamics among the actors (Leal, 2015). Although food trails are a common strategy for actors' engagement, a food trail cannot be a simple list of restaurants where the traditional cooking from the area is practised, or of stores where products can be purchased; a trail has to be a route that traces the footsteps of both, the cooking and the products, and an adventure in which to enjoy them (Tresserras, Medina & Matamala, 2009, p. 229).

5. Methodology

As Eisenhardt (1989) has stressed, the process of inducting theory from case studies is associated primarily with qualitative methodologies, which is the approach adopted in the research reported here for the Medellín's case study. The methodological approach of the case study applies triangulation as a valid procedure for qualitative research, a procedure that involves the search for convergence of observations from multiple sources of information. Triangulation is a systematic process of classification of data aimed at finding common themes through the overlapping of analytical areas. The methodology adopted is based on a systematic analysis of institutional documents, legislation, information consulted via the internet and documents related to the food tourism in Colombia and Medellín. In selecting the documents, one of the following three basic criteria had to be satisfied: a) they referred to strategies related to tourism and gastronomy in Colombia; b) they included legislation and documents about tourism and gastronomy particular for Colombia; and, c) they were produced by institutions, organisations or associations with links to Medellín's food strategy.

To the above was added the information obtained from nine telephone semi-structured interviews randomly applied in 2015 and 2016 to owners of establishments participating in the project Medellín Sí Sabe, each lasting a minimum of 20 minutes. Likewise, two main criteria were taken for the selection of the respondents: 1) those responsible for programme design and 2) those who had participated in its implementation (Table 2). The main objective of the interviews was to discover more about the experience and perceptions of the stakeholders concerning the role played by institutions in the Medellín's strategy. Some excerpts from the interviews are incorporated to illustrate and supplement the information presented. It is important to mention that Medellín has been chosen as a case study as a result of being a unique strategy designed and implemented by a local government, specifically the City Hall of Medellín.

Table 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

NAME	INSTITUTION	ACTIVITY INSIDE THE PROJECT
1. Claudia Márquez	First Lady, Mayor of Medellín	Project's promoter, First Lady of the city.
2. Juliana Duque	External consultant	Specialist in gastronomy, external advisor for the project
3. Luis Carlos Gaviria	Punto verde establishment	Owner
4. Jorge Iván Gaviria	Espiga Roja establishment	Owner
5. Nicolás Albeiro	Estadero el Mono establishment	Owner

6. Efrain Betancur	Fondita la Moneda establishment	Owner
7. Yesid Olaya	Rampimondongo	Brother of the owner
8. Nora Shirley Calarcá	Famosa arepa de chocoló	Co-owner
9. Milena Gómez	El Laboratorio del Café	Co-owner

Source: the authors

4. Results and discussion

Based on the theory of new institutionalism, an organisational field means the organisations that constitute a recognised area of institutional life in the aggregate: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organisations that produce similar services or products. This view allows an approach to all relevant actors in a commercial activity (Dimaggio, 1983). The players involved in the new institutional field set new relations using institutional concepts, the meaning of which may vary to reflect local conditions in which they are used. In the case of food tourism, creating initiatives like Medellín Sí Sabe (2012), would be an example of local action in a given territory due to changes in discourses at the macro level or in the international context, and that can affect food tourism development for the Colombian case. This aspect is noted in response provided by the actors involved such as:

(...) Everything has doubled, specially our customers. We have improved the kitchens and everything. There are many people who came at Christmas, mostly from the USA. In terms of tourism, it is a great thing for the region. (Interviewed 6, 2015)

(...) People recognise us. We have had tourists from other regions of Colombia and in December; the holiday season was the best (Interviewed 8, 2015).

In the case of Medellín, institutions led by the office of the First Lady and the secretary for tourism in this area, have joined together to design the first guidelines that result in a working group called Food Table. This table represents a group of organised institutions involved and relate to others with a common goal. As well as being cross-sectorial, the participating institutions represent key players in developing a type of food tourism that is meant to cross-over the tourism sector and, in this first phase of the strategy, “the table” is made up of the health sector represented by several institutions that covered all geographical scales. The main objective of the encounter was to “identify the establishments that prepare and sell the best traditional Colombian food” (Secretary for Tourism of Medellín, 2012). This objective clearly defines the institutional field, with a group of organisations interacting with other stakeholders. Regarding the participation of the owners of the establishments, the First Lady claimed that “They always want to learn and are 100% committed to participating in the training (...)” (Claudia Márquez Cadavid, 2015).

The theory of the new institutionalism argues that the players involved in the new institutional field set new relations using institutional concepts that may vary to reflect local conditions in which they are used. The overall importance of local action in the emergence of a new institutional or commercial activity field is clear for the case study analysed. Without local actors and local action, new networks would not be created (Lawrence & Philips, 2004). In the case of food tourism, training initiatives such as Medellín Sí Sabe in Colombia, is an example of local action in a territory due to changes in discourses at the macro level or in the international context and that have a direct bearing on the development of food tourism in the local and regional level.

4.1 Training and education as a tool for local development linked to food tourism

The second phase of the strategy has focused its efforts on the training and professionalisation of the actors who form part of the chosen establishments. This training of the actors in areas such as food safety regulations, manufacturing, nutrition, accounting and marketing, has included not only an institutional participation, but an inter-agency structure. In addition, in the city of Medellín, the discourses and debates in the educational sector concentrate on gastronomy, with the educational centres and universities including aspects related to gastronomy on their syllabuses. This dynamic has a clear influence on the revitalisation of food tourism in the city. Currently, at university level, two recently introduced undergraduate degrees have been identified. However, the technical training programmes offered by a larger number of educational institutions have the most experience in the city. It can be argued that the list of training activities linked to gastronomy is beginning to grow at a high speed in response to the international “gastronomic boom” and this is reflected both in the offer and demand for education. However, the understanding of food tourism as a tourism phenomenon from a global perspective is less extensive and more recent. Academic programmes dedicated to training experts in this particular field for the case study analysed are non-existent.

4.2 Creation of a corpus of knowledge

In the case analysed, the creation of a corpus of knowledge (Dimaggio, 1991) is not due to a regional or local body, but rather to a national one, which clearly influences the diffusion of culinary heritage across the country and the region. This body corresponds to the Basic Library of Traditional Cuisine of Colombia (BBCTC). This compendium of 17 volumes is a corpus of basic research on the traditional cuisine of different regions of the country issued by the Ministry of Culture.

On the other hand, in the case of Medellín, the strategy includes a book of establishments that are part of each of the routes or lines (Figure 1), and although this does not correspond to a corpus itself, it is recognised as a first step in building knowledge about the city and region’s culinary culture is visible in establishments that

are part of the project. This aspect was also highlighted by one respondent when he mentioned: “People recognise us and tell us that they have seen us in the book” (Interviewed 5, 2015).



Figure 1: Book cover “Medellín has a taste”

Source: Internet website publishing communications & editions, 2015

5. Social organisation as a driver of food tourism

The organisations and professional associations contribute to the institutionalisation of a commercial activity. The culinary academies are the organisations and associations with an impact on the spread of gastronomy, both nationally and internationally, due to the exchange networks generated. The Colombian Association of chefs and the Colombian Association of Foodservice Industry (Acodres) operating since 1956 throughout the national territory, including Medellín should be highlighted.

According to DiMaggio (1991) professional associations constitute sectorial associations or unions. Therefore, Medellín has several partnerships that reflect the guild, especially for the culinary and food sector, rather than for tourism. This territory has the presence of associations of professionals with special relevance in the sector of hotels and restaurants. One example operating in the region is the Association of Chefs Antioquia which has been operating since 2014.

5.1 Qualified training: the increase of relevant professionals experts

In the case the study, the programme has had the support of researchers and renowned chefs, not only due to their contributions and recommendations to the programme, but also by references or articles that have been made in the local and national press. Formal education programmes that are gradually being established in the city and society create culinary recognition of the professional activity. However, as referred to above, the analysis of food tourism as form of tourism is not identified in the training and educational programs analysed for Medellín.

5.2 Local interaction for the development of food tourism

The Medellín strategy has contributed to the establishment of contacts with various organisations at all levels, both local such as neighbourhood associations, but also internationally through contacts with the Kreanta Foundation or Bulli Foundation in Spain, the latter directed by one of the most world-renowned chefs, Ferrán Adrià. The establishment of inter-organisational contacts by the Office of the First Lady clearly affects the city branding of Medellín, an aspect that can affect tourism in the city. It is observed that Medellín is being identified as a food destination in which its image is based on its food identity. The statement supports Therkelsen and Halkier (2008) findings regarding place branding that place branding takes its point of departure in the identity of the place and uses local norms, values and practices to construct its offers. This was found in interviews and was reflected as follows:

(...) The project has boosted our business a great deal. People come with the guide, people liked it. Foreign people have come from Australia, the United States, and Asia; in general a lot of new people arrive, they order our products to take back to their own countries. (Interviewed 4, 2015).

On the other hand, regarding a contact between establishments is reflected in the following statement:

(...) Although I have sporadic contact with other establishments on the food trail, one person contacted me to inquire about my product and to make an order" (Interviewed 7, 2015).

However, some establishments mentioned that there has been no further contact beyond the first one generated by the City Hall of Medellín. This fact shows an absence of networking by other institutions and in turn, a lack of self-management by participants in order to seek new institutions or organisations that can contribute to a broader development of the programme Medellín Si Sabe.

5.3 Information as a tool of food tourism development

For the tourism sector, the use of Internet has played an important role in the dissemination of a wide range of activities and information generated by organisations and institutions. For the case study, the use of social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are linked to the project website as a driver to stimulate and interact with the public. The most active platform is Facebook, where the project's page has over 4,000 followers, and permanent updates that invite and create expectations regarding visits to each of the participating establishments. However, activity on other social networks is low. In fact, a suggestion from the Medellín's City Hall and from some experts is the use of social networks by the owners of the establishments as one of the aspects that requires training and improvement.

Finally, it can be argued that nowadays Medellín is one of the main cities involved in gastronomic activity in Colombia. A result was the WTO meeting about food tourism which was held in Medellín in 2015. The information generated during such events certainly has international repercussions that help to place Medellín on the map of world tourism, in addition to also positioning it on the gastronomic scene.

Based on the contribution by Powell and DiMaggio (1991) from the theory of the new institutionalism and its application to analyse the effects of policy and institutions in food tourism as an engine for local development, it is clear that the aspects of professionalism and structuration applied to Medellín certainly demonstrate a movement throughout the territory. However, this requires a continuity of actions and self-management by the project participants. These aspects are reflected in some interviewee responses: "(...) We should not let the project drop. We are hoping the Mayor will contact us again this year" (Interviewed, 4, 2016), or "(...) Since the Mayor changed, there has been no contact" (Interviewd 3, 2016). The last statement reflects a lack of continuity that is subject to change due to a political context that affects the revitalisation and the long-term continuity of such initiatives.

Conclusions

Fostering territorial development based on tourism initiatives needs the participation, relation, interaction and cross-sectoral cooperation of stakeholders on a multiple geographical scale. The aim of establishing a particular region, as a gastronomic region is also its branding role. The principles of marketing and branding can be used in the service of creating sustainable small-scale production-consumption relations and, therefore, local cultural sustainability (Askegaard & Kjeldgaard, 2007).

In the case of Colombia, the synergies between Medellín's strategy and other gastronomic food and beverage trails could be integrated into a wider Colombian place branding strategy where institutional cooperation between private and public organisations becomes crucial. The cities and regions of Colombia need to be further promoted, because the country is still associated with a poor, unknown or negative image (Martinez, 2016). However, and as Martinez (2016) claims, in Colombia there is

a confirmed trend towards more complex place branding processes which are evolving towards inter-institutional participation and multi-stakeholder interaction.

Inter-institutional participation which has been analysed through the concepts of the new institutionalism is important because it allows the effects of local policy to be identified and analysed. These effects are embodied in the actions and interactions of international, national and local institutions represented in the case study. It also helps to identify opportunities for local development through actions and interactions conducted by local institutions.

The paper contributes to the knowledge and understanding of how the actors and their organisations interact and participate. The interactions also lead to various interconnections in heterogeneity of actors and institutions involved. The resulting knowledge of the relationships and interactions is considered a competitive advantage for the territories. In the case of Medellín, this knowledge can influence a local dynamic linked to the gastronomic scene.

On the other hand, the identification of those involved in activities related to gastronomic tourism and their scale of action and interaction allows knowledge regarding how local institutions can mobilise discourses on a larger scale; as well as showing how actors are influenced by socio-institutional contexts. An example was observed in the incidence of actions designed and developed by the City Hall as a dynamic institution regarding the inclusion of marginal establishments in the city. From the interviews, this aspect was highly valued by the establishments interviewed, along with the project marketing strategies promoted by the City Hall.

The results highlight how local strategies and programmes, driven by an institution operating on a local scale, certainly generate an effect on the revitalisation of tourism linked to gastronomy and how other institutions and organisations are linked to this. In addition, they contribute to a better understanding of the role of institutions and their agents in the political and social discussions that affect the dynamic of gastronomic tourism, not only locally or regionally, but also nationally.

The current case study may help other urban cities or territories that have historically been affected by bad image, especially violence, to generate value with their natural and cultural resources based on food. And, to see and develop a common approach to place a brand that gathers new initiatives and would help to enrich economic and cultural values of traditional food based on public and private cooperation.

The analysis of the case study indicates that the development of tourism linked to gastronomy has been possible thanks to major changes in the international discourses recently materialised in cultural economic policies related to gastronomy and tourism, which have had local repercussions in this country. Moreover, the territorial revitalisation of gastronomic tourism depends on local action and interest of stakeholders becoming involved and interacting with the institutions that are part of this recent type of tourism. Finally, the case study demonstrates that it requires a strengthening of the capacities of actors oriented towards self-management to provide a long-term nature of this kind of initiative in the future.

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